

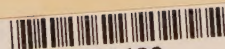
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HANSARD'S
PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES,

THIRD SERIES:

COMMENCING WITH THE ACCESSION OF

WILLIAM IV.

52 & 53 VICTORIÆ, 1889.

VOL. CCCXXXV.

COMPRISING THE PERIOD FROM

THE NINTH DAY OF APRIL, 1889,

TO

THE THIRTEENTH DAY OF MAY, 1889.

Third Volume of the Session.

THE HANSARD PUBLISHING UNION, LIMITED,

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Chronology of Hansard's Debates.

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The **PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES** commence with the year 1803, and the contents are set forth in the following Chronological Table:—

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FOURTH SESSION OF THE TWENTY-FOURTH PARLIAMENT OF THE
UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND,
APPOINTED TO MEET 5 AUGUST, 1886, IN THE FIFTIETH
YEAR OF THE REIGN OF

No. 1.] THIRD VOLUME OF SESSION 1889. [APRIL 17.

Tuesday, 9th April, 1889.

Brought from the Commons; read 1^a; to be printed; and to be read 2^a on Thursday the 2nd of May next.—(*The Earl Beauchamp.*)

Read 3^a (according to order), and passed.

House in Committee (according to order); Bill reported without Amendment; then Standing Order No. XXXIX. considered (according to order), and dispensed with. Bill read 3^a, and passed.

Order of the Day for Second Reading
read.

*THE EARL OF MILLTOWN: My Lords, the Bill which I now ask your Lordships to read a second time is extremely simple in its provisions. The Bill proposes to amend the Town Police Clauses Act of 1847, which was passed with the object of consolidating all the Acts giving to Local Authorities the control of the police. That Act contained, *inter alia*, a number of clauses with respect to the regulation of hackney carriages. Clause 38, after defining what is meant by "hackney carriage," enacts as follows:—

“ Provided always that no stage coach used for the purpose of standing or plying for passengers to be carried for hire at separate fares, and duly licensed for that purpose, and having thereon the proper numbered plates required by law to be placed on such stage-coaches, shall be deemed to be a hackney carriage within the meaning of this Act.”

That Proviso has been held to extend

to omnibuses, and the consequence is that the Local Authorities in many towns are powerless to regulate the traffic of omnibuses, which wander about at their own sweet pleasure, causing very serious obstruction and annoyance to the inhabitants. Several towns have proceeded by private Local Bills to give themselves these powers; amongst others, I may mention Birmingham, Accrington, Bristol, Cardiff, Huddersfield, Liverpool, Nottingham, Preston, Salford, Sheffield, and probably many others. The object of this Bill is to save the time and expense of thus proceeding by separate Local Bills, by amending the Act of 1847, and giving the necessary power to all Local Authorities. The reason probably why omnibuses were not included in the Act of 1847 was, that at that time omnibuses as public carriages were hardly known; but I need hardly remind your Lordships that at the present time public omnibus traffic has enormously developed all over the country. I may add that tramcars are not included in this Bill, because the various Acts under which tramways have been constructed have always contained the necessary powers to the Local Authorities. That, my Lords, is really the whole of the Bill. It has been supported by both sides in the House of Commons. It was brought forward by Mr. Picton, the hon. Member for Leicester, and seconded by my noble Friend Lord Granby. It received no opposition from Her Majesty's Government. At one time it certainly was blocked in the House of Commons, but that, I understand, was for purely personal reasons, as an hon. Member, with that public spirit which distinguishes certain Members of the other House, had blocked this Bill because somebody who sat near the hon. Member who proposed it had previously blocked another Bill in which the blocking Member was interested. Eventually, however, the Bill passed through the House of Commons in the absence both of the blocker and blockee.

*VISCOUNT TORRINGTON: The Towns Police Clauses Act, 1847, contains in Sections 37 to 68 a series of provisions with respect to hackney carriages. An omnibus standing or plying for passengers to be carried for

hire at separate fares is not a hackney carriage within the meaning of these provisions, and the object of the Bill is to extend such provisions to omnibuses, so far as they may be applicable. Under the Bill, power will be given to license omnibuses, &c., and to make bye-laws for the regulation of the conduct of their proprietors, drivers, and conductors, and for other matters connected with the management and use of such carriages. Some slight Amendments have been made in the Bill in the House of Commons, and the Government have no objection to the Bill, as amended. Indeed, the Local Government Board have in several instances amended Local Acts by Provisional Order so as to give effect to proposals similar to those contained in the Bill. These Orders, however, are, of course, in force only in the districts of the Sanitary Authorities whose Local Acts have been thus amended. The Bill would be in force in the district of every Urban Sanitary Authority.

Bill read 2^a (according to order), and committed to a Standing Committee.

COMMISSIONERS FOR OATHS BILL.

(No. 6.)

House in Committee (according to order); Amendments made; the Report thereof to be received on Thursday next.

STANDING COMMITTEES.

Ordered, That two Standing Committees be appointed, the one for the consideration of Bills relating to law and courts of justice and legal procedure, and the other for the consideration of all other Public Bills, that may be committed to them by the House, and that the first of such Committees be designated "the Standing Committee for Bills relating to Law, &c." and the second of such Committees "the Standing Committee for General Bills."
—(*The Marquess of Salisbury.*)

LORD DENMAN: The debate as to the Larceny Bill shows the inconvenience of its being necessary to move for a Committee of the Whole House, instead of its being needful to move specially for reference to a Grand Committee. In fact, there were two debates on the principle of the Bill. I wished to have said that if a burglar deterred by the Bill carried no firearms, he showed that he had no intention to murder. Grand Committee was only named after the debate.

Resolution agreed to.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—THE EASTER ADJOURNMENT.

In reply to Earl GRANVILLE,

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: I understand that there is no business after Thursday next, and that we might adjourn on Thursday. It is usual to meet in the week after Easter week; but I am told it is not usual to meet on the Monday. If there is no objection, we might meet on the Tuesday afterwards.

House adjourned at a quarter before
Five o'clock, till Thursday, a
quarter after Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Tuesday, 9th April 1889.

MR. SPEAKER'S INDISPOSITION.

The Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of Mr. Speaker, owing to indisposition.

Whereupon Mr. Courtney, the Chairman of Ways and Means, proceeded to the Table; and, after Prayers, took the Chair as Deputy Speaker, pursuant to the Standing Order.

INDIAN APPOINTMENTS.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) asked the Under Secretary of State for India (1) whether appointments in Native States where the persons appointed are not natives of the respective States are reported by the Agents of the Viceroy to the Government of India; (2) whether in the State of Rampur an English engineer has been appointed to supervise the buildings of the Nawab of Rampur, at a cost of Rs.1,800 per month, with a regular establishment; (3) whether the like work had been performed by an Indian engineer on Rs.100 a month and a clerk on Rs.10; (4) and whether such appointment has been approved, and on what grounds?

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Sir J. GORST, Chatham): (1) No; such appointments are not reported to the Government of India. (2), (3), and (4). The Secretary of State has no information on the appointment referred to.

MR. BRADLAUGH: Does the hon. Gentleman mean by the expression "not usually reported" that sometimes they are?

*SIR J. GORST: No, Sir; they are not reported.

THUGGEE OFFICIALS.

MR. BRADLAUGH asked the Under Secretary of State for India whether there was any truth in the statement that Colonel E. P. Henderson, for some years in charge of Thuggee investigations, had been put on special duty, including watching the Indian National Congress leaders; if so, would he state on what grounds loyal persons engaged in a moderate and constitutionally conducted reform movement were subjected to the espionage of an experienced Thuggee official?

*SIR J. GORST: The Secretary of State has no information which confirms the statement referred to in the question.

IMPRISONMENT FOR FIRST OFFENCES.

MR. HERBERT GARDNER (Essex, Saffron Walden) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention had been called to the case of a woman called Sarah Dorothy Beck, who was lately sentenced to a month's imprisonment by Magistrates at Penrith Petty Sessions for stealing three hens value six shillings, and subsequently died in gaol; whether she was a person of weak intellect; whether any previous convictions were alleged against her at her trial; and whether he would consider the advisability of reminding County Magistrates generally of their power of fining instead of imprisoning for first offences?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (MR. MATTHEWS, Birmingham, E.): I am informed by the Justices, that this woman pleaded guilty to the theft, and was sent to prison for a month, and that she showed no signs of weak intellect when in the hands of the police, or when before the Magistrates, but was deaf, and quiet in her manner. There were no previous convictions against her. She died the morning after her reception in gaol from natural causes. I am not aware that County Magistrates are unmindful of the powers vested in them by law. On the contrary, I believe that the discretion of fining instead of imprisoning is largely resorted to by them.

MR. H. GARDNER: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that at the

inquest which followed the death of this woman, the doctor of the prison visited the deceased, and ordered her into the hospital, because she was suffering from mental disease?

MR. MATTHEWS: I have given the hon. Gentleman the exact statement which has been sent to me.

MR. H. GARDNER: Will the right hon. Gentleman make further inquiry?

MR. MATTHEWS: Yes.

GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS.

MR. HANBURY (Preston): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War what Government contracts have to the present knowledge of the War Office been wholly or in part executed by Messrs. Ross since that firm was struck off the list of Government contractors; whether, when the contract with Colonel Wallace for Army accoutrements was given to him, any provision was made against his making sub-contracts with or employing firms struck off for supplying bad goods; and what is the precise provision now made on that point in this and other War Office contracts; what proportion of his contract was manufactured previous to the insertion of such provision, and what increase of cost has been entailed by the enforcement of such provision in the future; and why does it entail any increase of cost at all; was the contract given to Colonel Wallace before he had provided a factory of his own; what security was taken against sub-contracting and sweating in such contract; and why has Colonel Wallace recently felt the necessity of raising his rate of wages by nearly one-third—viz., from 3½d. to 4½d. in the case of certain pouches, and from 6d. to 8d. in the case of others; is Colonel Slade a partner with Colonel Wallace in executing any part of the contract; and has a subsequent order been given for about 5,000 valises to the same person?

*THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): It is understood that Messrs. Ross & Co., since they have been struck off the list as contractors, assisted Messrs. Pulman in the execution of a contract for buff accoutrements, which was given out before they were removed from the list. They also made 500 Cavalry waist belts for Messrs. Almond, as stated by me last November in answer to the hon. Member for East

Finsbury; and it appears from evidence given before the Committee on the Sweating System that they made 1,000 sets of equipment for Colonel Slade last June. The contract for accoutrements with Colonel Wallace provides against sub-letting, inasmuch as it requires all the work to be done in his own factories. No portion of the contract was carried out before this provision was made. On an inspection of Colonel Wallace's factory, it was found that he was buying his buff cut out and pricked from Messrs. Ross & Co. He was informed that this was not contemplated in his contract; and ultimately, as he was able to show that he would be put to an increase of cost in hiring premises to do the cutting out, and that he had not estimated for this in his contract, it was arranged that 9d. per set of accoutrements should be allowed to meet the charge. The contract was not given to Colonel Wallace before he had provided a factory of his own. Sub-contracting was forbidden, and sweating was prevented by fixing a scale of prices to be paid direct to the workpeople. Experience proved that some of these prices were too low, and they have been raised. Nothing is known in the War Office of any partnership between Colonel Slade and Colonel Wallace. An order for 3,000 valises has recently been given to Colonel Wallace.

MR. HANBURY: Was the contract given at Colonel Slade's request?

*MR. BRODRICK: Colonel Slade had originally a contract for 1,000 valises, and it was in regard to that that no course of action was taken.

MR. HANBURY: Is Colonel Slade, to whom the contract was virtually given, an officer on full pay?

*MR. BRODRICK: I was not aware that the hon. Member was going to ask that question, and I am unable to say whether Colonel Slade was at that time, on full pay or not.

MR. HANBURY: Is he connected with the War Office, and a Member of the Small Arms Committee?

*MR. BRODRICK: I am not aware.

MR. HANBURY: I beg to give notice that on the Vote for the Director of Army Contracts I will move the reduction of the Director's salary.

ALBERT GATE.

MR. WEBSTER (St. Pancras, E.) asked the First Commissioner of Works

whether it had been called to his attention that the buildings in course of construction near Albert Gate were already higher than the adjoining buildings; and, whether he would take steps to make those responsible for their construction carry out the pledge they gave him last year, that they should not be constructed higher than the adjoining houses at Albert Gate?

MR. LAWSON (St. Pancras, W.): Is it not desirable for this purpose that legislation should be introduced similar to that proposed last year by the hon. Member for Chelsea (Mr. Whitmore) giving power to the public authority to limit the height of buildings in London?

*THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (Mr. PLUNKET, University of Dublin): The question which the hon. Member for West St. Pancras (Mr. Lawson) asks me is rather an abstract one, and I had rather not give offhand a definite opinion about it; but I think it is perfectly plain that if buildings in London are carried to a height that would cause serious inconvenience to neighbours or to the public generally, some steps should be taken to meet the difficulty. In answer to the question upon the Paper, I have to say that my hon. Friend is under a misapprehension when he states in his question that the builders of the new mansions at Albert Gate had given me a pledge that their edifice should not be carried to a greater height than the neighbouring buildings. What they did undertake was to reduce the intended height of their buildings from 130 feet to 100 feet, and from that undertaking I have no reason to think that they mean to depart. Of course, I shall see that it is fulfilled.

THE LANARKSHIRE ARTILLERY VOLUNTEERS.

MR. JOHN WILSON (Lanarkshire, Govan) asked the Secretary of State for War whether he was aware that the two batteries of the 1st Lanarkshire Artillery Volunteers were converted into "Field Batteries of position," and that this involves that officers be mounted; whether the Commanding Officer of the corps had received an Order from the War Office that officers must sign a specified certificate, to the effect that each officer undertakes to keep and maintain *bonâ fide* his own

property a charger to be approved; whether it was the case that one officer had refused to sign such a certificate, and had been compelled to resign, after having served for 17 years; whether it was the case that in no other corps have officers in a similar position been required to sign such a certificate; and whether such an Order had been issued by the War Office, or only on the responsibility of the Commanding Officer of this regiment?

MR. BRODRICK: The Officer Commanding the 1st Lanark Artillery Volunteers, on his own responsibility, required his officers, before appointment to the two recently formed batteries of position, to sign an undertaking that they would keep and maintain a horse. This was not done by order from the War Office. The subaltern referred to declined to sign the undertaking, and claimed to be appointed to one of the batteries of position, and has declined promotion in a garrison battery till the question of his appointment to the position battery is settled. Nothing is known at the War Office of his resignation. I am not aware that any similar undertaking has been required in other corps.

BURIALS IN WESTMINSTER ABBEY.

MR. OSBORNE MORGAN (Denbighshire): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the right of interment in a churchyard or (subject to the approval of the proper authorities) in a church, as distinct from the right to a religious burial service, is not independent of the ecclesiastical status of the deceased person; and whether he is aware that the late Sir Rowland Hill, although an unbaptized person, was buried in Westminster Abbey?

*MR. MATTHEWS: I have no authority to give an opinion on a question of law, but I am advised that the Burials Act of 1880 gives the right of interment in a churchyard independent of the ecclesiastical *status* of the deceased person, but that this provision of the Act does not apply to burials in churches. The right to be buried in a church depends on the consent or refusal of the incumbent, and in some cases is regulated by faculties granted by the ecclesiastical authorities. I am informed by the Dean of Westminster

that there is no discoverable trace in the late Dean's paper that Sir Rowland Hill was an unbaptized person. There are no signs of the question having been raised.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN BOARD SCHOOLS.

MR. COBB (Warwick, S.E., Rugby) asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education whether the Rev. F. H. Watson, on the 22nd of March last, examined the children in the Board School at Snitterfield in the Apostles' Creed; and, if not, what was the creed in which he examined them; and whether the teaching of and examination in the Apostles' Creed in a Board School is a violation of the provisions of "The Elementary Education Act, 1870?"

*THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (Sir WILLIAM HART DYKE, Kent, Dartford): The Creed in question was the Apostles' Creed, which, during the discussion of the Cowper-Temple Clause, was mentioned by the author of the clause as one which could be taught in Board Schools, on the ground that it was "not the property of any particular denomination, but belonged to all Christendom," and this view of the case has since obtained the sanction of and been acted upon by successive heads of the Department.

MR. COBB: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the universal impression among the Nonconformists of this country is that the Apostles' Creed is not to be taught in the Board Schools, and that if it is taught it is in violation of the provisions of the Education Act of 1870?

*SIR W. HART DYKE: I am not aware of any such impression whatever existing. I hold in my hand a Minute written by the right hon. Member for the Brightside Division of Sheffield (Mr. Mundella) when he was Vice President of the Council, in which he uses the very words of Lord Mount-Temple, and concludes by saying—

"Their Lordships are not prepared to interfere with the discretion of School Boards in the matter."

MR. COBB: Did I understand the right hon. Gentleman to say yesterday that this examination was not entered into by the direction of the Board?

*SIR W. HART DYKE: No. I stated what was the policy of the Education

Department, as observed by the right hon. Gentleman when he was Vice-President of the Council.

MR. DILLWYN (Swansea): I should like to know by what authority and at whose selection the Apostles' Creed is chosen. Can any other Creed except the Apostles' Creed be selected?

The question was not answered.

STRAND UNION.

MR. CREMER (Shoreditch, Haggerston): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board if he has appointed, or is about to appoint, Mr. Thomas Hill an *ex officio* Guardian of the Poor for St. Martin's in the Fields; whether he is aware that Mr. Hill has within the last few days withdrawn from the pending popular election of Guardians, and announced his attention not to again appeal to the ratepayers for re-election; whether Mr. Hill has been Chairman of the Guardians for several years; whether the terrible condition of the children in the parish schools did not exist during his term of office; and, if Mr. Hill has been, or is about to be, appointed as a Guardian, he will state the reason for such nomination?

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. RITCHIE, Tower Hamlets, St. George's): It is the intention of the Local Government Board to nominate Mr. Hill as a Guardian of the Strand Union. Mr. Hill has been an elected member of the Board of Guardians for 21 years, and in the case of most of the elections he has been returned at the head of the poll. For the past 16 years he has been annually elected Chairman of the Board of Guardians, and for many years he has represented the Union on the Board of Management of the Metropolitan Asylum district. Looking to these facts, and on the recommendation of the two Inspectors for the Metropolitan District, who have personal knowledge of Mr. Hill's services, he has been offered nomination as a Guardian. As regards the alleged "terrible condition of the children in the parish schools," I presume the hon. Member refers to the outbreak of ophthalmia. It is satisfactory, however, to me to learn that the specialist who was called in to examine the children states—

"As the general result of my examination, I was struck with the healthy aspect of the children, which showed they were thoroughly well fed and cared for. I do not, therefore, consider the state of the eyes of so many of them to be due to any want of attention on the part of either the surgeons, the master, matron, or nurses, but simply to the fact that there is insufficient accommodation, which is especially apparent in the dormitories and schoolrooms."

Plans for the extension of the schools are now before the Board.

MR. CREMER: The right hon. Gentleman has not answered one of my questions—namely, what are the reasons for the nomination of Mr. Hill as an *ex officio* Guardian? I would follow that up by another question, as to whether it is the policy of the Local Government Board to appoint as *ex officio* Guardians men who are afraid to face the popular verdict of the ratepayers?

*MR. RITCHIE: As to the reasons which induced the Local Government Board to appoint Mr. Hill, I have given sufficient evidence to the hon. Gentleman to show that in our opinion Mr. Hill was a proper person to be appointed. It was because we thought he was a proper person that he was appointed. As to the hon. Gentleman's statement of Mr. Hill being afraid to seek re-election, I beg to say that Mr. Hill only withdrew from the list of candidates after he had received a notification from the Local Government Board that he was to be offered the appointment.

THE VESTRY OF ST. PETER'S, THETFORD.

DR. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid): I wish to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether his attention has been called to the fact that Messrs. Stephen Oldman and Robert Brown were unanimously chosen overseers by the Vestry in the parish of St. Peter's, Thetford, County Norfolk; that the local magistrates have passed over the names of the selected overseers, and appointed in their place Messrs. Ditch and Holden; how many elective votes these gentlemen obtained; and whether it is the intention of the Local Government Board to sanction the election of Messrs. Ditch and Holden; and, if so, by what right and for what purpose are the elective votes of the Vestry to be superseded?

*MR. RITCHIE: The appointment of overseers vests in the Justices, and they

are empowered to appoint any householders in the parish whom they think fit, without any previous nomination by the Vestry, or without regard to any such nomination. As regards the parish to which the question of the hon. Member refers, I understand that it has been the custom for the Vestry to submit to the magistrates a list of at least four names for selection. In the present year the list contained the names of two persons only, one of whom had already filled the office for two years. In the two previous years, also, the names of two persons only were submitted to the Justices. I am informed that the magistrates considered that, as a matter of courtesy, they should have had a list to select from, and they made their own selection without regard to the nomination by the Vestry. The appointments of overseers are not subject to the sanction of the Local Government Board, and the Board have no jurisdiction in the matter.

DR. TANNER: Is it not the fact that one of the magistrates who adjudicated on this matter was Chairman, or, at any rate, a very large shareholder, of a company that was appellant in a case against the parish in question?

*MR. RITCHIE: I know nothing of that. The hon. Member must give notice of the question.

DR. TANNER: Is it not the fact, as evidenced by communications which have appeared in the Norfolk newspapers, that more overseers have been nominated for the parish than are required?

*MR. RITCHIE: I know nothing whatever about what has appeared in the Norfolk newspapers, or about any of the statements of the hon. Member; and I think it is very much to be deprecated that questions should be put in this House casting reflections upon people.

DR. TANNER: I beg to give notice that when I come out of gaol I shall give this matter my most thorough attention.

IRELAND—PARLIAMENTARY FRANCHISE FORMS.

MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): I desire to ask the Solicitor General for Ireland whether any person is under a legal obligation to fill up and return any form relating to the Parliamentary franchise devised and issued by the Belfast

or any other board of guardians, in addition to the form prescribed by the Franchise Law?

*THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. MADDEN, Dublin University): No person is under a legal obligation to fill up and return any form relating to the Parliamentary franchise in addition to the forms authorized or prescribed by the Franchise Law. It is not accurate to describe all these forms as prescribed. The Representation of the People Act, 1884, and the Parliamentary Registration, Ireland, Act, 1885, do give certain forms. But the Poor Rate Assessment Act of 1869, which was applied to Ireland in 1884, while casting upon certain classes of owners the obligation of furnishing information, does not prescribe any precise form in which this information should be asked for by the overseers.

POLICE ESPIONAGE IN IRELAND.

MR. H. J. WILSON (York, W.R., Holmfirth): I beg to postpone my question with regard to the police espionage to which I and my wife were subjected in Ireland, to a day when the Chief Secretary will be present.

THE LONDON SCHOOL BOARD.

MR. JOHN TALBOT: I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education whether the two vacancies on the London School Board, caused by the unseating of two Members for the Westminster Division, have been reported to the Education Department; and, what steps will be taken to make the representation of the division complete?

*SIR W. HART DYKE: The vacancies referred to has not been reported to the Department by the London School Board, but I can assure the hon. Gentleman that any representation they make to me I shall be happy to consider.

TELEGRAM ADDRESSES.

MR. PROVAND (Glasgow, Blackfriars, &c.): I wish to ask the Postmaster General if it is the case that, while in the Post Office, directories may be referred to by the clerks in cases of insufficiently addressed letters, postcards, or newspapers, in Telegraph Offices the clerks are forbidden to refer to directories in cases of insufficiently

addressed telegrams, the owners of which cannot be found; and, whether he will explain the reason for the different treatment of mail matter and telegrams?

*THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES, Cambridge University): At page 310 of the Post Office Guide, paragraph 46, the public are informed that the addresses of telegrams should be sufficiently full to enable the Department to effect delivery without difficulty and without reference to directories. The distinction between letters and telegrams is that insufficiently addressed letters can be set aside for search to be made in a directory without their being appreciably delayed or the general treatment of the mails interfered with, whereas telegrams cannot be carried to directories without delay to themselves and also to those which have been fully addressed by the senders. Perhaps I may point out that the sender of a letter has no inducement to shorten the address, and is therefore supposed to do his best; whereas experience shows that the addresses of telegrams are purposely shortened to save expense. I have, however, given orders that, where a sender of a telegram has obviously done his best the Directory is to be searched to complete the address and every effort made to deliver the message. If instructions were given that Directories were to be searched in every case, I fear that telegrams generally would be insufficiently addressed, and that great delay would result to the senders as well as additional expense and loss of revenue to the Post Office.

BOARD OR SCHOOL OF FORESTRY.

SIR J. LUBBOCK (London University) asked whether the Government proposed to establish a Board or School of Forestry, in accordance with the unanimous Resolutions of a Committee of this House and of the Associated Chamber of Commerce?

*THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH, Strand, Westminster): The Government fully recognize the importance of the subject, and it will, I think, be their duty through the new Board of Agriculture, if we are fortunate enough in the course of the present Session to pass the Bill creating that Department, to take steps,

if we can see our way to do so, to carry out the Resolutions of the Committee.

MR. MUNRO FERGUSON (Leith, &c.): I beg to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether, seeing that the prospect of establishing a Minister of Agriculture may be somewhat remote, and that the question of forestry is distinct from that of agriculture, he will not consider the possibility of dealing with the establishment of a School of Forestry apart from the Minister of Agriculture?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: Looking to the business we have to do, and the slow progress made with our work, I am afraid I cannot undertake to make such a proposal as the hon. Member suggests.

TELEGRAPHIC COMMUNICATION WITH LIGHTHOUSES, &c.

MR. JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.) asked the President of the Board of Trade if his attention had been called to the resolution passed at a recent meeting of the Associated Chamber of Commerce in favour of placing Lighthouses and Coast-guard Stations in electrical communication with the main telegraphic system of the country; whether in consideration of the fact that a vast amount of money value, and several hundred thousand persons passed Tory Island every year, he would endeavour to have this recommendation carried out with regard to it; and, whether the Government would take steps as soon as possible to complete a work of so important a national character?

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Sir MICHAEL HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): The question of telegraphic communication between Lighthouse, Coastguard Stations, and Lifeboat Stations round the coast is, as I stated last Session, a matter for the consideration of the Post Office and the Admiralty, subject to the Treasury, rather than for the Board of Trade. With regard to Tory Island, I would refer to the reply I gave to the hon. Baronet the Member for Hythe on the 26th June last. The Bill therein referred to has now become law as Lloyd's Signal Stations Act, 1888, and I am informed by Lloyd's that the question of connecting Tory Island under its powers is still under consideration, and that they are in negotiation with the proprietor of the Island for land for a Signal Station.

FOREIGN VESSELS AND BRITISH REGULATIONS.

MR. HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central) asked the President of the Board of Trade whether vessels flying a foreign flag, and plying from British ports are subject, as a condition precedent to obtaining letters of clearance, to such regulations as are laid down for British vessels in like manner as British vessels plying from foreign ports; and, in such case how many passengers the steam packet *Comtesse de Flandre* was authorized by the Board of Trade regulations to carry; how many she had on board at the time of her loss; how many life-belts and life-buoys she carried, and if the readily-detachable positions of these was ascertained by a Government Inspector; and when the Committee sitting under the Saving Life at Sea Act may be expected to present the rules as to life-saving gear which they recommended?

*SIR MICHAEL HICKS BEACH: Foreign vessels carrying passengers between a British and foreign port are not liable to survey by the Board of Trade. I am not aware how many passengers the *Comtesse de Flandre* had on board at the time of her loss, nor what appliances for saving life she was provided with. I am informed that the Life Saving Appliances Committee, to which the hon. Member refers, have very nearly completed their labours.

MR. HOWARD VINCENT: Do I understand that foreign vessels plying in a British port are not under the regulations of the Board of Trade?

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: The Board of Trade can only act under the law. A foreign vessel plying between a British and a foreign port is not liable to survey by the Board of Trade.

MR. HOWARD VINCENT: I beg to give notice that I shall call attention to this matter on a future occasion.

BANKRUPTCY OFFICIALS AND COUNTY COUNCILS.

MR. WOOTTON ISAACSON (Tower Hamlets, Stepney): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he is aware that Mr. Arthur Davies Berrington, the Chairman of the Monmouthshire Quarter Sessions, and Chief Inspector of Fisheries for England and Wales, has, by reason of his hold-

we would have the great satisfaction of sitting here to listen to Motions which possibly were not to be voted upon. Very likely there would simply be a conversation lasting the whole evening, with probably no satisfactory result to anyone except to some a consumption of time. Under these circumstances, I could not undertake that the Government will keep a House.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, order! This is now generating into a discussion.

MR. SEXTON: Can the right hon. Gentleman state, for the information and convenience of Irish Members, that Irish Supply will not be taken on Thursday, the 25th, the day on which the House is to re-assemble?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: Yes; I will undertake that no Irish Supply shall be taken on the day.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) PROVISIONAL ORDERS BILL.—(No. 145.)

As amended, considered; to be read the third time To-morrow.

MOTIONS.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Long, Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to the Boroughs of Accrington and Sunderland, the Local Government Districts of Altrincham, Brentford, Haworth, Heston and Isleworth, Swindon New Town, and Walton-on-the-Hill, and the Rural Sanitary Districts of the Belper, Chorley, and King's Norton Unions, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Long and Mr. Ritchie.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 191.]

METROPOLITAN BOARD OF WORKS (PENSIONS) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Pickersgill, Bill to invalidate certain grants of retiring allowances made by the Metropolitan Board of Works to its officers, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Pickersgill, Mr. Howell, Mr. Cremer, Mr. James Stuart, Mr. James Rowlands, Mr. Sydney Buxton, Mr. Causton, Mr. Octavius V. Morgan, Mr. Montagu, and Mr. Lawson.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 192.]

FRIENDLY SOCIETIES' ACT (1888) AMEND- MENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Tomlinson, Bill to amend "The Friendly Societies Act, 1888," ordered to be brought in by Mr. Tomlinson, Lord Francis Hervey, Mr. Burt, Colonel Blundell, Mr. Bradlaugh, Mr. Pickard, and Mr. Ainslie.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 193.]

Mr. W. H. Smith

ORDER OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY—CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES.

SUPPLY—considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

CLASS I.

(1.) £7,201, to complete the sum for Science and Art Department Buildings.

MR. A. H. DYKE ACLAND (Yorkshire, W.R., Rotherham): I should like to take this opportunity of asking the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works (Mr. Plunket) one or two questions concerning the Normal School, South Kensington. I desire to know what the condition of that School is at the present time, because, if we mean to have a Technical Education Bill, if we mean to turn to account the great Polytechnics which are being established in London with the assistance of the Charity Commissioners, we must provide capable teachers for the technical schools. The great centre for the training of technical school teachers is the Normal School, the condition of which I cannot help thinking is grievously unsatisfactory. Now, Sir, it is mainly a question of buildings. You have got some of the best scientific teachers—professors, whose names are well known in the world of science; you give them good apparatus—all that I fully admit; but your buildings are so choked that it is utterly impossible for the school to compare with any other great school—even with those at Manchester, at Leeds, or that supported by the Admiralty at Greenwich. If you go into the Chemical Department you will find such a crowd of students, and such an insanitary condition of things, that if it prevailed in any ordinary elementary school, Her Majesty's Inspector would at once reduce the number of passes on the ground that there was not a sufficient number of cubic feet of air for each student or child. I suppose the right hon. Gentleman is willing to admit that the industrial and commercial welfare of this country is considerably bound up with the important question of technical education. But, Sir, I would willingly see the Science and Art grants reduced, if the amount of the reduction could be devoted

to the improvement of our Normal School. I will make this suggestion even. I think there is a sum of £1,000 a year spent on a short summer course of lectures, lasting three or four weeks. I doubt whether that money is productive of very much benefit, and I think it might be laid out to greater advantage if the building were improved, say, at the outlay of the capital sum represented by an annual income of £1,000. When professors from other countries visit our Normal School at South Kensington, they are amazed that England in its great central school of teaching provides such an inadequate building. In 1852, in the Queen's Speech, it was said that we were to have the highest type of instruction and the most perfect training. I believe it was intended that that should be so, but the building is now not nearly large enough for all the subjects which are taught in it. Originally, I think it was intended to be devoted to one subject; but now we have taught in it physics, chemistry, mineralogy and astronomy, and, in fact, all scientific subjects. A little laboratory has been built on the other side, in which the Professor of Physics can teach the elementary students, and in regard to that, I may say that it is at one and the same time the cheapest, most simple, and ugliest of structures. It might have been wiser, perhaps, to have spent money on a more permanent structure, and, at any rate, it must be admitted that the school cannot long be carried on in its present building. We have there the very best material for teachers; a professor informed me that there was a better class of students than could be found either at Owen's College, Manchester, or at the Victoria College at Leeds. Then you ought to give them good opportunities for pursuing their studies. At present it is impossible to carry out some of the higher physical experiments, and you do not encourage these students to follow up the more advanced researches in their fourth year, simply because there is no room for the purpose. I venture to say this is a penny wise and pound foolish policy. If we are going to provide technical instruction throughout the country, as we have been told twice in the Queen's Speech it is intended to do, we must not neglect the provision of teachers and of giving professors,

who are eminently capable men, every opportunity of doing justice to the young people who go to them for instruction. I know well enough that the Secretary to the Treasury will give us very little hope. I suppose he thinks the chief object and aim of man is to ask for nothing from the Treasury, but I have some hope that the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works will afford us some assistance—that he will bring to bear his unbiassed judgment upon educational matters, and will help us to make this Normal School even more successful than it has been in the past. I think there is some reasonable ground for asking for an improvement in the building in which the school is carried on, because it will relieve the professors, who cannot now do their duty towards the students and towards the country.

*SIR HENRY ROSCOE (Manchester, S.): I wish to be allowed to add my confirmation to the remarks of the hon. Member who has just spoken. He has not said a word too much as regards the condition of the Normal School, and as regards the accommodation in that school compared to that which I know exists in schools of a similar character on the Continent. It is really a disgrace that we in England should have to put up with this condition of the Normal School. I know every corner of the place; I know in every department the students are crowded, and, indeed, the Professor of Chemistry told me he was almost ashamed to take high fees from the students when he could only afford them such poor facilities as regards accommodation as exist in the school. I trust the right hon. Gentleman will take this matter into his gravest consideration. Before long I hope we shall have a Technical Education Bill brought before the House, but of what use will it be unless we can obtain competent teachers? We cannot get such teachers unless we have proper facilities for training them. It must be remembered that in other countries, in almost every centre of population, Normal Science Schools exist, yet this is the only Government school of the kind in this country. It was built for one purpose, and it has been converted for uses for which it was not in the least fitted, and I do feel that the honour of the country is at

stake, and that we ought to put up with this state of things no longer. There is plenty of space for a proper building on the west side of Exhibition Road. As the right hon. Gentleman well knows, a portion of the land has already been offered to the Government; the site is an admirable one, and a really efficient School of Science might, at no very great expense, be erected. A large number of inquiries have been made into this subject by Committees of this House, and all have agreed that something should be done. May we not hope, Sir, that the Government will really attend to this matter, and say, whether, or not, they cannot put the Normal School in a satisfactory position? I do not think I can altogether support the views of my hon Friend the Member for Rotherham with regard to the summer classes. I believe they are of very great value, inasmuch as they are available for teachers who cannot come up at any other time, and who devote their holidays to attending this course of lectures. I do not think it would be a wise thing, in any shape or way, to reduce this most important work of the Normal School; but I believe if money were expended in erecting a suitable building, it would be well laid out, and would produce the best possible return. I trust the right hon. Gentleman will pay attention to this subject, and will impress upon the Government the great value which scientific men throughout the country attach to this matter.

*MR. BARTLEY (Islington, N.): I should like, Sir, to support the remarks of the hon. Members who have just spoken. I think it is a very discreditable thing that the buildings in South Kensington are not being completed with greater rapidity. When we consider that the Estimates for this year contain but a sum of £400 for work, alterations, and additions, it does seem to me a most unsatisfactory state of affairs that year after year these buildings should be left in the state in which they are. Now, Sir, it is part of a very much larger question than the mere Normal School; and in regard to that School, I must say I am very glad to have seen what a success it has proved. I think it is time this matter was taken in hand, and that the School was placed in a proper building. I think if it were

taken up by the present Government it would be a step in the right direction. There are many means by which the necessary money could be obtained. I cannot agree with the hon. Gentleman who suggests that the summer course of lectures should be discontinued in order to supply the funds. I agree with Sir Henry Roscoe, that they are a most important branch of the work which is being performed, but if we cannot have an additional grant, I would suggest that we might for a time stop the purchase of specimens and provide money in that way. There is one question referred to by the hon. Gentleman who has just spoken, and that is the subject of fees in the Normal School. I venture to say that those fees are rather too high, and the subject ought to be very carefully looked into, for you must consider that we are supposed to be training men who shall teach in our various schools, and fixing the fees so high really precludes many from attending at all. Finally, I would urge most emphatically on the Government that they should boldly grapple with the whole subject, and not be afraid of spending a sum of, say, £200,000, which might be necessary to complete the magnificent building which we have at South Kensington.

MR. MUNRO FERGUSON (Leith): Without going into the technical details of the question, I should like to support my hon. Friend the Member for Rotherham, in the description which he has given of these buildings at South Kensington. It must be quite evident that the accommodation there is wholly insufficient for the number of students; and, having regard to the increased demand for scientific education likely to be made upon the teaching staffs in the future, I think there should be no hindrances in the way of providing as much accommodation as possible. I do not agree at all with my hon. Friend, however, in his suggestion that any reduction should be made in the expenditure. I believe we ought to make up our minds to spend a good deal more upon institutions of this character. I do not see why, in this country, we should not have establishments equal to those at Berlin and Zurich; and I sincerely trust that this school will be taken in hand and finished upon some regular plan, and that we

shall have an institution worthy the capital of this country.

*THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (Mr. PLUNKET, Dublin University): I do not think this is the occasion to raise any debate on the general policy of the Education Department in reference to the South Kensington Institutions. I remember that last year the debate on this Vote had special reference to the physical laboratory, and, as a result, the Government took energetic action, and even presented a Supplementary Estimate on their own responsibility. It is admitted that the result of their efforts has been satisfactory to those who are interested in that matter; yet now it is attempted to make out a strong case against the Government for inactivity.

MR. ACLAND: I did not intend to say that nothing had been done. My complaint was that the physical arrangements had completely broken down.

*MR. PLUNKET: My humble duty is to provide what is ordered by the Government, and the hon. Member has no right to lay against me his complaints upon the general policy with regard to the increase of accommodation. He has asked if I myself have inspected the buildings. Of course I have. I have visited them several times; and I may mention also that the First Lord of the Treasury, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Vice President of the Council, and others, made since these questions were discussed last year a most careful visit to every part of the building. One of the conclusions arrived at was that, before additional buildings were erected, it would be a good thing to get rid of a good deal of the material filling up the Galleries existing at the present time. Directly that suggestion was made we were, of course, met with protests from the authorities at South Kensington, but eventually a Committee was appointed to examine and report on what may be done in this direction. Before the buildings can be enlarged we ought to await the Report of that Committee. I can only add that as soon as the Education Department can persuade the Treasury that fresh buildings are necessary I shall be only too glad to give every facility in my power. But it must be borne in mind that the noble Lord the Member for South Paddington was already protested

against the large sums which have been expended at South Kensington, and the Government has to stand between financial reforms on the one side and enthusiastic advocates for the development of South Kensington on the other. They are, therefore, bound to go carefully to work. They will, however, give careful and respectful consideration to any suggestions which may emanate from hon. Members on both sides.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE (Bradford, Central): I think the Government has adopted a wise course in appointing a Committee to investigate the condition of the Galleries on the western side of Exhibition Road, for I have always been of opinion that they are crowded with many objects of no very great utility. I should however, be glad to hear of whom the Committee is composed. With regard to the buildings on the other side of Exhibition Road, most people would be very glad to see them completed in a style worthy of the nation, because they contain collections of the greatest value and beauty, and it is discreditable to the country that they should be left in the condition in which they are. But some general plan should be decided on before the Government are asked to spend a large sum of money upon them.

MR. BARTLEY (Islington, N.): Are the Committee to have power to weed out both the Science and Art collections? Of whom is the Committee composed?

*MR. PLUNKET: Mr. —, Lord F. Hervey, Lord Rayleigh, Sir Bernhard Samuelson, Sir Douglas Crawford, and Sir Henry Roscoe.

MR. G. A. CAVENDISH BENTINCK (Whitehaven): The right hon. Gentleman has not informed us if the Committee will have control over the artistic collections.

SIR HENRY ROSCOE: Perhaps I may say the Committee is appointed to deal with the Science collections alone, not with the Art collection.

MR. CONWAY (Leitrim, N.): It is satisfactory to know that the Government are taking steps to investigate the state of affairs at South Kensington, and that hon. Members on both sides of the House are taking lively interest in the technical education of the country. But that is not all that is wanted. We know that all work and no play is just

as bad for the students as all play and no work, and I think we are bound to see that they are provided with suitable amusement. Now there are some good lawn tennis grounds. The inclosures are reserved for the permanent officials of the Department. I think it would be well if the Government, through the First Commissioner of Works, would at intervals give an opportunity to the students in South Kensington to avail themselves of these areas.

MR. KENRICK (Birmingham, N.): There is no doubt that the buildings on the east side of Exhibition Road are insufficient for the work done by the Department. The building from which is sent out all the objects lent to the local museums is a most miserable place, indeed, it is hardly weather proof. No merchant dealing in the most common objects would have such a miserable place from which to dispatch his goods. Again, at one time there was a Gallery specially assigned to the Exhibition of Works executed by Art students in what is called the National Competition. The object of the Exhibition is, of course, educational. Teachers in the Art Schools all over the country visit the Exhibition for the purpose of ascertaining the position other schools take in the National Competition, and to learn what the shortcomings of their own schools are. Now-a-days the Exhibition, instead of being in one room, so that the work of the various schools can be easily compared, is scattered about the ordinary museum. It is very difficult indeed for any visitor to form a general idea of what is sent up from the country. This is one of the points it is very desirable the Department should attend to. I very much regret there is no Representative of Art on the Committee which has been appointed, because Art is quite as important as Science.

MR. CONWAY: I beg to ask for an answer as to the use of the lawn tennis courts by the students?

*MR. PLUNKET: I will consult the Vice President of the Council on the matter, which does not come within my Department.

*MR. F. S. POWELL (Wigan): I sincerely hope the Government will not much longer delay the commencement of the work necessary to finish the buildings on the east side of the road. The incomplete state of those buildings is

no credit to the Administration of the country.

DR. TANNER (Cork, Mid): I think my hon. Friend (Mr. Conway) is entitled to an answer upon the point he has raised. I know the Vice President of the Council was in the Lobby half a minute ago. Surely he can be consulted at once?

*MR. PLUNKET: It is not a matter over which I have any control whatever, but I will make a representation on the subject to my right hon. Friend the Vice President.

MR. M. KENNY (Tyrone, Mid): I see the Vice President sitting behind the Treasury Bench. If he would come forward and explain the matter, he would, no doubt, considerably facilitate business.

*THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (Sir W. HART DYKE, Kent, Dartford): I was serving upon a Committee upstairs, and left the Committee Room to answer three or four questions in the House. Having done that I returned to the Committee, and now I have had to leave again. I really have not the faintest idea of what has taken place in the House.

MR. CONWAY repeated his observations, whereupon

*SIR W. HART DYKE said: I will make a thorough inquiry. Perhaps the most practical way of raising the question will be upon the South Kensington Vote. Between now and then I will make inquiries, and be prepared to make a statement to the House on the point.

Vote agreed to.

(2.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £8,847, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1890, for the Maintenance and Repair of the British Museum and Natural History Museum Buildings, for Rents of Premises, Supply of Water, Fuel, &c., and other Charges attendant thereon."

*MR. CREMER (Shoreditch, Haggerston): The Leader of the House just now appealed to hon. Members to facilitate the progress of business by passing the Estimates as speedily as possible. Under ordinary circumstances I should be quite willing to accede to the request of the right hon. Gentle-

man, but I think the nation ought to be congratulated on the manner in which the Estimates are now being discussed, and on the very different state of things obtaining now to that which formerly obtained, when millions of money were voted by a handful of Members without any, or at least adequate, discussion. I think it is well for the country that there are a body of Members determined to deal with the Estimates as they ought to be dealt with. I beg to move the reduction of this Vote by £500. Under ordinary circumstances I should be exceedingly sorry to see the amount this House votes for the purposes of instruction reduced by one farthing. I am anxious to increase the amount we vote for the instructive and constructive forces, and to diminish the sum which we vote for the destructive forces. By the present reduction I desire to protest, as I have done for the last three or four years, against the system of sweating which obtains in our Government institutions. I complained last week of the system of contracting for human labour which is in force in this building. The same system obtains in the British Museum and in the Admiralty Department, and I said last week I should feel it to be my duty to continue to move reductions upon these Votes until our natural and just request is acceded to. I find I made a mistake last week. I was too generous towards the Government contractor. I said that the contractors supplied certain plant and tools, and that in consideration of this they were allowed to make certain deductions of from 16 to 20 per cent from the wages of the *employés*. I find, however, that the plant and tools are supplied by the Office of Works, and therefore there is not the slightest justification in the world for the continuance of this system of sweating, and I shall be exceedingly glad to know from the right hon. Gentleman the grounds upon which these contractors are allowed to make these deductions from the wages of their *employés*. Now, in addition to cleaners, dusters, gardeners and others who perform menial work at the British Museum, and who are employed through contractors. These are also the men employed in the catalogue department, and these men too are subjected to the sweating system. Messrs.

Spottiswoode have for years been permitted to supply a number of workmen and boys in the catalogue department of the British Museum.

THE CHAIRMAN: That is not relevant to this Vote.

*MR. CREMER: Then I shall be under the painful necessity of moving another reduction later on. I simply referred to the state of things in the catalogue in passing, to show that Messrs. Brass are not the only contractors at the British Museum who make large deductions from the wages of the men they employ. I have to complain that since I have brought this question forward two or three years ago, the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works has entered into another contract. I believe it has been made for three years with Messrs. Brass. Therefore, I cannot content myself with indefinite promises on the part of the right hon. Gentleman that he will consider the grievances of these workmen. I want a distinct assurance from the right hon. Gentleman that when the present contract ceases, he personally will enter into no further contract, either with Messrs. Brass or anyone else. Of course, he cannot pledge his successors, but if he will give a distinct pledge that the system of which I complain and the grievance under which these men labour shall be ended so far as he is concerned, I shall be perfectly satisfied, and will not press my Amendment to a Division.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item B of £3,300, for the Maintenance and Repairs, be reduced by £500."—(Mr. Cremer.)

*MR. PLUNKET: The hon. Member has, in his opening remarks, said that the nation is to be congratulated in the way in which a handful of Members are determined to thresh out the Estimates item by item. Possibly that may be the hon. Member's view, but I hold a different opinion. I think the public are turning away with weariness and disgust from the proceedings of this House—"Withdraw"—because of the way in which comparatively unimportant matters are discussed at great length, and the public time is deliberately wasted. I am not speaking of the action of the hon. Member on this special occasion; but I refer to the con-

duct of a handful of Members who, as they openly tell us, are determined to thresh out the Estimates item by item. And now I wish to deal with the particular point the hon. Gentleman has raised, and which he has stated with fairness. Let me, in the first place, remind the Committee what happened on the last occasion, when I think the subject was brought forward by the hon. Member for Northampton. The hon. Member suggested that I should make some endeavour to rectify the grievance complained of in regard to labourers and others employed within this House; and he pointed out that here we had special opportunities for rectifying the grievance, because we had a staff of officers by whose assistance it would be more easy than it would be in other places to carry out some change. I promised the hon. Member for Northampton that, so far as this particular set of *employés* was concerned, I would do my best to find out some way of escaping from the apparent anomaly which existed here. But that is a comparatively small question to the one the hon. Member for Haggerston has now raised. What does the hon. Member expect me to do? The contract with Messrs. Brass for general maintenance and repairs must run for two years. Even supposing I admitted to the full—which I do not—all the statements of the hon. Member, I have no power to interfere. There is no use in giving a vague promise that I will enter into no such contract in future. What I have undertaken to do—and it is the utmost any Minister can be expected to do—is that when this contract terminates the whole question of such employment by the Government shall be as carefully as possible considered with a view to giving, as far as we can, effect to the very natural feeling which has been expressed—namely, that no advantage should be taken of Government contracts to the injury of those who may be employed under the contracts. This is a very difficult matter to deal with. I have always understood that the system of contract by open competition was admitted almost universally a true, sound system upon which this kind of Government business should be transacted; and it is impossible for me to say it shall be changed until the question has been gone into carefully, as I promise it shall be. I trust that, under the circumstances,

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the hon. Member will not think it necessary to go to a Division.

MR. A. WILLIAMS (Glamorgan, S.): I think the right hon. Gentleman has rather confused the matter. We are not now dealing with large works of construction, but with what may be called the domestic part of our Administration, with the daily work of the ordinary labourer employed by the State. As I understand my hon. Friend, he desires that the *employés* in Government institutions should be paid first hand, just as we in our own farms or places of business pay the people we employ. When we are charged with wasting public time because we inquire into these apparently minor matters, I have to answer the right hon. Gentleman that I have looked to the record for a year or two, and I find that time after time objections have been made and met in the same way as they have today. I declare when I find this so often repeated I feel tempted to interfere a good deal more in the future in these matters. I have looked at the report of the proceedings last year, and I find the same objections met with the same dilatory answer, that the matter should be looked into. Now, if the question is a difficult one, that is no reason why it should not be grappled with; it will not become easier by being put off. Are we to have a categorical answer "yea" or "nay" to the question we put? Unless we have a decided promise that every contract when it ends shall not be renewed by the right hon. Gentleman—if he is in office then, as I hope he may not be—then I hope my hon. Friend will divide the House on this question.

*MR. CUNINGHAME GRAHAM (Lanark, N.W.): I do not wish to trespass on the time of the Committee; but I am rather at a loss to understand whether a private Member is at liberty to moot such questions as this, if, in Committee of Supply, he is to be accused of wasting time when he does so. The First Lord of the Treasury seemed to indicate, a short time ago, that Members who put down Motions dealing with matters of this kind were simply doing so with a desire to obstruct public business, in order to prevent the Government getting Supply; and now, after a very indefinite promise, it is expected that this matter shall not be pursued. Now, I should like to

know what all this investigation into the system of sweating by the Committee of the other House is to result in? We do not spend so much money and occupy so much of the valuable time of noble Lords simply in order to publish a Report; and I fail to see how a system we all condemn when exercised by private firms should be condoned when exercised by ourselves in our collective capacity. It is about time, I think, that we set an example in our State Departments. If we are not going to set the example ourselves, we have no right to point the finger of scorn at firms who are called "sweaters" upon evidence that comes out before the Committee sitting in "another place." What are we to understand in this matter? Are we always to be behind every other corporate body that exists in the Kingdom upon this matter. The County Council and the School Board of London were no sooner elected than they endeavoured to grapple with the matter, although they have not the authority we have. They have passed resolutions dealing with kindred matters to this. Are we, the House of Commons, ever to be

"Letting I dare not wait upon I would,
Like the poor cat i' the adage."

I am exceedingly glad that the hon. Member, representing a working-class constituency, has seen fit to move in this matter, and he has my hearty support in what he has said. I venture to hope that all future contracts will be most severely overhauled, and, if possible, not only the hours of labour will be carefully limited by the Government, and the conditions made such as will not only satisfy capitalists and the State, but that the conditions as affecting the men who do the work will be considered.

*MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton): I should not have risen, but that I do not think the remarks of the right hon. Gentleman should be allowed to pass unnoticed. The right hon. Gentleman's objection—and there is something in the objection—is that these discussions, taking item after item, will make the work of the Committee impossible in the House of Commons. Yes, but if that be so, what is our discussion of Supply to be? I agree that with the huge number of Votes to be disposed of, that if this

kind of attention is given to each vote it will render it impossible to take the whole number of Votes through Committee within the allotted Parliamentary time, but is there to be no discussion at all? Is it because the work will become impossible there shall be no such critical examination of expenditure? Does not the answer of the First Commissioner amount to this, that an investigation should be conducted by a number of small Committees dealing with these votes before they are submitted to the Committee of the House? Would not that avoid waste of the time of the House on each individual item? The Government have the means of setting up such machinery. We have not had the same amount of investigation as took place last year. Several Committees sat last year, and we were much indebted to their labours though, the Committees were, I think, too large, and necessarily occupied too much time to be useful in settling the current Estimates for the year. A number of smaller Committees dealing with these Votes would do the work much better, and there would then be no complaint of undue encroachment on the time by elaborate discussion in Committee of the House. I can understand the feelings of the right hon. Gentleman waiting here hour after hour, for the passing of Votes to which he does not attribute so much importance as some hon. Members do, but I do not think his language is justified, though I feel the difficulty of his position. Much of the old passing of Estimates in this House was in the nature of a farce; and I do not even now believe it is in our power to reduce a Vote. Our discussions are solely useful as illustrating some grievance, either against individuals or a system which we have no means of raising otherwise. I trust the right hon. Gentleman, in consideration for such Members as myself, will reconsider his censure, for I may truly plead that at no time, and under no circumstances, have I ever tried to waste the time of the House, or the Committee, but I conceive that I have a duty not to allow this to pass without challenge. I trust that the right hon. Gentleman may see fit to modify his phrase about weariness and disgust.

*MR. PLUNKET: I rise without a moment's hesitation to assure the hon.

Member that I had no notion of referring to him, and that I think, of all Members sitting opposite, he is perhaps least open to any such charge. What I said was simply in answer to what appears to me the most misleading general statement of the hon. Member for Haggerston (Mr. Cremer), and I did not refer to the course taken in this instance. I expressly said on a previous occasion that this whole question should be considered, but that it was impossible for me to rescind or largely to modify these contracts. While I repeat my statement on the general question of obstruction, I wish to make it perfectly clear. I do not, for a moment, question the right of the Committee to discuss any item with the *bonâ fide* intention of bringing into prominence some particular view. What I deprecated was a system that would make it impossible to get through the Estimates properly at all. As to the suggestion that some classes of the Estimates should be considered in a preliminary way by small Committees, there is, in my opinion, much to be said in favour of that. Once again let me say that I had not the slightest intention of making any reference to the hon. Member for Northampton, who has just spoken; what I said was on account of the general statement of the hon. Member for Haggerston.

MR. J. ROWLANDS (Finsbury, E.): I am glad the right hon. Gentleman has somewhat amended the statement in his first speech. We can only use the machinery at our disposal for criticizing the rules submitted to us. We are not responsible for that machinery. If it is cumbersome, then no Government could be better employed than in its improvement, and in providing some method for facilitating this examination of Estimates, and forwarding the business of the House. The right hon. Gentleman does not seem to have clearly grasped the position taken up by my hon. Friend; he seems to confuse the question of contracts such as these with contracts in which the contractor has to supply technical knowledge and skilled labour, a large staff and plant. These contracts we are discussing are merely contracts for the employment of unskilled labour, that might easily be directed by officers of the Department. What would be thought of a proposal

to carry out this system to the extent of providing a librarian or attendant in the Library of the British Museum? Offer such employment to contract and the thing becomes ridiculous at once. But, except in degree of employment, the relations are the same between such *employés* and the Department and others employed about the building. Our objection is clearly defined. We object to this letting out of labour to contract when there is no work for the contractor to do, no supervision, no expenditure upon plant, no capital, and when no knowledge or skill whatever is brought to bear. Surely there is a clear distinction between giving out contracts such as these and giving out contracts for work such as erecting a building or building a ship. All we want is a clear statement that the Government have arrived at an opinion that this system of contract for human labour is wrong. We have made up our minds, and intend to force home our opinion, for we know the importance of this matter to those employed under the system. No contradiction has been given to my statement last week that 4s. 6d. a week is in some instances deducted from a man's wages. Can hon. Members imagine what this means? Some of us have had to work for a weekly wage, and know what a serious inroad on much larger earnings than these men get such a deduction is. We have called attention to the evils of the system; we tell you from practical experience that direct employment can be given, that the effect of these contracts is serious deductions from the men's wages, and we ask that the Treasury shall declare that the system shall not go on when present contracts have ceased.

*MR. H. H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.): I quite agree with the hon. Member who has just spoken that we can only make the best use of the machinery at our disposal, but I also think that we are responsible for the mode in which we use it for making it effective in a practical business-like manner. The hon. Member has clearly drawn the distinction between the two classes of contracts which I think the First Commissioner will appreciate. These contracts simply mean that the officers of the Board of Works are saved from the trouble of employing this unskilled labour, but at the expense of the

wages of the men who do the work. The right hon. Gentleman says that the point was not brought to his attention last year, but he is aware that a Committee of the Lords has been sitting for the last twelve months, and public attention has been drawn to the evils of what is called the sweating system in a manner it has never been called before. I think the time has come when the House of Commons should make its voice effectively heard on the subject. I am happy to say that the Committee engaged on the work of building the Imperial Institute have passed a resolution declaring that in no part of the building shall the "sweating" system be allowed. I see the difficulty of the First Commissioner; there are existing contracts that must be allowed to run out. Now, as I understand, a week ago he invited an expression of opinion from the Committee whether these contracts should be renewed on their present basis. Well, owing to the unfortunate mode in which our decisions are taken—Gentlemen crowding in to take part in a Division and knowing nothing of the conditions of the question—many Members voted entirely against their own convictions and desires. They thought it was an ordinary Motion to reduce the Government Vote, and they voted in support of the Government. I will venture to say that had it been really understood that it was not a question of a substantial reduction of a Vote, but the expression of an opinion that the Government had asked for, and which the House was prepared to give, disapproving of the "sweating" system and declaring that as soon as it could reasonably be done an end should be put to it in relation to the work in Government Departments, then I think the numbers in the Division would have been very different. But let me point out to the hon. Members who are moving in this matter that I do not think any particular good will result from taking a Division on this Vote. We have made our protest, and ask that the First Commissioner should pledge himself that he will not renew these contracts without the distinct approval of the House of Commons? Having that I think we may be satisfied. It will solve the difficulty, and prevent the question arising on subsequent Votes, if the right hon. Gen-

tleman will promise that a Select Committee shall be appointed to consider the whole question of these contracts before they are renewed. A fairly representative Committee will come to a far better conclusion than the officials of the Board of Works. My sympathies are strongly with the hon. Member for Haggerston. The sweating system is one of the greatest evils of the day, and we should condemn it in whatever shape or form we find it. I invite the right hon. Gentleman to terminate this controversy by promising the Select Committee to which I have referred.

*MR. PLUNKET: I should like to remove one misapprehension under which the right hon. Gentleman labours. What I said the other day was that I invited an expression of opinion as regards the persons employed about the Houses of Parliament, for I felt that if this House thought these persons should be employed directly by the Government, and not through a contractor, that was a question on which their views ought to have exceptional weight. But as to the general question of these contracts for maintenance and repair of all Government buildings, that is not so easy a problem to solve as some hon. Members seem to suppose. It has always until now been thought that it is the best and most economical arrangement to invite contractors by open competition to undertake work, and pains are taken to secure that the contractor employed should be respectable and solvent, and then we hold him responsible for the work. Another reason why the Government has been obliged, in dealing with those public buildings in London, to employ a contractor is that there sometimes occur sudden exigencies which require the putting on of a number of hands and engaging an amount of labour which my Department has no machinery for calling together for a short job which must be done at once, except at a grievous expense to the country.

*MR. CREMER: The workmen whose case I represented are not casual hands, but have been engaged, many of them, from five to 20 years.

*MR. PLUNKET: I am replying on the general question raised by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler), who asked if I was prepared to state that the principle of carrying out these opera-

tions by contract should be abandoned, and I was stating some of the difficulties in the way. Again, we must realize this that—as soon as the Government become the direct employers of this labour, pressure will be put upon them at every point in dealing with the men. You cannot dismiss a man or engage another man in place of one who falls sick without pressure being brought to bear by Members of Parliament or through them on the Government to do this or that. I do not mean to say that such representations made might not in some cases be fair and just; but I do mean to say that the pressure which might be brought to bear by Members in many instances might not be beneficial, and not in favour of economical expenditure. Other difficulties would arise with which I will not now delay the Committee. I have, however, undertaken that the whole matter shall be fully and fairly reviewed, and that when the contract expires it shall not be renewed without the Government being prepared to justify the grounds on which they act. Every word used in this debate shall be carefully weighed and considered. I cannot pledge myself that no new contract shall be entered into; but the whole nature of the service, and the engagement of labourers to carry out the work, shall be carefully and fully gone into again. I can give no pledge until there has been this examination, for I do not know how the difficulties of the case can be met; but I think the pledge I have given should satisfy hon. Members.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar): I am sorry the right hon. Gentleman is not able to meet us half way. I think my hon. Friend would be willing to accept the suggestion of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton; and if the Government would promise that before the contract comes to an end an impartial Select Committee shall be appointed to inquire into the whole question, the difficulty would be met and both sides of the House will be satisfied. There are difficulties in the way of working without these contracts; that is admitted; if there were not, there would be no need for this discussion. What we ask for is something more than a mere official promise upon which absolute reliance cannot always be placed,

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though I quite acknowledge that the right hon. Gentleman and the Secretary to the Treasury have every desire to carry out what they undertake. The appointment of a Select Committee would be satisfactory, I think, on both sides, and our unanimous decision would be an earnest of the intention of the House of Commons to tolerate no introduction of the sweating system into Government work.

*THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (MR. JACKSON, Leeds, N.): I should like to satisfy hon. Members that the promises of my right hon. Friend are not what are called the mere usual official promises. The question is one which contains a good many difficulties, and since it was raised a week ago it has been the subject of very grave consideration by the First Commissioner of Works and by the Leader of the House and his colleagues. I think everyone must admit it is extremely desirable to avoid defining those particular cases to which the hon. Member for Haggerston refers. If the men have been employed continuously for twenty years—

*MR. CRÉMER: I did not say all—I said many.

*MR. JACKSON: Those cases, I should think, it would be perfectly simple and easy to meet. I have given some personal consideration to this question, and have had some experience in dealing with questions of organization and with working men. The position in which we find ourselves appears to me to be one which has been forced upon us by the action of Members of this House—I do not say whether wisely or unwisely—and by the very strong desire which has been expressed in recent years that everything should be done as cheaply as possible, and, as far as possible, under the severest light of open and public competition. I do not know whether the hon. Member for Haggerston (Mr. Crémer) has seen the schedule of prices framed by my right hon. Friend the First Commissioner of Works (Mr. Plunket). That schedule contains a list of every article that can possibly be required by the Department as the result of the experience of a great many years; and the Office of Works, by means of its expert officers, has attached to the schedule the prices which are believed to be the market prices. Included in the schedule are

the prices of labour for different classes of work. It seems to be almost impossible, without committing the grossest extravagance, to avoid calling in outside labour to do particular kinds of work, but I think the whole tendency is in favour of all work for which a separate tender can be obtained being put up to public competition. All extra labour which is of a kind that requires constant employment may, of course, be met by adding to the staff of the Office of Works, and probably the class of men to whom the hon. Member has referred would come within that category; but when the Office of Works is called upon in an emergency, or requires for a short time a number of men belonging to a particular trade, it would be the grossest extravagance to keep them upon its staff after they have done the work required of them. I think a solution of the difficulty will probably be found in adding to the permanent staff what I will call the minimum number of men who are required to discharge certain duties, calling in from the outside, on reasonable terms, such as may be necessary to meet exceptional demands. What, however, I really rose to say was, that the hon. Member may be assured that my right hon. Friend (Mr. Plunket) in giving the assurance which the House has heard, has not done so lightly. The matter has been under the consideration of the Ministers of the Crown, and I think the Committee will admit that whilst it may relieve the Government of a great many difficulties, it is the duty of my right hon. Friend and his Department in the first instance to consider whether they can find a satisfactory solution.

*MR. CREMER (Shoreditch, Haggerston): I am sorry that the suggestion made by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler) has not been acceded to by the Government. I have not yet exhausted the information which has been supplied to me, nor have I made out as bad a case as I could have presented. I could prove to the Committee that 25 per cent has been deducted from the wages of workmen, and 50 per cent from those of boys. I did not myself suggest the appointment of a Committee, because a great deal of the information that has been supplied to me has been supplied by the men themselves, who have a

great fear that their names may be divulged. They have, in fact, told me they have been threatened that if they make any statement they will be discharged from their employment; and they, therefore, approach the consideration of the subject with fear and trembling. The evils I complain of are, however, so general—extending to the Admiralty and the British Museum, and, I fear, to other Government Departments—that I shall be quite willing to accept an offer on the part of the Government to inquire into them, and I hope that these poor men will run no risks in the future by stating their case. The necessity for some inquiry will be apparent to anyone who has heard the conflicting statements made by the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Plunket). It seems to me that the right hon. Gentleman does not understand the difference between ordinary and extraordinary contracts. We do not object to the ordinary, but only to the extraordinary contracts. The right hon. Gentleman says the question is surrounded with a great deal of difficulty. It seems to me, however, that he is not quite the proper authority to express an opinion upon that point, or to get rid of the evils to which reference has been made. A Committee of Inquiry might possibly help the right hon. Gentleman to a solution of the problem, and to remove from his mind the prejudice which, I fear, still lingers there, and which renders a solution in the interests of the men almost impossible. If the right hon. Gentleman will state that between now and the time when the Admiralty Vote comes on the Government will seriously consider the advisability of assenting to the suggestion made by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler), I shall not, on the present occasion, press my Amendment to a Division. I have endeavoured to meet the right hon. Gentleman in an impartial spirit, and I hope he will meet us in the same manner.

*MR. PLUNKET: I think the hon. Member will see that I could not give the undertaking which he asks for without consulting my right hon. Friend the Leader of the House (Mr. W. H. Smith) and the Members of the Government. I can assure the hon. Member that it will be a great relief to me personally

to have the responsibility of settling this question taken off my shoulders. I can, however, under present circumstances, only say that I will submit his suggestion to my colleagues. If they should come to a conclusion unfavourable to his contention, it will, of course, be in his power to raise the question again on a future occasion.

*MR. CREMER: Under the circumstances, I shall, with the permission of the Committee, withdraw my Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Original Question again proposed.

MR. H. GARDNER (Essex, Saffron Walden): I wish to ask the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works (Mr. Plunket) whether any decision has been come to with regard to extending the electric lighting in the British Museum, and also with regard to opening the Museum at night?

*MR. JACKSON: It has been decided to extend the electric lighting in the British Museum, and to make the experiment of leaving the Museum open at night.

SIR G. CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.): I understood that a promise was made that the first experiment in opening after nightfall was to be in the Natural History Museum.

*MR. JACKSON: No; it was not.

SIR G. CAMPBELL: Well, words were used which almost amounted to a promise. Before I sit down, I want to make one protest against the philippic with which the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Plunket) commenced the discussion in reference to the alleged obstruction of the proceedings of the House. It seems to me that the occasion chosen by the right hon. Gentleman for making that speech was singularly inappropriate. Yesterday, hon. Members, in their generosity, assisted the Government to the point of dereliction of duty, and allowed a large number of Votes to pass without one word, in order to facilitate the progress of the business of the House.

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne): This is not the first time that the right hon. Gentleman has chosen to deliver a philippic against us on the score of obstruction. We protest against such insinuations. I was last night only absent from the House for a short time, and I was perfectly alarmed when

I came back and found how much progress had been made. It may be very pleasant for the Government to rush through the Estimates, but it is not the business of hon. Members to allow Vote after Vote to be obtained without consideration.

MR. PHILIPPS (Lanark, Mid): I wish to know whether the Item for Official Residences in this Vote is a very heavy one?

*MR. PLUNKET: There is no exceptional change this year in connection with the Official Residences.

*MR. CREMER: I wish to ask the right hon. Gentleman a question with reference to the supply of furniture and articles of a domestic character. I want to know who supplies the furniture? Last year there was some suspicion that the furniture was supplied by some particular firm who was favoured with the orders of the Government, and a pledge was given that in future the various furniture contractors should be invited to supply it by tender. I should like to know whether that promise has been fulfilled, and whether the same principle applies to all other Government Departments?

*MR. PLUNKET: I promised last year that I would make out a list of firms who might tender. I had such a list made, but I have never been asked to produce it to the House.

MR. HANBURY (Preston): The point is this. Is the supply of furniture open to competition or not? An hon. Member who is connected with a very large firm has told me that that firm was never allowed to be put on the list, and it seems to me that the list is founded too much on favouritism.

*MR. PLUNKET: We are only too glad to have the competition of all the good firms. I can now, if it is desired, give the names of the firms that have been invited to tender, and I shall be glad to add the names of any other firms that the hon. Member may suggest.

*MR. CREMER: I hear with some amazement that the system, though an improvement on the old one, is still that of a close corporation, and that the firms placed on the list are selected. All the firms should in my opinion be invited to tender.

MR. CONYBEARE: Does the right hon. Gentleman refuse to state that he will consider the possibility of advertising

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in the ordinary manner, so that all the firms may tender? If so, will he give us any satisfactory reason why he considers that cannot be done?

*MR. PLUNKET: Any firm of any strength or solvency that applies to us shall be added to the list; but I do no care about throwing the matter open to public competition, because we then might have tenders from insolvent firms.

Question put, and agreed to.

(3.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £23,702, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1890, for Diplomatic and Consular Buildings, including Rents and Furniture, and for the maintenance of certain Cemeteries Abroad."

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): I think we are entitled to complain of the large sum, £4,200, required for the Embassy House at Paris, and it is a question whether we are wise in buying such buildings. I think we ought to make proper allowances to our Ministers abroad, and leave them to take what houses they like and furnish them for themselves. I have no complaint to make of Lord Lytton personally, but I find that whenever a new Ambassador is appointed he is not content with the Embassy House as he finds it, but requires structural improvements which are very costly. In this case there are three items—£2,300 for structural repairs; £500 for ordinary maintenance and repairs; and £1,400 for renewal of decorations and furniture. I do not know whether the Committee is aware that when a gentleman is appointed an Ambassador he receives an outfit. But for what does he receive it? It is in order that he may do up his house and make all necessary arrangements for occupying it. I think we ought to put our foot down upon this constantly recurring expenditure for alterations and repairs. If we give our Ambassador a house he ought to take it as it is, and do all that is necessary to repair and maintain it—having, as it were, a kind of repairing lease while he remains in it. The Embassy House at Paris is a very fine and large building, and costs the country an enormous sum of money. If sold or let it would realize £5,000 or

£6,000 per annum. For my part, if I could, I would do away with Ambassadors everywhere, but, under any circumstances, I do not think it is necessary to expend a large sum of money in keeping up houses for them. I beg to move the reduction of the Vote by the sum of £3,000 in respect of the Embassy at Paris.

Motion made, and Question proposed,—"That Item I, Paris, of £4,200, be reduced by £3,000."—(*Mr. Labouchère.*)

MR. A. WILLIAMS (Glamorgan, S.): Can the First Commissioner of Works give the Committee any idea of what the original cost of the house was? £4,200 is required this year to keep it in repair, but what was the original cost?

*MR. PLUNKET: I cannot, at this moment, give the original cost. The date of the purchase goes back as far as 1814. But with regard to the point raised by the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchère), it is, no doubt, a question whether our Embassies generally should be provided with houses, or have an allowance given them to provide houses for themselves. But there are some capitals in which all are agreed that our Ambassadors should have houses provided for them, and such a capital is Paris. The French have provided their Ambassadors in every great capital with houses to live in and represent the country at the same time. As to the increase of the charge for the Embassy at Paris, it arises from the circumstance that the late Lord Lyons was a man of very simple habits, and he only made use of a very small part of the Embassy House. It was discovered when his successor was appointed that even the rooms which Lord Lyons had inhabited were in a very bad state of repair. I thought it right to send over to Paris two of my most experienced surveyors, and it was found that a great part of the house was in an absolutely dangerous condition, and was almost falling to pieces. Very considerable structural repairs were necessary, as to several of the floors and ceilings. The timber in some parts was found to be seriously affected by dry rot. That is the real explanation of the increased charge for repairs. Hon. Members may rest satisfied that the greatest possible care has been taken to reduce the expense.

MR. MUNRO FERGUSON (Leith, Burghs): The right hon. Gentleman has given the Committee a description of the repairs which have been executed, and it would appear that nothing has been done which was not actually necessary. It is absolutely necessary that a large amount of money should be expended, in order to prevent the decay of this very fine building, which was bought at the Peace of Paris. I believe that it is true economy to maintain the building property, and I shall be glad to support the Vote.

MR. LEGH (Lancashire, S.W., Newton): Speaking from some experience, I may say that, unless a considerable sum is spent upon this building, it would, in a short time, tumble to pieces. The only alternative plan to the voting of large sums of money for structural repairs is that the present site should be sold. Possibly as good a site might be obtained elsewhere. Personally, however, I should be very reluctant to part with the present Embassy House, which, both in its situation and in every other respect, is suitable to all requirements.

MR. LABOUCHERE: I hope that the Committee will not be deluded by the arguments which have been advanced. My hon. Friend says that this a very old house, and something must be done every year to keep it in order. The Committee ought to know, however, that a sum of £500 a year has been devoted every year to the maintenance of this house for a long term of years. By referring to the Estimate the Committee will perceive that a sum of £1,400 is required for the renewal of decorations and furniture, and last year a similar sum was expended for the same purpose, including ordinary maintenance and repairs. Surely that sum ought to have been sufficient to keep the house going, and if dry rot has got into the building somebody ought to be punished for it. What becomes of the money spent every year for ordinary maintenance and repairs and the renewal of decorations and furniture? The fact is, as I have said, that these houses cost too much. If you spend £500 per annum in keeping a house in structural repair, it ought to be sufficient. Whenever a new Ambassador is sent out upon a new mission there is always this expenditure. In this case we are told it is the dry rot;

but it is the Ambassador. The hon. Member opposite (Mr. Legh) has thrown out an excellent suggestion, namely—that we shall sell this house if we can get £200,000 for it. In that event I should be willing to enter into a contract to lodge the Ambassador, and lodge him well, for £2,000 a year. The whole of this extra expenditure is due to the change of Ambassador, and I think we ought to protest against it. When an Ambassador is appointed he gets an outfit of £2,000 to enable him to purchase spoons, but it is a sum which really goes into his pocket, and, in my opinion, it ought to be done away with.

MR. A. WILLIAMS: I should like to have some account of the cost of the German Embassy in London and the cost of keeping an Ambassador here. The charges imposed upon the country for our Ambassadors are, in my opinion, perfectly monstrous. We not only give our Ambassador at Paris a house, but we allow him £500 a year to maintain it and keep it in repair. That ought to be an ample allowance.

*SIR J. GOLDSMID (St. Pancras, S.): I have had the opportunity of having considerable experience in maintaining large houses, and I think it is a wise policy to buy houses and not to rent them. The Embassy House at Paris was bought at an extremely low price, and is now of far greater value than the price we paid for it. It is suggested that we should sell it. That is not the principle on which we ought to proceed. Our Ambassador at Paris ought undoubtedly to be suitably lodged, and for keeping up this particular house £500 a-year is by no means excessive. Moreover, it must be remembered that the expenditure does not depend on the Ambassador, but on the gentleman sent over from the Office of Works, who has to decide from time to time what ought to be done. I think the sum asked for is moderate, and I do not think the matter is one which ought to be dealt with in a niggardly spirit.

MR. H. GARDNER (Essex, Saffron Walden): Allow me to point out that the principal part of the Vote is for structural repairs and alterations, and only £500 for ordinary maintenance and repairs. I agree with the hon. Member behind me that it would be much better to purchase Ambassadorial residences than to hire them. I am afraid that

the hon. Member for Northampton would find it very expensive to hire residences for our Ambassadors. It is much better that the houses should, as far as possible, be purchased, and not hired.

SIR G. CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy): There is one weak point in the argument of the hon. Member for South St. Pancras (Sir J. Goldsmid). Although £500 a year may not be an excessive sum to pay for ordinary maintenance and repair, it ought to be sufficient, if properly applied, without necessitating further expenditure.

The Committee divided:—Ayes 121; Noes 228.—(Div. List, No. 68.)

Original Question again proposed.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): The next item in this Vote is for the Embassy at Rome; and here we have another Ambassador who is putting the country to extra expenditure. The ordinary expenditure is £250 for maintenance and repairs of the Roman Embassy, but here we have a charge of £500 for renewal of furniture and decorations, and a further charge of £250 for a new entrance and approaches to the Embassy House. I have watched this outlay in Rome for some time. If I remember rightly, when our first Minister went there, the charge was £500 a year for a house. But in course of time he became an Ambassador, and, as a matter of course, an Ambassador, having a large salary, wants to spread himself out. It was then thought necessary that he should have a special house, and we first of all bought the site and inclosed the ground. We gave a large amount for the site, and devoted a large amount for the house. Then we decorated the house and furnished it. After that the Ambassador cast his eye on a garden, that which was attached to the house not being deemed large enough. Then it was said that there was a wood near the garden, and somebody might build a house in the wood that would overlook the garden, and now we have the result of all this in the approaches—I daresay, through the woods. I think the time has come when a stop must be put to all this, and when we must bring home to the Foreign Office the necessity of telling our Ambassadors, when they are sent out to their Embassies, that they must

really accommodate themselves to the house, and not have the house rearranged in order that it may be accommodated to them. The expenditure here is very large, this year being £1,000 in excess of the ordinary outlay. I remember that when we bought the house we were told it was structurally so well built, and that the furniture was so excellent, that we had made a great bargain, and we should not be called on to spend any large sum of money on either for years to come; and yet, in a very few years, we are called on to spend £500 for renewal of furniture and decorations. All this is mere waste, and I, for one, do not share the opinion of the Chief Commissioner of Works that the country looks with indignation on those who move reductions of the Estimates. I do not know what the view of those who send the right hon. Gentleman and hon. Gentlemen on the other side of the House to Parliament may be; but I know that portion of the people of this country who send Radical Members to Parliament rather like us to look into the Estimates. I am not going merely to swallow gnats—I am going to strain at camels and gnats, too; and the view I take is the view of my constituents. If it were not, I should think it my duty to educate them to that view. The only way in which we can induce the Government to meet us in these matters is by constantly calling attention to them—not, perhaps, by taking Divisions, because we never win a Division against the Government; but we know that if we keep to our point, whenever an Ambassador wants to make an extra expenditure, the Government say to him, "Pray do not ask for it, or we shall be having a great deal of bother with those miserable Radicals." I beg to move, Sir, that this Vote be reduced by the sum of £1,000.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item J., Rome, of £1,250, be reduced by £1,000."—(Mr. Labouchere.)

*MR. PLUNKET: There has undoubtedly been the increase which has been pointed out in this Vote, but I think I can satisfy the Committee that it is necessary. The fact is that the Embassy House at Rome happens to be in a part of the city in which there has of late years

been a great deal of improvement and building going on, and the entrance, which has hitherto been in the front, was in a very narrow street, and was found, under the altered circumstances, to be neither convenient nor suitable for those who had business at the Embassy. That is the reason why this extra expenditure in regard to the entrance has been incurred. With regard to what the hon. Gentleman the Member for Northampton has said about the furniture, it must be remembered that that furniture was bought twelve years ago, and that is a considerable period. As the matter has been carefully looked into by the Surveyor, I hope the Committee will agree that the expenditure has been necessary, and will refuse to accept the Amendment.

SIR G. CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy): On the last occasion I voted with the hon. Member for Northampton, on the general principle, when in doubt vote against the Government. On this occasion I cannot vote with him, for I consider this a very moderate sum charged for the Embassy in Rome, in connection with which there is no unnecessary ostentation. Now, when I went to see the Ambassador, I must say that the approach to the Embassy was not of an extensive or ostentatious character; in fact, when I came to the door, I hesitated to knock, thinking I had made a mistake, and that it was not the door of the Ambassador. I do not think an expenditure of £250 or £500 is a large amount to spend upon the entrance to the Embassy in the country of our good Allies the Italians.

MR. LABOUCHERE: Twelve years ago we spent £250 in making that door, and now we have to spend £250 on another new door, in order that my hon. Friend may walk through it. I hope there was no attempt at a covert attack by hospitality on the virtue of my hon. Friend. But I am very much afraid that it is the case. I was brought up in the Diplomatic Service, and we were always pestered at that time by Englishmen coming, and they used to have letters from the Foreign Office. We used to call them soup tickets. We used to give them a dinner. We found that if we did not give them a dinner there was some trouble in the House of Commons. I hope my hon. Friend has not

been seduced from that stern virtue which characterizes him by one of these soup tickets. We have before us for the last 12 years all the expenditure in regard to these Embassies. The Chief Commissioner of Works admits that this expenditure would not have been incurred but for the change of Ambassadors. I believe it is admitted that while Lord Savile was at Rome he kept a very good Embassy; but if an Ambassador chooses to have an extra number of children or servants, I do not see why the country should pay for them. I suppose what was sufficient for the late Ambassador ought to be sufficient for the present.

*MR. OSBORNE MORGAN (Denbshire): I, too, have been to Rome, and, like my hon. Friend, I went to the British Embassy. I can assure the hon. Member that I did not enjoy, and, therefore, was in no way corrupted by the hospitality which he seems so much afraid of. But I am bound to say that there was a general opinion among the English there that their Embassy was the shabbiest in the place. I do not think the expenditure is at all extravagant, and that it meets strictly the needs of the case.

DR. TANNER (Cork, Mid): Before this is put, might I draw a comparison between the expenditure at Washington and that at Rome? The expenditure we are called upon to pass in connection with the Embassy at Rome is £1,250; when we turn to Washington, the capital of the United States, I think that the simplicity which is practised in Washington should be observed at our other Embassies in the interests of the taxpayers of this country.

The Committee divided:—Ayes 102; Noes 246.—(Div. List, No. 69.)

Original Question again proposed.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE (Bradford): I wish to call attention to the item of £9,000 for building a new Consulate at Tangier. I observe that the old building is expected to fetch £4,500. I have never been to Tangier, but I have always been led to believe that the Legation is one of the best houses in the place, and perfectly suitable for the Consul General who resides there. It has been occupied for many years by Sir Henry Drummond Hay. Inasmuch as last year the Committee rejected a

proposal for building a new Legation at Cairo in place of the present one, and as I understand the present Legation at Tangier is a very good one, I move the reduction of the Vote by the sum of £2,000, for the purpose of giving the First Commissioner an opportunity of explaining the item.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item S., £2,195, Tangier, be omitted from the proposed Vote."—(*Mr. Shaw Lefevre.*)

*MR. PLUNKET: It is quite clear from the Report of the Surveyor—a most trustworthy and competent public servant—who has reported on this building at Tangiers, that it would be impossible to oblige the Minister to reside in the old house in its present state. The Surveyor reports that it is surrounded by high buildings; that some of the outhouses and the gaol are in an insanitary condition; that the office accommodation is insufficient; and that, structurally, it is not capable of improvement; that there is no suitable house or site to be had inside the town, and the only alternative, therefore, is to purchase a site and build a house on the high ground outside. That will cost about £9,000; but that sum will be reduced by the £4,500 which, it is expected, will be obtained for the old building. I may mention that Sir Drummond Hay had resided in a villa of his own outside the town while Consul General there, and did not live at the Consulate except for about one month in the winter.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: I do not wish to press the Motion.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Original Question again proposed.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar): I should like to ask the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs a question as to the meaning of Sub-head "T," under which there seems to have been a large purchase of land adjoining the site of the Consulate of Zanzibar. Does it mean that Her Majesty's Government are going to have a larger Consulate, in consequence of their increased activity in that part of the world?

MR. MUNRO FERGUSON (Leith, &c.): The item for a new building at Tangier is a large one; and I cannot

help thinking that every argument that can be adduced in favour of the State providing a permanent residence for its Ministers in North Africa applies much more strongly to the building at Cairo than to that at Tangier. There has been an amount of shilly-shallying on the part of Her Majesty's Government in their policy in regard to the establishment of a suitable residence for our Consul General at Cairo, which is not inconsistent with the character of their general policy in Egypt. A site was bought for a new residence, but it was not made use of, no buildings being erected upon it. The French Consul in Cairo lives in a palace, whilst ours has to hire a building as best he may; and, altogether, if there is a central locality in which it is desirable for the British Representative to live in respectable style, and where it is desirable that we should build a residence for him, I should select Cairo as that locality. With regard to the Consulate at Zanzibar, I should like to ask whether it is maintained there for any useful purpose? We see that Count Herbert Bismarck has just paid a visit to this country, and that Colonel Euan Smith has been recalled on leave, doubtless to consult Her Majesty's Government as to our policy in Zanzibar—

THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order! The hon. Member is not entitled, on the question of Consular residences, to enter into the policy pursued by Her Majesty's Government.

MR. MUNRO FERGUSON: I was going to ask whether, under the circumstances, it was worth while maintaining Consular buildings at all in that part of Africa? However, I will not pursue that matter any further.

SIR G. CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy): In continuation of what has been said by my hon. Friend as to the provision of a residence for the Consul General in Cairo, I beg to say I am one of the last men anxious to make our residence in Egypt more permanent than it is at present. I should like to see Her Majesty's Government quit Egypt bag and baggage, but whether we leave it or not we have important interests in that country, and it is right that our Representative should be properly housed. Our Representative at Cairo lives in a hired house, of the unhealthiness of which he has reason to complain, his

wife and children having been ill there. The French Consulate—and I speak with knowledge on the matter, having made a visit to Cairo—is a magnificent palace; and though I do not desire to see this country attempt to rival French magnificence, I think it behoves us to see that our Representative at Cairo has a proper and healthy residence. Our position in Cairo is so difficult owing to the Capitulations and the difficulty of punishing foreigners, that it has been found impossible to establish a decent sanitary system there—

THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order!

SIR G. CAMPBELL: I think I have shown, Sir, that I am coming to the point. On account of the insanitary condition of Cairo, the hired houses there are all unhealthy. Our Consul General lives in one of these, with the result I have mentioned. I understand that a Vote was brought forward by the Government to test the willingness of the House to build a residence for the Consul General at Cairo, and why that residence has not been built I do not know. I do not wish to take up any position that would seem to imply that I favour extravagance, but having been in Egypt, and having visited the Consulate, I do think there is a *prima facie* case for providing the Consul General with a respectable residence.

DR. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W.): I am able to speak from some experience of the insanitary conditions of the houses in Cairo, and especially of the house of Sir E. Baring, which is something of the whited sepulchre class, and which may, one of these days, contain dead men's bones. It is important that in Eastern countries some decent state should be kept up.

SIR W. T. MARRIOTT (Brighton): Some time ago Sir E. Baring might have had a piece of land at a very reasonable cost, but the opportunity passed, and now he lives in a very insanitary house. Our Representative, especially in such a country as Egypt, ought to be as well housed as the Representative of any other country.

*MR. H. H. FOWLER: I trust that the Committee will not allow itself to be influenced by Gentlemen who have been recently in Cairo, and have probably enjoyed the hospitality of Sir E. Baring. The hon. Member for Kirk-

caldy must have forgotten his facts. This question was raised several years ago, and the Cabinet decided, after most careful consideration, that it would be unwise to build a house in Cairo. A change of Government took place, and negotiations were entered into for the purchase of a piece of land for £5,000, but, in view of the feeling in this House on the subject, the Government decided not to build a house, which decision met with the approval of both sides. It is now sought by a sort of side wind to raise a question which really involves the subject of increasing the Estimate. This matter has come upon us with surprise. With regard to it I hold a contrary opinion to the right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down. I believe these houses are extravagant in their inception, their completion, and their maintenance. I remember fighting about the question of a house in Berlin. We were assured that £50,000 would be sufficient, but the £50,000 grew to £70,000, and that to £100,000. In every one of these cases it would be far better to hire a house. I am only expressing my own opinion in this matter, but, certainly, this Cairo question was fully considered and settled on a previous occasion.

*MR. PLUNKET: I will not go into the question of a new Consulate at Cairo, which is not now the subject under debate, that matter having already been discussed last year, when it was, for the time at least, decided in deference to the strong expression of opinion on the part of the House. As to Zanzibar, the money asked for for the purchase of land has nothing whatever to do with the general policy of this country in that part of the world. The Consulate is situated close to the shore. There is a piece of land in front of it, which, if not acquired by us, would be acquired by other people, and, if it were built on, the sea breeze would be excluded from the Consulate, which in that climate would render it impossible to occupy the house.

*MR. CHILDERS (Edinburgh, South): I desire to ask a question as to the item for cemeteries. There has been some difficulty with the Italian authorities in regard to the cemetery at Rome, and the subject is one in which many Members of the House take great interest. Will

Sir G. Campbell

the Under Secretary of State be good enough to tell us whether the matter is satisfactorily settled?

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir J. FERGUSSON, Manchester, N.E.): In the course of municipal improvement in Rome it was thought desirable that a broad road should be made, which required for its completion that a part of the Protestant cemetery should be taken. Representations were made to the municipal authorities on behalf of England, and these were backed up by Germany, who had sympathy with the desire of this country to prevent the remains of Keats and Severn, and other celebrated Englishmen from being disturbed. The Italian Government were appealed to and the municipality of Rome, and eventually it was arranged that certain remains would be removed with all respect, but that those of celebrated Englishmen would be enclosed suitably and handsomely. All difficulties being removed, Her Majesty's Government expressed their acknowledgments both to the Italian and German Governments in the matter for the assistance given in preserving memorials very dear to many people in this country.

MR. A. PEASE (York): I should like to ask for an explanation of an Item under one of the sub-heads of this Vote—namely, for the Consulate in the Nyassa district at Zomba, the Item being £50. I am under the impression that there is no Consulate at Zomba, and that there has not been one there for some time past. As we are not likely to have one there in the immediate future I do not think the House should be asked to vote money in this way.

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: There is no intention to abolish the Consulate at Nyassa. It is somewhat of a Consulate *in partibus*, as we have no territorial jurisdiction, and do not exercise a protectorate, but it is thought desirable to continue the Consulate in order to maintain law amongst the British residents of whom there is a small community which it is hoped will continue to flourish. The Consul is, however, temporarily employed at Zanzibar. There are not only the ordinary Consular Courts there, but also a Vice-Admiralty Court, and great additional labour has been thrown upon

the Consular staff owing to the blockade and the operations which have been carried out for the suppression of the Slave Trade.

DR. CAMERON (Glasgow, College): The impression prevails in Scotland that if ever a Consul could be wanted anywhere it is at Nyassa. There is no spot in the world where it is more important we should have a Consul than at Nyassa, and I think we ought to mark our disapprobation of the withdrawal of the Consul at such a juncture as the present by moving to reduce the Vote.

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: I am able to give an explanation which will, perhaps, induce the hon. Member not move his proposed Amendment. The Consul at Nyassa had been allowed a short and well-earned leave of absence, and on coming back to his post he has been placed for a time at Zanzibar, for the reasons I have mentioned. During his absence the duties of the Consulate at Nyassa are ably discharged by the oldest and a most respected resident, Mr. Buchanan. It is very often necessary in remote places that Consuls should be temporarily replaced by well-known and respectable residents, and I feel sure that British interests have not at all suffered by the temporary discharge of the duties by Mr. Buchanan. The hon. Member may rest assured that there is no intention of withdrawing permanently the Consul.

DR. CAMERON: What is the status of Mr. Buchanan?

THE CHAIRMAN: This discussion is quite irregular.

DR. TANNER: I should like some explanation of the items under Sub-head 7.

THE CHAIRMAN: Order! That sub-head has been passed over. The hon. Member cannot recur to it.

DR. TANNER: I should like your ruling, Sir, upon one point. We have discussed the cost of the Embassy at Paris. In the course of his remarks the First Commissioner of Works made certain statements as to money spent upon the Paris Embassy. While he was speaking I went to the Library to look up certain facts, and when I returned I found the matter had been disposed of. I should like to know whether it is not possible for me to

lay the facts and figures I have collected before the Committee.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member cannot recur to the item.

Original Question put, and agreed to.

(4.) £8,286, to complete the sum for Harbours, &c., under the Board of Trade.

MR. T. E. ELLIS (Merionethshire): Upon this Vote I should like to ask the Government whether they have yet made up their minds with regard to the completion of the Holyhead Harbour? The work of constructing the harbour has been going on for 50 years, and has cost the nation something over a million and a half sterling. The harbour is a remarkably fine and even magnificent one. It affords every year refuge to between 2,000 and 3,000 vessels, but it is not yet finished, and its want of completeness greatly lessens its value as a harbour of refuge. It comprises 267 acres, but of these 50 acres are rendered completely unavailable for ships during storms, because the rocks at the entrance have not been removed. The clearing away of these rocks was part of the original design of the Government, and I think it has been repeatedly urged, not merely by the great Steamship Companies, but by the engineers of the Government, who have from time to time reported on the harbour, that the work should be taken in hand. I brought the question up two years ago, and in reply the then Representative of the Board of Trade admitted it would be a great advantage if the work could be completed in the manner suggested. The present President of the Board of Trade (Sir M. Hicks Beach) last year, in answer to a deputation, admitted it would be a great advantage if the work were to be undertaken. What I desire to ask the right hon. Gentleman is whether the Government will undertake that the work shall be taken in hand without delay? It may be an expensive matter, but the work will have to be done, and the sooner the better. The right hon. Gentleman has said that Sir John Hawkshaw estimates the cost of the work at £250,000. I have it on very good authority that this is an exaggerated estimate, and if the right hon. Gentleman still adheres to Sir John Hawkshaw's Report, I have to ask that he will lay it on the Table of the House, so that it may be examined.

Dr. Tanner

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Sir MICHAEL HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): I am sorry I have nothing to add to what I said on this subject last year. I do not at all deny that the removal of the rocks would be an advantage to the harbour of refuge at Holyhead, but I cannot admit that the removal of them can be effected for as little as the hon. Member supposes. My predecessor in office obtained an estimate of the cost of the work, and it amounted to a quarter of a million sterling. I cannot recommend that the work should be undertaken at such a cost as that. I have no reason to suppose that the estimate of Sir John Hawkshaw is too great, but, as I said to the deputation which waited upon me last year, if anyone can show me any ground for believing that the work can be more cheaply done, I shall be very glad to consider it. The estimate was made before I went to the Board of Trade, and I do not quite know the circumstances under which it was obtained.

DR. TANNER (Cork, Mid): I should like some explanation of the item of £3,000 for the repair and maintenance of the wooden pier at Holyhead. This seems to be an expenditure which has been incurred annually, and I should like to know how long it has to last? Residing as I do in a seaport town, where there are a large number of such wooden structures, I know that they cost a good deal. The expenditure of this money annually seems to me to be wilfully throwing money away.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): in the case of the Dover Harbour, I see that the resident engineer gets a house, and salary and allowances, amounting to £900 a year. Besides this officer, there is a piermaster, and many other officials. We ought to be told something about this resident engineer. I do not see that at Holyhead there is a resident engineer, but I find a harbour master instead, who receives £450 a year. I should think the piermaster at Dover and his assistants could do all the work that is required.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: The resident engineer at Dover has other work besides attending to the Pier. But if the hon. Member will look at the opposite page of the Estimates, he will see that the Dover Pier more than

pays for itself. With regard to the pointraised by the hon. Member for Mid-Cork, I am afraid that the expenditure of £3,000 upon the wooden pier at Holyhead is necessary, though it may seem very heavy.

DR. TANNER: There is another item in regard to which I would like a word of explanation. There is at Holyhead a Superintendent of Works who receives £300 a year. There are no works going on there. Is this another sinecure for some supporter of Her Majesty's Government?

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: Holyhead is a very expensive harbour to keep up. The breakwater requires continual watching, and I am sure the salary of this gentleman is well earned.

MR. O'HEA (Donegal): All the items in this Vote seem to be very extravagant, and to indicate a strong tendency towards jobbery. I am perfectly certain that if there was no sum on the Estimates for the Holyhead Harbour, the London and North-Western Railway Company would find it incumbent upon them and to their interest to keep the harbour up.

MR. LABOUCHERE: It is no answer to us to say that Dover Harbour pays for itself. If it pays, so much better for us. I see that £1,200 is set down for repair to the harbour, gas, &c. I suppose we may safely take the repairs at £800; therefore we actually pay a resident engineer £900 for looking after repairs which do not cost more than £800. If that is not monstrous I do not know what is.

Vote agreed to.

Resolutions to be reported to-morrow; Committee to sit again to-morrow.

SUPPLY—REPORT.

Resolutions [8th April] reported.

CIVIL SERVICES.

CLASS I.

(1.) "That a sum, not exceeding £36,379, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1890, for the Buildings of the Houses of Parliament."

(2.) "That a sum, not exceeding £110,824, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1890, for the Maintenance and Repair of Public Buildings in Great Britain, including various special Works; for providing

the necessary supply of Water; for Rents of Houses hired for the accommodation of Public Departments, and Charges attendant thereon."

(3.) "That a sum, not exceeding £4,500, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1890, for the Extension of the Admiralty Buildings."

(4.) "That a sum, not exceeding £12,800, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1890, for the Supply and Repair of Furniture in the Public Departments of Great Britain."

(5.) "That a sum, not exceeding £210,614, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1890, for the Customs, Inland Revenue, Post Office, and Post Office Telegraph Buildings in Great Britain, including Furniture, Fuel, and sundry Miscellaneous Services."

(6.) "That a sum, not exceeding £24,740, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1890, for New Buildings for County Courts, Maintenance, and Repair of Courts, supply of Furniture, Fuel, &c., and for Charges attendant thereon."

(7.) "That a sum, not exceeding £22,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1890, for the Metropolitan Police Court Buildings."

(8.) "That a sum, not exceeding £6,717, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1890, for one-half of the expense of Erecting or Improving Court Houses or Offices for the Sheriff Courts in Scotland, and for the Government contribution towards the cost of Maintaining Courts so Erected or Improved."

(9.) "That a sum, not exceeding £175,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1890, for the Survey of the United Kingdom, including the revision of the Survey of Ireland, Maps for use in proceedings before the Land Judges in Ireland, publication of Maps, and engraving the Geological Survey."

Resolutions read a second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the First Resolution: "

*MR. H. H. FOWLER: I want to ask one question with reference to the re-arrangements for the convenience of Members which my right hon. Friend the First Commissioner of Works said yesterday he is going to

make in consequence of the alterations in Westminster Hall. All the First Commissioners of Works for many years past have been smokers, and therefore they have been predisposed to take a favourable view of the representations made to them by hon. Members who indulged in the habit of smoking as to the accommodation for smokers. But there are many Members of the House who do not smoke, and I should like to ask the First Commissioner of Works whether he will not have some compassion on such inferior beings in any rearrangements he may make. My right hon. Friend the late First Commissioner of Works, held out to us the prospect of a new room in the Lobby leading to the House of Lords; but he had no sooner made the promise than it was rescinded, and the room devoted to the purposes of a Grand Committee. There is really no reasonable accommodation for the non-smokers, and it has occurred to me that the present Tea Room might be converted into a News Room and the present News Room turned into a Tea Room. I know the right hon. Gentleman is most anxious to promote the convenience of all sections of Members, but he always seems to be overcome by the arguments of the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere), who sympathizes with smokers and who is so powerful on such questions as this.

MR. LABOUCHERE: I can speak quite impartially, because I am at once a smoker and a tea drinker; but I do protest against the suggestion that we should give up the Tea Room to my right hon. Friend to read newspapers in. We had a claim on that room and we gave it up on account of the late Mr. Beresford Hope. If the right hon. Gentleman would desire to see the place where the smokers are sent to he would realize the fact that the smokers are really worse off than the tea drinkers. I trust that if the right hon. Gentleman does consult the tea drinkers in any rearrangements he will also consult the smokers, and if I can act as a go-between in the matter I shall be only too glad.

*MR. PLUNKET: If it will facilitate a settlement of the matter I shall certainly avail myself of the invitation of the hon. Member for Northampton. I desire to consult with all the different sections of Members, and I will try to

make the new rooms go as far as possible.

MR. W. M'ARTHUR (Cornwall, St. Austell): I wish to recur to a question I put to the right hon. Gentleman last night. I find in the Estimate for the Houses of Parliament there is a charge of £2,000 for oil lamps used in the building. As far as I can reckon the cost ought not to exceed £150 to £200. The right hon. Gentleman told me the great cost arose from the fact that we had to hire the lamps. I should like to know where the lamps are hired, and what is paid for their hire?

*MR. PLUNKET: I have asked for information, and if the hon. Member will put a question in the House on the subject I will be glad to answer it.

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne Division): I should like the right hon. Gentleman to endeavour to improve the accommodation afforded in the Ladies' Dining Room. The present accommodation for ladies is extremely inadequate. On one occasion when I was anxious to obtain the use of a table I found all the accommodation had been taken up a long time previously. There is no limit to the number of guests one Member may invite to dine in the room. I do not complain of that, but I think if there are any additional rooms to be placed at the disposal of Members it is only fair to Members and their lady friends that some better accommodation for ladies should be provided.

DR. TANNER: I think we are entitled to some answer on the subject raised by my hon. Friend. I very seldom entered the Ladies' Dining Room until the present year. Now I have sometimes to make use of the room and I invariably find the tables are taken up by supporters of Her Majesty's Government. I suggest that a book should be kept to show who are the monopolists of the tables night after night.

It being Seven of the clock, the debate stood adjourned.

MOTIONS.

HOME RULE FOR SCOTLAND.

DR. CLARK (Caithness): In moving the Resolution that stands in my name let me say at once that that Resolution

does not mean separation. I have no desire to repeal the Union between England and Scotland, and I think that Union has been mutually beneficial—a good thing for Scotland, but a better thing for England. Since the Union our great Colonial Empire has been developed, and that Empire has been as much built up by Scottish blood and treasure as by English. More than that I, knowing something of our Colonies, have no hesitation in saying the present prosperity is to a large extent due to the industry and intelligence of Scotchmen in the Colonies. All I want is that we should keep all the benefits we have under the Union without any of its disadvantages, and I think we can attain this without affecting the Union in any way whatever. I frankly admit that, although my Motion is based mainly on practical considerations, there is a sentimental basis for the growing Home Rule movement in Scotland. We Scotchmen are all proud of our country and of our country's history. We do not think we have anything to be ashamed of, and even an English historian, anti-Home Rule Mr. Froude, gives praise to Scotland such as a Scotchman probably would not, when he coupled her name with Judea and Greece. An attempt is made here to ignore Scotch nationality. We hear of the English Government, and the Minister is not called to order for the expression. Why, only the other day the Secretary for War spoke of the English troops he was sending to Egypt, the Scottish Borderers. I notice the hon. Member for East Renfrew has an Amendment to my Resolution. I saw a report of a speech made last year to his constituents; and in that speech he speaks of Scotch Members feeling insulted by the way their nationality is ignored or treated with contempt. I only wish he would call some of his leaders to order when they so insult his nationality; and if he used here strong language similar to that he used when he addressed his constituents, then perhaps the attempts to ignore our old nationality would stop. I for one feel that there is no incongruity in the possession of these strong national feelings, with broad cosmopolitan sympathies. The main practical ground on which I urge this Motion is that Scotch business is neglected. In support of that conten-

tion I may cite the Education Question. Scotland had to wait until England had a national system of education before she could get her educational system revised, and then it was revised on English lines. In adjusting the local burdens it is the landlord who gets the advantage. Another important measure is the Public Health and Police Bill. We have confusion, anarchy, and chaos in mingled jurisdiction in Scotland, owing to the disgraceful state of our Public Health Law, but the House has never had time to deal with this subject, and so anarchy continues. There are thousands of preventible deaths every year in Scotland in consequence of our disgraceful Public Health Act. The Scotch Universities Bill, too, has been brought in last year for the sixth time, but not passed. No doubt hon. Members may say it might have been passed; but when? Between the stages of the Appropriation Bill, and on the terms that all the burning questions connected with it should be referred to a Commission altogether out of harmony with Scotch feeling on the subject. Not only has Scotland to complain of neglect of her business in that House, but she has also to complain that Scotch opinion is overwhelmed by uneducated English opinion. Hon. Members vote at the bidding of the Whips on Scotch questions when they know as much of Scotch politics as they do of the politics of the moon. Take another question which stands first on the Orders of the Day, and which probably will not be considered this Session, and upon which we have been unable to get a decision for five years. My hon. Friend in charge of the Liquor Traffic Veto Bill attempted to get a vote upon it, but it was blocked by an English Member. Probably, even if we had a discussion, the settlement would be upon English lines, our views on the Scotch Liquor Question being overridden. Another question is that of Church Disestablishment. Whenever this comes up, as it does in the form of abstract Resolution, we find Scotch opinion in its favour represented by 38 to 18—such were the figures last year, but we are overwhelmed by the votes of English Members, who vote for the continuance of what they, as Episcopalians, must consider a schismatic Church. There are many such instances, but an affection of the throat from which I am

suffering prevents me doing justice to the subject. But I must say a word on the financial relations between England and Scotland. Here we have been treated very badly. We cannot complain of being taxed more per head than Englishmen, because that is due to the high tax on our whisky; but on that point, too, we are unfairly dealt with, for while Scotch whisky is taxed 10s. on the alcoholic gallon, English whisky is taxed 2s. 6d. only. We have not the advantages Ireland has, we have no camps and no docks in Scotland, although we could build ships in half the time and at half the cost on the Clyde. Nor is there any arsenal, although I believe there is to be one established near Stirling. The sums voted for local purposes, the sums paid to officials are on a lower scale than in England, though we are going to have some redress on this point at last, and the Lord Advocate is going to devote the money he receives from the Probate Grant to Free Education; but if Scotland received from the State for local purposes as much proportionately as England and Ireland got, Scotland could give Free Education, and would have money to spare for other purposes. But I want the House to look at this question from a broader standpoint. Supposing we had no grievance at all, supposing that instead of being treated unfairly, we had been treated on equitable terms, what is our position? It must be admitted that the House does its work very badly and inadequately, and that something is required to be done to enable Parliament to discharge its duty to the whole country. Every year more work is thrown upon Parliament, and the probability is that the aggregate amount of the work that ought to be done will go on increasing. Everybody, even old Tories on the other side, must admit that some change is necessary. Then what is the remedy to be? It must, I think, take the form of devolution. The Government themselves propose some devolution in their Local Government Bill, referring Private Bill legislation inquiries to a local Commission. For my own part I think that is a bad system, and I do not think it will save the time of the House. It is possible even that more time will be occupied, for probably the Committee discussions

would be resumed in this House on the Report stage of Private Bills. I think the only solution of the present state of affairs in this House is to have devolution upon lines of nationality, to devolve on each of the national elements of which this great Empire is composed, its own local or national business. This devolution should be two-fold. First legislative. Give to your National Parliaments, or your National Councils—I do not care what you call them—give to these bodies, not an indefinite something, but something well defined by an Act of this House, the Imperial Parliament still remaining the High Court of Final Appeal in all matters concerning the Empire. But devolve on these National Bodies the powers and functions parallel to those you are going to devolve on County Bodies, and such as you have long devolved on Municipal bodies—powers to act in their own business and with a free hand. If those bodies attempt to go beyond this, the Imperial Parliament can veto the proceedings, but, so far as their powers are conferred, they should have a free hand. As to what these powers shall be, I think we must come to the conclusion that they should consist of the powers which are now possessed by the Scotch Secretary, others that are possessed by the Board of Trade and others by the Board of Works. But, in addition to that, you must give executive responsibilities to these bodies, or you will have this condition of affairs, that the men carrying out the laws passed by these bodies would be under the control of the Imperial Parliament. Now I think, this question of the executive is made a bugbear in the minds of some; but I see no reason why it should be. We do not want an elaborate Executive. I think the Scotch Secretary, supported by the Scotch people, would be sufficient, and the Lord Advocate might be left to devote more time to his practice at the Bar. There must be a Board of Supervision, a Board of Trade and Agriculture, an Education Board, and heads of these departments of course. I think this would be sufficient for carrying on the national work. This seems to me the only solution of our present difficulty—you should do it on the lines of Nationality. The Scotch are a separate nation; we have our separate laws, our

separate methods of jurisprudence and administration, and our special technical language, which English lawyers cannot understand. Now, is it not far better that our business should be transacted by a body which has some knowledge of these matters than by others who frankly admit they have no knowledge at all on the subject? You have passed special Bills for Ireland, and the claims of Wales cannot be long neglected. The Welsh people will make their demand before long, and you will be no longer able to settle their affairs on English lines. This question of Home Rule can be settled in one of two ways, on the principle of dualism, or by the method of federalism. I have no hesitation in saying that dualism as a basis can never be carried through, and I hope no attempt will be made in that direction. The only solution is that which Mr. Butt proposed many years ago, and it was that proposal which converted me to his Home Rule views in 1874. I am strongly of opinion that the solution of our difficulty lies in the adoption of Mr. Butt's lines. There are several questions that have to be considered in relation to this Home Rule question. The country will never consent to Irish Members being driven out of this House as a consequence of Irish Home Rule, but at the same time I do not think the country would submit to Irish Members, while settling their own National affairs, having a finger in the Scotch and English pie. So under the circumstances it seems to me that we are logically bound, and I have long held this view to have Home Rule all round, and a Federal Parliament representing every section of the Empire. I know Home Rule in Scotland is growing and will grow, though many people try to retard it, and some of our Scotch friends think that pushing forward Scotch Home Rule will retard Irish Home Rule. But I would keep back Home Rule in Scotland for half a century rather than put off Home Rule in Ireland for a year. Ireland has much more need of it, she has suffered more, and the Irish evil is a national evil to be averted. At the same time, with a growing feeling in Scotland, we can flash the movement. A great number of hon. Members opposite will only look at the Irish Question through their prejudices, but without flatter-

ing Members, I think I may say they would consider our claim from an intellectual standpoint with less prejudice and more reason. The Home Rule feeling is growing strongly in Scotland as it is in Wales and Ireland, and I hope the time is not far distant when this Parliament will be freed from the discussion of such questions as whether a Scotch Railway Company should have an hotel in Edinburgh, or Belfast have a system of drainage. Other great and Imperial questions will then have a chance of discussion. We have an immense responsibility. We are responsible for the government of a third of the human race—three hundred millions of people look to the House of Commons for guidance. I trust that in the consideration of Home Rule propositions we shall still preserve intact the great Anglo-Saxon Union that has done so much for civilization, that has so much still to do.

Motion made, and Question proposed

"That, in the opinion of this House, it is desirable that arrangements be made for giving to the people of Scotland, by their representatives in a National Parliament, the management and control of Scottish affairs."—(*Dr Clark.*)

MR. HUNTER (Aberdeen, N.): I beg to second the Resolution. There is no question of a political character which has made such extraordinary and rapid progress as this question of Home Rule for Scotland. On August 20, 1886, I think the question of Home Rule for Scotland was raised for the first time, and somewhat casually, in the debate on the Address; but it is remarkable that since then there has been nothing of a sustained agitation in its support by public meetings or in the Press. It has been rather out of sympathy with the general tone of Radical movement, and yet it has an amount of public opinion in its favour that would astound those who have not had the opportunity of ascertaining this. Sir, having made up my mind that Home Rule for Scotland would be beneficial to the country, I decided next to explain my views to my constituency in Aberdeen. I had not the remotest idea how they would receive it, but I discovered very quickly that the constituency was ahead of myself, and that the mass of the people had been tending in the direction of Home Rule to an extent which I should not have thought pos-

sible. Indeed, I believe that we shall not have 10 Members returned for Scotland at the next General Election unless they are pledged to Home Rule for Scotland. I do not expect hon. Members opposite to agree with me in that, because the idea is one not altogether pleasant to them. But let me point to the fact that some of the acutest intellects in Scotland at the time of the Act of Union pointed out the great dangers likely to arise from the incorporation with England, and now we are experiencing these dangers and evils. Those who have studied the history of representative institutions—those who have considered the evils and dangers incident to democratic government—must, I think, have come to the conclusion that the Federal form of Union is the one which gives the greatest hopes of obtaining the objects of representative institutions in the future, and also of avoiding the perils of democratic government. Nothing can be more remote from the Radical idea of government than the idea of the disintegration of the United Kingdom; and so far are we from desiring the disintegration of the United Kingdom that we, the friends of Home Rule, look forward to the day when England herself shall be merged in a higher unity, and when, although we may not live to see it, there will be established that which would be the greatest blessing to the world—namely, the United States of Europe. That is the direction of our ideas and aspirations. But, Sir, the point of view from which Scotchmen look at the question of Home Rule is that which has been stated by the Mover of this Resolution. It is not so much one of national sentiment, it is not merely a gratification of that, but it is a conviction which is being borne in upon Scotchmen more and more every day that the business of Scotland could be better managed in Scotland, and the business of the Empire could be better managed in London, if there were separate Parliaments for the two countries. It is for the better management of Scotch business, and of the business of the United Kingdom, that we advocate the establishment of a Legislative Assembly in Scotland. Now, Sir, the people are hardly aware of the prodigious increase which there has been

during the present century in the work of this Imperial Parliament. Anyone who takes a glance at the Statute Book, and marks the progress of legislation before the year 1832, between 1832 and 1867, and from 1867 to the present time, can fail to observe the enormous increase, not only in the volume of legislation, but in the diversity of the subjects dealt with, and in the importance of the subjects. In fact, the work of the Imperial Parliament of the present century has increased several fold, and in addition during the same period there has been an enormous increase in the British Empire—I cannot say by how many thousand square miles, but anyone who compares the map of the Empire in 1801 with one for the present year would be startled to find what a steady and continuous and prodigious increase of area there has been—an increase which devolves upon this House large additions to its present responsibilities. In 1858 there was added the enormous territory and population of India. I cannot say that the House well discharges its duties and responsibilities in respect of India; but certainly those responsibilities add to the labour of this House. But that is not all. In the work of administration, the introduction of the household suffrage has completely revolutionized the condition of Government in former days; and now, compared with 40 or 50 years ago, there is an enormous increase in the demands of constituencies upon Members, with a corresponding demand by Members on the time of this House. Now, Sir, let us look for one moment at the work which has to be done in a somewhat similar Assembly—I mean the Congress of the United States of America. That Congress has little idle time on its hands; and yet it has been relieved of all that kind of work which it is now proposed that the House of Commons should be relieved from by the establishment of Home Rule and the creation of Legislative Assemblies in England, Scotland, and Ireland. Remember, also, the Foreign and Colonial questions which this House has to deal with from time to time, and that vast amount of work is outside the scope of the Congress of America. Then, with regard to the details of administration, there is no comparison between the American Congress and this House so

far as regards the minute supervision of the duties of Government Departments. Again, while we have unlimited powers of legislation, the Congress is limited within certain bounds as to the nature of the legislation it may undertake. Yet, although Congress is relieved of much of the work which devolves on this House, it finds, with all its cleverness, that it has as much work to do as any Legislative Assembly can fairly undertake. Now, Sir, why is it that Scotch business is so badly attended to in the House of Commons? It is that the majority of the Members of that House have a want of knowledge of Scotch affairs, and, naturally enough, do not take an interest in them. When a Scotch question is under discussion the English Members leave the House to seek more interesting places of retreat, and when the division bell rings they come in, and without having heard a word of the debate, and often without knowing what is the question on which they are going to vote, they overrule the Scotch Members. When I first entered the House I understood that an arrangement existed by which, as regarded Scotch measures, English Members practically left us to manage our own affairs, so that we had virtually, though not formally, the substance of Home Rule; but before I had been here long my experience disabused me of that delusion. The substitution was cleared away after a few months experience. Certainly since 1886 the reverse has been the case. The Crofters Act of 1886, which was brought in by a Liberal Government, was cut down so as to conform to the requirements of English prejudice. This, be it remembered, was a measure brought in by a Liberal Government. Still it was not a measure up to the standard of Scotch opinion, and it was cut down; and although the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian has always found that the Scotch Liberals are among his most loyal supporters, we, nevertheless, time after time found that we had a majority against us in the Lobby on questions raised in Committee—time after time the Scotch Members were in one Lobby, and the majority of the House in another. Since then another Government has come in, and these occasions, which were rare under a Liberal Government, are now of fre-

quent occurrence—indeed, they are almost uniform. I have taken some pains to examine the votes of Members of this House, and it is remarkable how rarely it happens that the majority of the Scotch Members are found in the same Lobby as the majority of the Members of this House. We had instances only in the month of December last. There was a question raised as to whether the Secretary for Scotland should be a Member of the House of Commons. On that question 37 Scotch Members voted against the Government, and 15 with it. A few days later there was a debate on another subject of great interest to Scotland—and that was with regard to the conduct of certain Crown officials. On that occasion there were 28 Scotch Members on one side and 11 on the other. In the Division on the Vote on Account of Scotch Prisons there were 33 on one side and nine on the other; and in all these cases, without exception, Scotch opinion was overruled by the obedient majority which the Whips are able to bring into the Lobby when they desire. There can be no question that the separation of Scotch Executive work from English Executive work has led to some very good results; but the value of the office of the Secretary for Scotland is very much impaired by the fact that the holder of the office does not sit in the House of Commons. An overwhelming majority of Scotch Members have declared in favour of his having a seat in this House, and the Government can find but few Members, to express a contrary opinion. If it had been an English question the Government would have been bound to act on the opinion of English Members but they set aside and despised the views of the Scotch majority. I thank the Government for the concessions which they made last night, and I believe they will thereby gain credit and popularity, for allowing the appropriation of the Probate Duty to the abolition of School Fees. But we must bear in mind that 55 out of 72 Scotch Members were pledged to support this appropriation, and if the Government had refused it and challenged a division, I do not believe they would have been supported in the Lobby by five Scotch Members. I do not propose to trouble the House with any details of our Home

Rule proposals. I do not believe that there are any other means than Home Rule by which Scottish opinion can be given the control of Scottish business. But I am not bigoted in my opinion. If anyone can point out another scheme which would have such an advantage I will support it. As long as the ends are attained the means are of secondary importance. One advantage which will be gained by a Scottish Legislative Assembly will be the improvement in the *personnel* of the Scottish representatives. At present Scotland is to a large extent represented by hon. Members who have no abiding home in Scotland; and local Scottish candidates cannot be readily obtained because there are in Scotland very few of the idle rich class, of those who can afford the time and money to spend six months of the year in London. We have many men of moderate wealth, and some with large fortunes, but those who have fortunes are generally immersed in business of their own, and very few men in business find it possible to sacrifice their business and break the threads of it in order to spend six months in London in the Imperial Parliament. Now, the leading merchants and manufacturers in Scotland would form the best material for dealing with local affairs of Scotland, and they are a class of men sparingly represented in this House. Yet they are precisely the men you would have sent to a Legislative Assembly in Scotland. I believe the whole business of the legislative administration of Scotland—if we might judge from the experience of other States—could be easily accomplished in the space of eight weeks with sittings, say, on four days a week. Therefore, we should have a great improvement in the *personnel* of representatives of Scotland, and I believe we should easily enough find members to represent Scotland, not only in the Imperial Parliament but in the Scottish Assembly, and in the case of the latter body you would bring into public life a valuable class of men who have an intimate knowledge of the wants of the country. And, now as to the alternative for Home Rule. There has been witnessed during the last few years a continuous diminution of the liberties of Members and of Parliament itself. There was a time when the word closure was heard with horror by Members of this House; now, like

vice, we have become familiar with it, and it forms our daily bread. In another direction we have witnessed most extraordinary innovation and destruction of the liberties of Parliament in the way of passing Bills through the House without the House having an opportunity of dealing with every clause in Committee. This is a novel principle in the constitutional history of this country, and one very dangerous and far reaching in its effects, because if you may stop a discussion on a Bill at its third clause why not stop it on the first clause, or why have any second reading debate? It is a principle which must prove fatal to the integrity and the dignity of the House of Commons, and it is but one of the effects of Parliament attempting to do work beyond its power. It requires no prophet to foretell that if the House of Commons continues to exercise all the powers hitherto exercised by it a further curtailment of the privileges of the House is inevitable, and the House will be converted from an assembly for discussing the affairs of the nation into a mere registering machine of the will of the Government of the day. I entirely share the opinion of my hon. Friend that those who support the Motion before the House are throwing no obstacles in the way of Home Rule for Ireland. Home Rule for Scotland can well afford to wait until the other scheme is out of the way, if there is any real inconsistency between the two. If that satisfaction were given which the people of Scotland earnestly desired, it would be possible to frame a scheme of Home Rule equal for all four divisions of the United Kingdom while maintaining absolute the sovereignty of Parliament. By a purely historical accident Parliament is really sovereign, and so a very large devolution of powers could safely be made, while the best division for such devolution will be found in following national lines. I believe that Home Rule would work more smoothly in Scotland with her peculiar and independent system, and laws and institutions than in either England or Ireland. Although we do not expect a majority of the House on this Motion, we have nevertheless opened up a question of great interest to the mass of the people, and one which at no distant day will be ripe for treatment by Parlia-

ment. I beg, therefore, to second the Motion.

*MR. SHAW STEWART (Renfrew): Sir, as to the Motion brought forward by the hon. Member for Caithness, there can, I think, at any rate on this side of the House, be only one feeling, that of satisfaction at having an opportunity of hearing his proposal discussed, and of ascertaining how much or little merit there is in it. I confess that hitherto I have regarded the question of Home Rule for Scotland as somewhat hazy and mysterious, and the speeches of the hon. Members for Caithness and Aberdeen have not done much to dispel that haze and mystery. The hon. Member who seconded confessed there was no sign of a desire on the platform or in the Press for Home Rule, but he said there was an astounding desire for it in Aberdeen. The hon. Member who submitted this Motion disclaimed any intention of bringing about a repeal of the Union between England and Scotland; and I have no doubt that he is sincere in that, but it is somewhat remarkable that his arguments to-night were exactly the arguments used when there was a proposal for separation brought forward in the Scottish Parliament in 1703. During the debate on the Act of Security, which as hon. Members well know was practically an act of separation, the arguments were that the interests of Scotland were uniformly sacrificed, and that if the Scottish Parliament was neither obstructed nor interrupted by the English Council, the grievances of the Nation would be redressed by the execution of its own laws. The hon. Member for Aberdeen distinctly said that he would utterly decline to discuss any details of the measure of Home Rule for Scotland, and he then went on to say that it was difficult to get good candidates for Parliament at the present time. Sir, it is quite possible that intelligent Scotchmen are not so easily found to adopt the principles of hon. Members who sit on the opposite side of the House, and that they may be obliged to come to seek for candidates among English gentlemen about whom the Mover of the Motion said something not very complimentary in respect of their want of education. I do not think, on the Unionist side of politics, it is difficult to find intelligent Scotchmen who are willing to come forward in support

of the Union. But if it is difficult to get Scotchmen to come forward to represent constituencies in the present Parliament, how will they find it easier to get candidates to come forward to represent them in the Imperial Parliament which they still wish to retain in the future? The Mover of the Motion alluded to the Liquor Question as one of those questions on which they were continually over-ruled by the action of English Members. But what happened last year with regard to this very question of the Liquor Bill? There was ample opportunity for discussion of that measure, but for some reason best known to themselves hon. Members opposite chose to pass the Second Reading of the Bill without any discussion whatever. The hon. Member also alluded to financial questions, and he argued that they would be treated with greater dispatch and more effectiveness in a Parliament in Edinburgh than here. But surely if a Parliament in Edinburgh is not to deal with Imperial matters, I fail to see how they can deal with finances which certainly are matters of Imperial interest, both to this country and to the whole of the United Kingdom and Ireland. Then the hon. Member made the astounding assertions that the Bill brought in by my right hon. Friend the Lord Advocate in respect to Private Bill legislation would add to the work which this House would have to do. He brought forward very little in support of that assertion, and I still think that hon. Members must be of opinion that if some of the work in connection with Private Bills is taken out of this House its labours must of necessity be lightened. The proposals of the hon. Member have not been put before us in any detail, but he proposes to set up a Parliament in Edinburgh.

DR. CLARK: I never made any such proposal. I never mentioned the word Edinburgh.

*MR. SHAW STEWART: I apologize to the hon. Member, but at any rate he must mean that a Parliament is to be instituted somewhere in Scotland—I think it ought to be Glasgow if anywhere. This Parliament would entail offices, appointments, and departments, and a considerable expenditure in salaries. Now, I think that is rather a startling proposal to come from the quarter of the House in which the hon.

Member sits. Will he persuade Members who sit round him to vote increased supplies to meet those salaries? I think he offers a rather large camel to be swallowed by those whose business in life it is to strain at every gnat they can discover in the Estimates. The hon. Member for Caithness may, by his eloquence, persuade hon. Members around him to vote those supplies, but I do not think he would persuade the people of Scotland that a National Parliament would be of the slightest benefit to them. They know that a Parliament established in Edinburgh or anywhere else in Scotland, would absorb the functions of local life, and instead of stimulating would kill it. It would be centralization in its very worst form, because either the Parliament must be so limited as to deal with purely local matters, and so deprive local communities of the management of their own affairs, or else it would have larger powers and so trench upon matters of Imperial interest. I will not go into the question whether the people in the West of Scotland would approve of a Parliament in Edinburgh, because it has not yet been settled by hon. Gentlemen where this Parliament is to be established; but I would venture to remark that if it were in the West, the people of the East of Scotland would be dissatisfied, or if in the East, the people of the West would be discontented. I cannot deny that there are demands from Scotland which ought to be satisfied—grievances, if you like, which ought to be redressed. There is, first, the demand for the extension of local self-government; second, the demand in respect of Private Bill legislation—demands which I believe will be amply satisfied by the proposals of my right hon. Friend the Lord Advocate; and the third demand is that the Secretary for Scotland should be in the Cabinet. In my opinion that is a question which we should continue to press upon the Government. I dare say the measures of my right hon. Friend will not satisfy hon. Gentlemen opposite. But would anything satisfy them? It is a point of honour with my hon. Friends below the Gangway to be satisfied with nothing. I think that the spirit which animates my hon. Friends is embodied in the advice given by an old Scotch Radical to a young man about to enter

Parliament—"Be aye asking, and when ye get onything, be aye complaining that ye canna' get mair." My contention is that the measures of the Government, which are bold and comprehensive, will satisfy the Scottish people, and that they will prefer them to a second rate Parliament, limited in its scope and feeble in its powers, such as that which has been shadowed forth, and only shadowed forth in the proposal of the hon. Member opposite.

*MR. A. ELLIOT (Roxburgh): What the House of Commons is now asked to do is to set up in Scotland a National Parliament. After listening to the speeches of the hon. Members who moved and seconded this Resolution, I am astounded at the weakness of the peg on which they have suspended so enormously serious a proposal. When we are asked to set up a National Parliament in Scotland, are we to be so invited because there is something wrong in the calculation of the Medical Vote, however much that matter may be of special interest to the Mover of this Motion? Why, Sir, we should make ourselves the laughing-stock of the country if we were to allow such twopenny-halfpenny considerations to weigh with us in discussing a proposal to destroy the Union. The hon. Member who followed the Mover of the Motion soared to considerable heights in the language he employed, and even spoke of the "United States of Europe." We are acquainted with the poet's dream of the time to come when we are to see "the Parliament of man, the federation of the world;" but it is new for the House of Commons to be asked seriously to debate a proposal to reconstruct the British Constitution with respect to such a very distant state of things. I look upon this question as a deeply serious one, and I look on it not so much as a mere Unionist, nor as a Liberal belonging to one of the great Parties of the State, but as a Scotchman. I congratulate the hon. Gentleman on the frankness of the terms of his Motion. We know we are asked to vote "for giving to the people of Scotland by their Representatives in a National Parliament the management and control of Scottish affairs." I cannot conceive that there will be any one who, on such a question, will not be able to make up his mind. I cannot conceive that Gentlemen representing

Scottish constituencies do not know whether they wish Great Britain to be governed by one, two, three, or even four Parliaments. At all events, what we are asked to vote about is plain and clear. But if the proposal is a clear one, I am bound to say the hon. Gentleman's speech in moving it was not so frank as I could have wished it, and he tried to minimize its importance. It is, at any rate, a proposal to set up a separate Executive for Scotland; and I would ask what must that Executive be? Not, as the hon. Member suggested, some mere re-arrangement of the functions of the Scotch Secretary. It is fortunate that I have made myself acquainted with some of the previous utterances of the hon. Member, and it will not be wasting time if I lay before you the proposals of the Scottish Home Rule Association, of which the hon. Member for Caithness (Dr. Clark) is President. There are six Members of Parliament who are office bearers and vice-presidents of the Association, and I will ask, is it the case that they merely mean to set up a re-arrangement of the office of Chief Secretary? The rules of the Association are published in the names of the hon. Members for Caithness, East Aberdeenshire (Mr. P. Esslemont), Dundee (Mr. J. B. Firth), North West Lanarkshire (Mr. R. Cunningham Graham), East Perthshire (Sir John Kinloch), and Ross and Cromarty shires (Dr. Macdonald). These proposals are therefore worthy of serious consideration coming from such a source. I have often heard it said outside the House by those who follow the lead of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Midlothian (Mr. Gladstone), that there is hardly a sensible man in Scotland who would like to establish in Scotland a Scottish Parliament and Executive Government; but let them then stand up here and say so now that the present proposal is made. These are three of the Rules. The first is—

“To promote the establishment of a Legislature in Scotland, with full control over purely Scotch questions, and with an Executive Government responsible to it and the Crown.”

The second is—

“To secure to the Government of Scotland, in the same degree as at present possessed by the Imperial Government, control of the Civil Service, Judges, and other officials, except in the Military, Naval and Diplomatic Services, and in collecting the Imperial Revenue.”

And the third is—

“To maintain and protect the integrity of the Empire, and insure that the voice of Scotland should be heard in the Imperial Parliament as fully as at present when discussing Imperial questions.”

These Rules involve five distinct propositions. In the first place a distinct Legislature; secondly, a separate Executive Government dependent upon that Legislature; thirdly, a distinct Civil Service for Scotland; fourthly, apparently a separate Treasury; and, last of all, they contain an admission that Scotland shall henceforth have no voice in the Imperial Parliament, except upon what they are pleased to define as Imperial questions. Perhaps the hon. Members to whom I have referred may be said not to have had any very great experience of this House, but there are others, and among them, I am sorry to say, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Edinburgh (Mr. Childers), who has given a very uncertain sound on this question. It was with astonishment I read the other day knowing that these are the views being promulgated in Scotland, and that the right hon. Gentleman must have been aware of them, a letter from the right hon. Gentleman, who, on being appealed to on the subject, wrote a letter, in which he declared that “at all events Scotland was entitled to claim a legislative body.” Not a word of repudiation of these ideas that are floating about. The mere terms in which this declaration is expressed show that although the right hon. Gentleman is a Scotch Member he is not a Scotchman. He says “Scotland is entitled to claim.” Scotchmen do not claim any favour from England; our claim is that we are part and parcel of the United Kingdom and have joined the Union on equal terms. There is no way in which we can maintain equality with England except on the terms of the Union; we must choose between equality by means of a Legislative Union, or something like the position of a dependent State. What does my right hon. Friend mean when he says we are entitled to claim a legislative body? Does he mean a body to make laws—not mere regulations or bye-laws, but laws which will bind persons and property, laws which will deal with the rights of persons and the rights of things? For the first time since the

Union it is proposed that this great change should be made—that instead of having one engine for making the laws of the Kingdom we are to have two, and that henceforth laws are to be passed not by the Imperial Parliament, but by different local Legislatures. Well, Sir, I presume my right hon. Friend contemplates that this Legislature shall be elected on a very democratic franchise. Does he imagine that in that case it will be possible to keep separate from it all sorts of executive authority and power? You must, if you have a legislative body at all of that kind, give it control over some portion, at all events, of the executive functions of Government. I put this forward to show that, if the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Edinburgh is willing to grant a legislative body for Scotland, he cannot expect it to stop short of acquiring some executive authority. Well, Sir, I think I have pointed out already that this demand is a somewhat peculiar one. I have said that it is a demand for the repeal of the Union. I do not think anyone will deny that. Article 3 of the Treaty of Union of 1707 runs as follows:—

“That the United Kingdom of Great Britain shall be represented by one and the same Parliament, to be styled ‘The Parliament of Great Britain.’”

Whether hon. Gentlemen who bring forward this Motion are Unionists in heart or not I do not know, but I say that they are in terms proposing to repeal the principal section of the Treaty of Union. The Act of Union has been and can be amended, but to attempt to destroy the good work of those statesmen who passed the Act, which has been so beneficial to Scotland as well as to England, upon the case shown to us by hon. Members is to make the House of Commons ridiculous. Why, after all, is this demand made? What are the reasons for it? One of the reasons advanced is the delay which exists in the passing of Scottish business in this House, and special reference is made to the Scottish Universities Bill. I read what was said by my hon. Friend the Mover of the Resolution the other day in Edinburgh—that the Scotch Universities Bill had not become law because, forsooth, Parliament was full of English Members who did not take an interest in the matter. Do you not know why the Scotch Universities Bill did not

pass? Do you not know that it was because it was opposed by those very Scotch Members who bring forward and support this Resolution, some of whom actually went down to Edinburgh and there declared that it was the fault of the English Members? Another ground which has been advanced is, that the Scottish Members are outvoted in the Lobbies. Well, I am very glad to have an opportunity of saying a word on that point to Scotch Members. The same thing never occurs, I suppose, to other nationalities! Are the English, the Irish, or Welsh Members never outvoted? Has it never happened that the Government of the day are solely dependent on a majority composed largely of Scotch and Irish Members? And does not the character of the laws passed mainly depend on the Party to which the Government belong? If you have a Union at all there must be some outvoting, and, I think, perhaps one great object of the House of Commons is to discover and outvote minorities. I do not know whether the Member for Carlisle was present, but no more striking case can be found than that in connection with the prohibitory measures in the Liquor Laws. We had Sunday Closing in Scotland under the Forbes-Mackenzie Act 30 years ago, and we had it not because it was thought right by the English, Irish, and Welsh Members, but because it was thought right by the Scotch Members. That was done in deference to Scotch opinion. But I would point out what occurred a few weeks ago. There was an English Sunday Closing Bill. It did not deal with Ireland, Wales, or Scotland, but were the English Members allowed to decide it by a majority? I will give the figures, which are, I think, a little striking. For the Bill there were 179 votes, and against it 157, or a majority of 22 for the Bill. But deducting the Scotch, Irish, and Welsh votes, which numbered 77, I find that 102 English Members voted in favour of the Bill, while deducting the 13 Scotch, Welsh, and Irish votes on the other side there were 144 against the Bill, or in the result a majority of 42 English Members against the Second Reading of a purely English Bill which, however, was carried, as it was quite right it should be, by a majority of Members

of the United Kingdom. Now, that is worth consideration, for it shows that English Members are outvoted on occasion by the Scotch and Irish votes. It is right that it should be so. I am standing up for the Union, and for our right to take part in the work of Parliament. I have no wish to exclude any part of the United Kingdom from taking part in Scotch business. Well, Sir, we are given as another reason that Parliament cannot find time for Scotch business. I say that that is not an argument which Scotch Members should admit. I would point out to the Scotch Members that the grievance of which they complain is equally applicable to other portions of the Kingdom. The way in which the time of this House is wasted astonishes everyone. I may refer to yesterday by way of illustration, when some hours were spent in a debate on the hiring of oil lamps for the use of Members—a matter which, if raised in a club, would have been settled by some small committee. The right way to deal with the House is to try to keep it to its proper business, to try and prevent the waste of time, not to admit that there was no time to attend to legislation for Scotland, on questions which are perhaps of enormous importance to the Scottish people. I have always maintained that equality can only be obtained through the Union. We have had experience of various sorts of government in Scotland. Scotland was originally a separate nation, not only in our own eyes, but in the eyes of the world. Afterwards the Crowns were united, but we retained our separate Legislature, and I must say that was the time Scotland showed at its worst. We had less sense of national dignity, we had no actual separate existence, and we had not that equality which we afterwards got from the Union. As Burton, the latest and one of the best historians of the Scottish Union said—

“The great security for Scotland consisted in that community of interest which divided the Scottish into the same political divisions with the English representatives, and made Members vote as Whig and Tory and not as Scotch and Englishmen.”

Neither the Mover nor the Seconder have pointed out in what way a Scottish Parliament is to legislate better than this Parliament? Can they show

that it would be more wise, more just than the Parliament of the United Kingdom? But they do not and they cannot show what is more important still—that the Scottish Parliament would be as powerful, or nearly as powerful, as the Parliament of the United Kingdom. It might be wise and just, but it must have power at the back of it, and to suppose that a Parliament sitting in Edinburgh would have the same strength at the back of its decisions as attaches to the Imperial Parliament in which sit Members coming from the length and breadth of the Kingdom is a proposition which cannot be maintained. No wonder, then, that hon. Members did not try to sustain it. Again, if you have different Executive Governments and separate Parliaments, you will probably have different political Parties prevailing in the two countries, and you must expect that the legislation of each will tend to diverge, and that the legislation fostered and promoted by one Party in Scotland will necessarily tend more and more to differ from legislation promoted and fostered by a Government belonging to another Party in England. And when you once start a system which produces this divergence it becomes a very serious business. Looking at the question from the Scottish point of view, I think the utter fallacy of these Home Rule proposals lies in the suggestion that Scotchmen ought to have no influence over English legislation, and, in short, that it does not matter to Scotchmen how England is governed, or what legislation is passed for that large portion of our Island. Are the people on the Borders to be told that it does not matter to them what kind of legislation is in force between the Cheviots and Land's End? I say that is an absurd proposition. Local considerations are not everything, and Scotchmen live under a Union to which they mean to stick. They are determined to assert themselves not only as Scotchmen, but as citizens of the United Kingdom. The whole proposal is, in fact, based upon entire fallacy; and we will not consent to be told that English matters are of merely local interest, for England, after all, is three-fourths of Great Britain. We Scotchmen are proud of our nationality. We have reason to be proud of our ancestors, who for long years defended

their liberty and independence. But are we to consider that we ceased to be Scotchmen in the year 1707. Why since the Union we have also done much to be proud of as Scotchmen, and have maintained our nationality in the way in which it ought to be preserved. But we must not sacrifice the substance for a shadow or false sentiment which has no basis in reason or fact. It is time for right hon. Gentlemen and hon. Gentlemen to speak out. We are asked to vote for or against a Scottish Parliament. The term Parliament implies the performance of important functions, and no body which cannot levy a tax or make laws, or choose and control the Executive, can be called by that name. We have a simple question before us, and no hon. Member should hesitate to express his opinion by his vote. I will refer once more to the Borders, with which I am intimately connected. I know the extraordinary benefits which the Borders have received from the Union. That district, which was formerly placed between two hostile and jarring nations, became by the Union the centre of a large and peaceful Kingdom. The period when under one King there were two Legislatures was the period of least independence and least good government, and it should be a warning to Scotland not to recur to such a horribly unsatisfactory state of things. By all means let Scotch opinion have due weight in all Scotch business; let us have the same respect for English opinion in England, Irish opinion in Ireland, and Welsh opinion in Wales, but let us never weaken, by dividing into fractions, the legislative authority of the Parliament of the United Kingdom. Let us rather maintain the unity of Parliament and let us maintain also unimpaired the control of our National Executive over the length and breadth of the land.

***MR. DONALD CRAWFORD** (Lanarkshire, N.E.): The proposal of my hon. Friend is to establish a National Parliament in Scotland, and we have been challenged by my hon. Friend the Member for Roxburgh to express a definite opinion upon the issue which has thus been raised. I think that the challenge is a fair one, and, for my part, although I hold that the discussion to-night is by no means a convenient

one, I shall certainly not shrink from expressing my opinion upon the question before the House. Now, I confess I cannot support the proposal for a National Parliament. My hon. Friends the Member for Roxburgh and the Member for East Renfrewshire, in the speeches in which they supported the two Amendments which were to have been proposed, showed a very inadequate appreciation of the strength of the case which has been made by my hon. Friends the Mover and Seconder of this Motion. Not only was the Motion before the House recommended—if I may take the liberty of saying so—in speeches of very great ability; but it was also supported by arguments of very great weight, and those arguments, I think, have not received the due attention which should have been paid to them. There is no doubt that two or three years ago it would have been wholly unnecessary for any Member sitting on this, or the other side of the House, to give reasons why he was unable to support a Motion of this kind. But the state of things has very greatly changed. There is no doubt that my hon. Friends have in no degree over-stated the case when they said that there was a very strong feeling in favour of a greater measure of self-government for Scotland—something in the nature of what is called Home Rule, though, in my opinion, it is unhappily and infelicitously called Home Rule. This movement is a growing and powerful one in Scotland, and it is one with which the Government will have to reckon in my opinion, sooner or later; and they will not only have to reckon with it, but also satisfy it. But, Sir, this is a very different thing from proposing a National Parliament for Scotland; and, in passing, I may say that no such proposal has been made in the case of Ireland. The word "Parliament" has never been used in the case of Ireland; it has been most carefully avoided, and it was avoided in what was called the Home Rule Bill of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian. Now, Sir, when I say that there is a very strong feeling growing up in Scotland in favour of a proposal of this kind, I seek for the reason why there is this great change in a comparatively short space of time, and I do not think it is difficult to find that reason, because the business of Scotland has been entirely

neglected by this House. I do not care whether this neglect is due to contempt or merely to impotence on the part of the Government to deal with Scotch business under existing conditions, but let us take last Session as a specimen of our complaint, when we had two great measures before the House—the University Bill and the Burgh Police Bill. The Burgh Police Bill was a measure with an unpretending name, dealing with an ordinary subject, but involving very great labour and results of great importance to the country. A strong Scotch Committee, consisting of more than 20 Members, was appointed, and it spent over two months last summer in the consideration of the Bill. I venture to say that if a Member of the Government connected with England had sat on the Committee, he would have taken care that some effect was given to their deliberations; or if the Secretary for Ireland, who has a very free hand in the disposal of the business of the House, had had anything to do with the Bill, we might have been sure that the Government would have made a point of dealing with it when it again reached the House. But, because it was a Scotch Bill, we were allowed to amuse ourselves with it, and when it was returned to the House it was dropped, as a matter of no importance whatever. And the same was the case with regard to the Universities Bill. That was a Bill which concerned the highest educational interests of Scotland, and we know that Scotland is a country in which education is thought very much of. The Universities of Scotland had for years been making arrangements and entering into negotiations with regard to this Bill, and we thought the time had come when the matter was ripe for legislation. But then, because, forsooth, we did not agree to pass the Bill without discussion through the House, we were refused any time for considering it, and we were told that either we must take the Bill as it stood or it must be dropped, as there was no time for discussing it. The history of these two Bills is only a specimen of what occurs in relation to many Scotch subjects which are ripe for legislation. There is, for instance, the Licensing question. We cannot induce the Government to give any attention to this subject; and

even when a Local Government Bill is introduced we find that the licensing question is entirely left out of it. When Scotch opinion is so nearly unanimous, as it is on this matter, I think it is very inconvenient that the Government should neglect to deal with it. But, while we must not allow Scotch legislation thus to be neglected, I must say I cannot, as at present advised, come to the conclusion that the remedy proposed by the hon. Member who has introduced this most inconvenient discussion is the right way of meeting the growing and deep dissatisfaction in Scotland with the existing state of things. Right hon. and hon. Members opposite are in the habit of representing the Scotch and the Irish case as identical, and they say that what you do for Scotland you must do for Ireland. I submit that it should be regarded as a fundamental principle in dealing with this question, that there is no presumption whatever that Scotland is to be treated in the same way as Ireland. I demur to the proposition that the cases of Scotland and Ireland stand on all fours. There are the plainest historical reasons, and the plainest reasons of fact why that is not so. It is true that Scotland of late years has not got those measures which she desires, though I believe that in former times she was not nearly so badly off, and that she got many of the measures she desired. But the complaint is not, as in the case of Ireland, that those measures are forced upon her which she abhors and detests. That is the historical case of Ireland, and it is a case which requires entirely different treatment from that of a country which has never been oppressed or insulted in the same way, but which has merely, owing to the neglect of Parliament, not got as much legislation as she requires. I think that we not only require to give Ireland a measure which shall secure that her business is done by the Irish people, but I certainly go the length of saying that some measure of pacification should be passed, which should pay a tribute of atonement to the injured nationality of Ireland. In Scotland no such question arises. The time may come, undoubtedly, when we may require to make special provision for the transaction of affairs in Scotland, but we shall only require to look for a business

assembly, and there is no necessity for making any complaint that the nationality of Scotland has been insulted, because our national spirit has always been able to take care of itself. My hon. Friend below me asked that the Liberal Members should speak out on this question, and I say I do not think that is an unfair challenge. The constituencies of the country are now established on a very democratic basis, and I have never disguised from myself that occasions might arise from time to time in which there would be a temptation for Liberal Members to take up and follow a popular cry, when it would rather be their duty to point out the difficulties that lie in the course that is suggested for the moment. I consider that this is an occasion of that kind. My own constituents have never urged me upon this point; but I am well aware that if I were to vote to-night for the establishment of a National Parliament in Scotland, I should go down to them with no fear of incurring any reprobation for my vote. On the other hand, it is not unlikely that in one quarter or another I may meet with some criticism for stating my objections to the proposal in the extreme form in which it is made. But now that the drag has been taken off the Liberal Party by the withdrawal from its ranks of the Party to which the hon. Member for Roxburgh (Mr. A. Elliot) belongs, it is all the more incumbent upon the Members of the Liberal Party to discuss with extreme frankness the difficulties that attend any course which for the moment may be favoured by a popular cry. I think we must sooner or later come to an arrangement for the transaction of Scotch business—it may be as little as a Grand Committee of Scotch Members, or as great as an assembly for business purposes in Scotland itself—but there are some special difficulties attaching to the proposal before the House. I should like to ask my hon. Friend (Dr. Clark) whether he proposes that if a National Parliament be established in Scotland the Scotch Members are to sit in this House or not? I suppose my hon. Friend does mean Scotch Members to sit here. If so, is this House to continue to transact the business not only of the whole Empire, but of England also? I take

leave to say that if Scotch Members are only to be introduced into this Assembly for the transaction of exclusively Imperial business, they will be placed in a position of inferiority. I have never disguised from myself or from my constituents that the important and just demand which Ireland makes implies some sacrifice, as well as some advantage, to this country. In return for the autonomy which it is proposed that Ireland is to receive, she gives up something, and it is her interest to give up something with such a history as she has. But she would not, in my opinion, have the same influence in the Councils of the Empire as she has on paper at this moment. On paper she gives up something, but in reality she gives up nothing, because her Representatives have been treated as pariahs, and no attention has been given to their voices. That is not the case with regard to the Scotch Members, who have exercised a just and fair influence in the deliberations of this Assembly. They and their country would, in my opinion, be placed in a position of inferiority if they were to be elected to this Assembly for the special purpose of deliberating and voting on Imperial questions. If you say that this objection is a just one, and that you will have a separate Parliament for English affairs, my answer is that that is a very large proposition. We, as Scotch Members, have no right to assume that England will consent to it. If a general system of devolution—and I think that something of the kind may very likely have to be adopted—were carried out, and England were divided into North and South England, that would be a question of an entirely different kind. I also quite recognize the possibility of a larger Imperial federal scheme one day coming into the horizon of politics, but that is a distant thing, and I would warn my friends in Scotland that the very great inequality in size between the two countries would make the federal bond one that they ought to look at with considerable jealousy. England is seven or eight times as large as Scotland, and London is, under conditions which we cannot alter, not only the political but the commercial capital of the country. The bounds of Scotland are too narrow for Scotchmen. She sends thousands of

her sons into all parts of England, and I should like very narrowly to inquire into the conditions of any federal bond between the two countries, for fear that Scotland would suffer by the arrangement. It is certainly in no hostile spirit to the powerful and growing feeling that the conduct of Scotch business in this House has fostered and reared and brought to a vigorous height within a short time a movement in favour of a more direct and practical manner of doing our own public business—it is in no hostile spirit that I have ventured to point out what appears to me the insuperable difficulties against accepting the Motion in the form in which it has been presented, bearing in mind in particular that in proposing a National Parliament for Scotland my hon. Friend has proposed something which no one yet has ever proposed even for Ireland.

*MR. CUNINGHAME GRAHAM (Lanark, North-West): I wish in a very few words to support the Motion of the hon. Member for Caithness, but I wish to do it on vastly different grounds and reasons from any of those which have been urged by hon. Members who have spoken to-night. I do not wish to support this proposal specially on national grounds. I thoroughly agree with an observation that fell from the hon. Member for Caithness when he said that though there is a great and growing feeling in favour of Home Rule in Scotland it runs on other lines than those of the Radical programme. I do not wonder at that, because, personally, I never could find out what were the lines of the Radical programme. I believe, Sir, that there is a great and growing demand for Home Rule in Scotland, but it comes, in my opinion, from no sentimental grounds whatever, but from the extreme misery of a certain section of the Scottish population, and they wish to have their own Members under their own hands, in order to extort legislation from them suitable to relieve that misery. That may seem an extreme proposition to state in this House. Hon. Members from Scotland are often fond of representing Scotland as a sort of Arcadia, but I think that, in face of the misery existing in the Highlands and Islands, that we have women in Aberdeen to-day toiling

for 6s. or 7s. a week; that we have 30,000 people in Glasgow who herd together in one room; and in face of the fact that we have a Socialistic agitation on foot in the East and West of Scotland, I must say I do not think the condition of the poor in that country is one very much to be envied. I think it will be found that the same reasons which impel a certain section of the Scottish people to be dissatisfied with the legislation served out to them from this Parliament are not the reasons which have been alleged by other hon. Members. On many public questions public opinion is far riper for legislation than in this country. Not one Member who has spoken—although it must be patent to all hon. Members—has referred to the rising opinion in favour of land legislation in Scotland. I should like to ask the hon. Member for Roxburghshire whether he could go down to his constituency and speak to the free and independent electors there, and say much against the theories of Henry George, for example? And I would like, furthermore, to point out to the House that on the question of labour legislation in Scotland we are much farther advanced as a country than in England, especially on the eight hours' question. In the matter of free education and many other questions, the people of Scotland are greatly in advance of those of England, and it is for these reasons, and not for sentimental or national ones, that I think this House will soon be called on to face the demand for a Legislature for Scotland. We have an absolute detestation in Scotland of all propositions dealing with the solution of the land question by means of emigration. It would not, I fancy, tend to enhance the popularity of any hon. Member in Scotland to go down to his constituency and propose to emigrate the crofters *en masse*. He would soon be met by the suggestion that some of the landlords and capitalists of the country could be emigrated with much greater benefit to the country. It has been said that in the event of the institution of a Scottish Legislature we should largely be represented by the merchants of the country. To that statement I say, God forbid! I believe I speak the feelings of a large section

of the Scotch people when I emphatically state that, were such a Legislature ever created, we should find the working classes much more represented than is the case here. Thus, I think that, taking into account the large expression of opinion that has undoubtedly been given to-day by the Scottish Members, and taking into consideration the great pressure that will soon be brought to bear from social causes upon this House from the electorate of Scotland, we have not come here with an absolutely futile or fatuous proposition when we have, for the first time, endeavoured to press the cause of Scottish Home Rule upon the House of Commons.

MR. GLADSTONE (Mid Lothian): I am sorry that the Government has not as yet found itself in a condition to state to the House what is their view of the Motion before the House. But in the absence of any guidance from that quarter, which I really think we were entitled to look for before the debate reached its present stage, I feel it to be my duty in the double character of a Scotch Member, and likewise of one who acts on behalf of the Liberal Opposition—so far as I presume myself to possess their confidence—I feel it right that I should no longer delay stating what occurs to me upon this interesting and important and also difficult question. When I read the Notice Paper of to-day

I felt that we possessed this advantage, that we were sure to have, or likely to have, before us the subject of debate in each of its main aspects. My hon. Friend the Mover of the Motion pronounces in the most emphatic and perhaps in the largest terms that have ever been used on the question of Home Rule, his views in this House on the question of a Parliament in Scotland and the management and control of Scotch affairs. No one can complain that he does not raise broadly and clearly the principle involved in his Motion. The hon. Member opposite gave notice of a restraining Motion intended to supplant the principal proposal, and which practically had very much the character of "the previous question." Irrespective of the particular reasons given in the Amendment, the practical effect of it was not to condemn outright and in principle the proposal of a Legislature for Scotland as a

thing that would under no circumstances be entertained, but stating that under present circumstances it was not ripe for consideration. Unfortunately, the hon. Member had not the courage of his opinions—though the field was open to him—sufficiently to propose his Amendment. But he opened the field for my hon. Friend behind me, the Member for Roxburghshire, who framed an Amendment embodying, as might be expected, I think, from him, the minimum of concession and the maximum of reservation. He was so full of courage and chivalry that he would not accept the mode of escape offered to him by the Amendment that was to have been moved from the Opposition Benches. He was not content to say that this was not the time for entering upon the question; but he denounced the principle of Home Rule under any circumstances or conditions for Scotland, and he exhibited his zeal in this debate by formulating an Amendment that appears to me to be a literary curiosity. I have heard much said of the necessity in questions of Home Rule of contemplating the general transfer of the affairs of one of the portions of the United Kingdom to a local legislature, and we have heard much of the necessity of maintaining the authority of the Imperial Parliament. I do not recollect that the Lord Advocate, in the excellent speech which he made yesterday on the subject of local government, made any reservations at all for the authority of Parliament. It did not appear to him that the authority of the Imperial Parliament was brought into question by his proposals, and I confess I entirely agreed with him. But my hon. Friend behind me is so jealous of the authority of the Imperial Parliament that I suppose if he gave a charter to a burgh he would give it in terms which would imply that the unity of the Empire was to be maintained, and possibly when he came to the consideration of Parochial Boards in Scotland he would say, "Oh, yes, let us have Parochial Boards by all means, but let us take a jealous care that those Boards do not interfere with the authority of Parliament or break up the unity of the Empire." He goes further still than this, and he sniffs danger even in legislation on Scottish Private Bills. He is willing to

Mr. Cunningham Graham

give some facilities for the conduct of Scottish Private Bills, but he will only allow Private Bills to receive additional and local facilities provided they are not permitted to impair the effective control over the whole United Kingdom of the Imperial Parliament. His jealous care for the authority of Parliament, which is an admirable thing to observe in its proper place, is carried very nearly, indeed, if not quite, to the borders of the ridiculous. However, my hon. Friend, whilst valiant in his speech, has not proposed the Amendment of which he has given notice, therefore we have only the exposition of his opinions. I must frankly own for myself that, while I am very much tantalized by the withdrawal of those interesting Amendments from any practical issue before us, I am in the same condition as was so well described for himself by my hon. Friend the Member for East Lanarkshire, that I do not feel myself to be in a condition to deal with the question at the present moment definitely and on its merits. [*Ironical Cheers.*] I presume that all those who cheer opposite have no difficulty at all of that kind, they are prepared to be very decisive in the expression of an opinion, but I think those hon. Members almost to a man are not Scotch Members, or the Scotch Members are very poor indeed. I make the observation almost to a man, because I know that it is a Scotch Member on the other side who has given notice of an Amendment which in no manner touches the principle of the question, and in so far as it has any principle at all, adopts the position I have indicated when I say I do not think that we have yet reached the situation when the circumstances are ripe for an ultimate and final consideration of this question on its merits. The principles applicable to the solution of this question are, however, by no means obscure or difficult to understand. I hold that Scotland and Ireland are precisely equal in the face of England with respect to their moral and political right to urge on the Imperial Parliament such claims as they may consider arise out of the interests and demands of those respective countries. They are precisely equal in this right, so that if I am to suppose a case in which Scotland unanimously, or

by a clearly preponderating voice, were to make the demand on the United Parliament to be treated, not only on the same principle, but in the same manner as Ireland, I could not deny the title of Scotland to urge such a claim. Moreover, I am bound to say that I have a perfectly sound conviction that if such a claim were made in the manner I have described as the clear and deliberate declaration of Scottish opinion, Parliament would accede to it. It is quite true that the country in 1886 denied that right on the part of Ireland, and the Parliament elected in 1886, whatever the opinion of the country may now be—a subject into which I shall not now enter—still continues to deny the claim of Ireland. But a similar claim coming from Scotland never would be denied. The English are a very brave nation, but they also possess that prudence which is the better part of valour, and which would prevent them from placing themselves in conflict with the deliberate and thoroughly formed Scotch opinion upon a case of this kind. As far as I may venture to form an opinion, in point of abstract right, Scotland and Ireland are upon a precisely equal footing, but the cases from a practical point of view are exceedingly different, as has been well shown by my hon. and learned Friend behind me. The mere physical difference, the mere fact of geographical continuity in the one case and not in the other is fraught with very large consequences. But the political and historical differences between the two cases are enormous. It would take hours to unfold these differences, and I will not now attempt to do so. As to the Union between England and Scotland, and that between England and Ireland, which are sometimes superficially imagined to correspond together in substance, there is this one difference, if no others, that the Union of Scotland and England was not forced by England upon Scotland—whether the Scottish Parliament in assenting to the Union followed Scottish opinion or not, it at any rate was not by English force or fraud that the Scottish Union was carried, whereas in the case of Ireland it was the English Executive which, by a combination of fraud and force, and tyranny and cruelty, hardly

to be equalled in the pages of any Christian history ["Oh!"], forced the Union upon Ireland. I hope that hon. Gentlemen who interrupt me with cries of dissent will not tempt me to occupy the time of the House by proving at length the truth of what I have said. Should I do so, the penalty would be that I should detain them much longer than I have any intention of doing. I say that, though there are immense differences between the cases of Scotland and of Ireland, which, as I believe, will weigh very powerfully with the people of Scotland in determining what their final claims shall be on England, still, whatever claim is made by the people of Scotland—providing it is consistent with the supremacy of Parliament and the integrity of the Empire—will be admitted, in my opinion, without cavil or ill blood between the countries. And now let me make a confession to my hon. Friend who moved the Resolution, a Resolution which it will be gathered from what I have said I am not prepared to support. I admit that a sentiment as yet vague and unformed, in embryo, but really of considerable extent, has grown up in Scotland of late years with very considerable rapidity in favour of something that in a shadowy manner is represented to the minds of those who consider it by the name of Home Rule for Scotland. I think the main cause of the growth and extent of this feeling has been correctly described by the hon. Member for North East Lanark (Mr. Crawford), that the Scotch people are not satisfied with the present arrangements for the conduct of Scotch business, and see no hope of bettering it. They see, on the contrary, taking the matter not as merely of a given time in a given Session, but judging for a period passing on from Parliament to Parliament, that their case is getting not better, but worse. The arrears of legislation, owing to no fault of anyone in particular, is becoming heavier and heavier, and as it becomes heavier and heavier the more is the truth of the homely phrase being exemplified, that "the weakest goes to the wall." The hon. Member for Roxburghshire has pointed out that if English Members influence Scotch legislation, the Scotch Members have the same influence over English legislation. Does he mean that 70 Members from Scotland will exercise

as much influence on the determination of English business, or are as likely to determine English questions in a sense adverse to English opinion, as the 400 odd Members from England are likely to exercise on Scotch questions, and in determining Scotch questions against Scotch opinion? Such is not according to my arithmetic. I see a very serious difference, though to my hon. Friend it seems but slight, between the sums of 70 Members and 470 Members. I hold gravely—I hope my hon. Friend will not consider it altogether an absurd opinion—that the 470 Members have rather more influence upon the operations of the 70 than the 70 have upon the operations of the 470. Without asking him to commit himself to that proposition, I put it forward for my hon. Friend's reflection. My hon. and learned Friends are right in holding that Scotch business is neglected. I am not prepared to lay the fault upon anybody in particular, or on this or any other Government; but the case is bad, it is growing worse, and it requires a remedy. But I am bound to say that, in my opinion, we are indebted to hon. Gentlemen opposite and to their allies, and more than allies, on this side, for creating, or rather presenting, this development of manifestations in favour of Home Rule for Scotland. It was not the proposal of Home Rule for Scotland, but the very vigorous opposition, and for the time the successful resistance they have made to that proposal, which has made the question enter more deeply into the minds of the people of Scotland, that for the first time brought home to the perception of the people of Scotland the breadth and importance of the subject. If I were in the place of the Mover of this Motion I should thank Her Majesty's Government and the noble Lord the Member for Rossendale and their followers for having matured public opinion in Scotland in favour of Home Rule. Undoubtedly there are many signs of the progress the question is making in Scotland. I am not prepared to take upon myself the responsibility of either dictating or indicating to Scotland what it should do in a matter of such gravity. I take my stand broadly upon this proposition—the mind of Scotland has not been declared in respect of the ultimate claims it may

have to make upon the United Parliament in regard to the management of Scotch affairs. My hon. and learned Friend has said the demands may be larger or smaller—and I cannot undertake to prognosticate whether they will be larger or smaller—but in one thing I differ vitally from hon. Gentlemen opposite who scoffed when I said I was not prepared to pronounce on the merits of this question. I understand that they are prepared to pronounce and to trample upon Scotland in this matter. ["No, no."] Well, then, I should like to know what the meaning of the ambiguous utterance was. Some day they will have to deal with the question; and the boldest of them will not look Scotland in the face with a denial when she makes her final well-considered and deliberate demand, with due regard to the authority of Parliament and the unity of the Empire. They will not look Scotland in the face and say "No" to the demand. Therefore, they are a little premature if they think they are now going to dispose definitely of this question, although at this time we do not know what the mind of Scotland is. The declaration made does not amount to a national and Constitutional declaration; it will become one when it has taken effect in the return of a large majority of Scotch Members. But as yet that declaration is not made, and I am not prepared to go in advance of it. I adopt the same attitude as the noble Lord the Member for Rossendale did when he was in charge of the Leadership of the Liberal Party with regard to the question of Disestablishment, which, he said, must be decided by the views of the people of Scotland. A like doctrine is equally sound with respect to a measure of Home Rule for Scotland, which must satisfy one paramount, overruling condition—that it does not endanger the supremacy of this Parliament and the unity of the Empire. When I speak of not endangering the supremacy of Parliament and the unity of the Empire, I differ entirely from my hon. Friend the Member for Roxburgh, who thinks that devolution of authority tends to weaken Parliament. That, I understand, was the effect of his speech. He feared that parting with any of the authority of Parliament weakens that

force which, I agree with him, is absolutely necessary to the efficiency of its discussions, and to give weight to its authority in the form of law. I do not think that judicious devolution weakens Parliament; I say it strengthens it. Are you going to weaken the authority of Parliament by passing the measures the Lord Advocate has introduced? On the contrary, you will confirm it. Do not suppose I am pledging myself to the Bills as they stand; they may be made more comprehensive and more worthy of the ability of the speech by which they were introduced. I hold that all judicious devolution which hands over to subordinate bodies duties for which they are better qualified by local knowledge, and which at the same time sets free the hands of Parliament for the pursuit of its proper business, does not weaken it but strengthens it, gives vitality to it, and makes the people more than ever disposed to support the supremacy of Parliament. I believe, though I am not quite certain, that this is the first occasion on which the proposal of Home Rule for Scotland has been submitted to Parliament in a form so broad and so comprehensive. The effect of passing this Motion would be to place Home Rule in the van of all Scottish questions in the House of Commons. If the Liberal Party—I will not say the House of Commons in which we are a small, though a growing minority—were to vote in favour of the Motion of my hon. Friend it would, in my opinion, have the effect of throwing into arrear and into the shade every other Scotch question on which the national opinion of Scotland is entitled to bear sway. I am not disposed to run that risk without seeing what the result would be. Take the question of licensing in Scotland. The moment we declare for Home Rule in Scotland we are open to the observation that such a question as that of licensing ought to stand over for the consideration of a Scottish Legislature. I take another question which is rather more burning—that of Scotch Disestablishment. It will not, I think, be denied that at this moment the question of Disestablishment in Scotland has made considerable progress towards maturity for Parliamentary decision; and I own that I am not prepared to give any vote on Home Rule or on any

other subject that would have the effect of thrusting that question aside, and of enabling it to be cast in our teeth that by setting forth as ripe for decision the question as to a Scottish Legislature we have pointed out that a Scottish Legislature would be the proper organ for disposing of the subject of Disestablishment. There is another objection that I take to a Motion of this kind. I am not casting the smallest reflection on my hon. Friend who made the Motion. I have not the least doubt that he and his Seconder and those who have supported him have in their minds perfect earnestness on this subject, and desire to carry forward with all practical speed the proposition which they announce in an abstract form, and to make it a practical resolution, not an abstract Resolution which there is no prospect of carrying into a practical measure. It may be an antiquated Parliamentary idea of mine, but I am not fond of these abstract Resolutions. They mean teaching the people to live, not on our performances, but on our promises; and my desire is that they should live, not on our promises, but on our performances. A proposal in an abstract form of some kind or another is an exceedingly popular thing. It may be supported either for the sake of popularity out of doors or for the convenience of a Party indoors. I may quote an example which I am afraid few of those who sit here have in their own personal recollection, but of which I have a lively remembrance. There was the case of the paper duty. Great credit was gained by the Tory Party in supporting, about the year 1858, an abstract Resolution declaring that the paper duty ought to be abolished. In 1860 a Liberal Government, the Government of Lord Palmerston, proposed a Bill for the abolition of the paper duty, but the fiercest antagonists of that measure were the Tory Party. It was not carried without a great struggle, and even, I think, after a conflict between the two Houses. The position of Scotland in regard to the important question of a domestic legislature for the transaction of Scotch business is, in my opinion, a thoroughly healthy and thoroughly favourable position. Scotland will never make any

demand except one that is consistent with the unity of the Empire, and tending to consolidate and strengthen the fabric of the Empire and the authority of the Imperial Parliament. Subject to that limitation, Scotland may rest assured, and I believe will rest assured, that her demands will be considered in a favourable spirit when they are clearly ascertained and fully brought forward. On the other hand, this subject is one which, as we know from the Irish case, involves large and numerous matters of detail. I doubt whether the mind of the House of Commons or even of the country sufficiently realizes the multitude of various and complicated details that are associated with this question. But Scotland will have the advantage—and in my opinion the inestimable advantage—of seeing the question, according to the expressive old phrase, bolted to the bran; and the whole subject will be worked through and through on the Irish points. Scotland will reap the advantage of that; so that if there be some delay, as there must be, both for her to make up her mind and for Parliament to approach the question, Scotland will be richly rewarded by the increased facilities she will have in advancing her claim. Under these circumstances I feel no shame in saying, but, on the contrary, I freely admit, in the face of my kind, indulgent, and generous constituency, that I do not think that this question is ripe for our decision; and, until it is ripe for our decision, I should forfeit any title I may have to the favourable attention and kindness of the House and the confidence of my constituency were I to support the proposal which is now brought before the House.

*THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, East): The right hon. Gentleman began his speech by making some complaints against Her Majesty's Government for not giving any clear and definite utterance upon what he describes as the important and difficult question which is now before the House; and he went on to criticize the action of those Members of the House who had put down Amendments to the Motion of the hon. Member for Caithness (Dr. Clark), because they had withdrawn their Amendments and had not had

the courage to put before the House the Resolutions which they had upon the Paper. The right hon. Gentleman forgets, or perhaps he was not aware, that the hon. Member for Caithness has materially altered the form of his Motion since it first appeared on the Paper. He has stiffened and strengthened it until it is too difficult even for the right hon. Gentleman and his Friends to swallow. Amendments that might have been, and probably were, appropriate to the original and weak form in which the Motion of the hon. Member for Caithness originally appeared on the Paper became in the opinion of the intending Movers, and certainly in mine, wholly superfluous, where we had to deal with a definite proposal to establish a Scotch Parliament. I am glad that the hon. Members have withdrawn their Amendments; for I desire the House should have the opportunity of voting definitely "Aye" or "No" on the question. And I, at all events, speaking for my right hon. Friends on this Bench, and, I believe, for the whole of the Party behind me, am prepared to give a clear and definite reply to the challenge thrown down by the hon. Member for Caithness, without any of the ingenious qualifications with which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. Gladstone) is himself going to modify the effects of the vote he is to give to-night. The right hon. Gentleman has told us that the sentiment in favour of Home Rule is growing rapidly in Scotland. I doubt that fact. I entirely admit that you cannot have a discussion like that with regard to Home Rule in Ireland—the one solitary topic of political controversy on every platform—without raising some pale reflection of the controversy with regard to Scotland. But I do not believe that in the minds and hearts of the Scottish people there is anything in the nature of a sentiment growing up in favour of the scheme which is known as Home Rule, and which it is proposed to apply to Ireland. And if there be in the minds of any small section of the Scottish people a feeling of that kind, who is their spokesman? The right hon. Gentleman followed to-night in debate the hon. Member for Lanark (Mr. Graham). Oddly

enough, he did not make one single allusion, however distant, to the speech preceding his own.

MR. GRAHAM (Lanark, N.W.): Yes, he did.

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I failed to catch it, and I do not think it can have gone beyond some empty compliment to the hon. Gentleman in question. Because, what was the argument of the hon. Gentleman? He said in the clearest language—he does not deal, like right hon. Gentleman, in circumlocution and ambiguities—what he wanted, and why he wanted it. The hon. Member for Lanark, speaking in the name of his constituents, told us that he wants Home Rule for Scotland because he wants Socialism in Scotland. ["Hear, hear," from Mr. GRAHAM.] He admits, therefore, that I have not misrepresented or exaggerated his sentiments.

*MR. GRAHAM (Lanark, N.W.): I always stand by my words.

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: He wants Home Rule because he wants Socialism. I want to know whether, when the right hon. Gentleman talks of the growing feeling in Scotland in favour of Home Rule, he is alluding to the sentiment which the hon. Member for Lanark so courageously represents? That sentiment may, I admit, be growing in certain parts of Scotland. I believe that much of this Irish agitation is a Socialistic agitation. I believe that the reflection of the Irish agitation is also a Socialistic agitation. And I should have desired that we should have had some utterance from the right hon. Gentleman as to whether he observes with satisfaction the growing sentiment in Scotland not merely in favour of Home Rule, but in favour of these Socialistic opinions which we have been told by the hon. Member for Lanark are the real basis and root of the Home Rule cry in Scotland. The right hon. Gentleman told us that, in his opinion, Scotland and Ireland stood on a perfect equality on this matter in principle; and whatever Ireland asks for in principle, Scotland has the right to ask for in principle. I accept that entirely. And whatever Ireland has a right to ask for in principle, Middlesex has a right to ask for in principle. And what-

ever Middlesex asks for, Yorkshire has a right to ask for. That I entirely grant. And by the cheers of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle (Mr. J. Morley) I presume that he accepts that statement.

MR. J. MORLEY (Newcastle-on-Tyne) indicated dissent.

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Then I should be glad to know on what basis a distinction is drawn between Yorkshire and Middlesex on the one hand, and Ireland and Scotland on the other. Take the case of the Highlands of Scotland. We are accustomed rightly to regard Scotland as in some respects a great unity. But I venture to say that the Highlands of Scotland are more unlike the Lowlands of Scotland in every essential particular than the Lowlands are unlike the North of England. Linguistically, ethnologically, in the character of the people, in the social habits, in every single thing of essential moment, I boldly state that the line of division is not the division between England and Scotland, but some line to be drawn far north of that. I want to know, therefore, if the Highlands, conscious as they are of being separate from the Lowlands in race and in social habits, traditions, and history, and conscious, as they also are, that they have been separated from the Lowlands by centuries of warfare—if the Highlands were to ask for Home Rule for the Highlands, are they to be regarded as on an equality with Ireland? This is a question which ought to be presented to the mind of every man discussing this question, and I hope it will be presented to the minds of the people of Scotland by this debate and others which will probably follow it. But the right hon. Gentleman, while he is good enough to say that Scotland is on an equality with Ireland in principle in this matter, says that there are two broad distinctions between the cases. The first is founded on geographical considerations. It appears that Home Rule may be safely deferred in the case of Scotland, because it is not separated from England by St. George's Channel. I never travelled over to Ireland without entertaining a strong feeling of gratitude that I have not, when going home, to cross four hours of tempestuous ocean. But I never knew

before how much I had to be grateful for. I never knew that it was owing to the fact that Ireland was an island that Home Rule was to be conferred on Ireland, but that this blessing may be indefinitely withheld in the case of Scotland, because Scotland is not an island. That is the geographical reason of the right hon. Gentleman. He then came to the historical reason. The right hon. Gentleman told us that the Union with Ireland was the result of force, fraud, brutality, and bloodshed. Apparently he thinks that the Union with Scotland was constructed by methods which every statesman may look back upon with pride and satisfaction. The right hon. Gentleman is always bringing bad history to the rescue of bad politics. I think he has greatly, grossly exaggerated the historical incidents, many of them unhappy, many of them regrettable, which accompanied the Union between England and Ireland, and that he has minimized and disguised the incidents which were associated with the Union between England and Scotland. Is it not perfectly notorious, is it not the commonplace of English and Scottish history that there never was a more unpopular measure in Scotland than that which united the fate of Scotland, as I hope for all time, with England? Is it not the commonplace of history that it was only after long experience had convinced the people of Scotland that all their highest interests, material, moral, and political, were bound up with the great Act of Union that they became what, I believe, they have ever since remained, firmly attached to the Union with the larger country? Then the right hon. Gentleman said the boldest among us would not dare to look Scotchmen in the face when Scotland makes a deliberate claim for Home Rule, subject, as he said, to Imperial control. I grant if that should ever occur it would be a phenomenon of the most serious character, which no man can regard with indifference or equanimity; but supposing Scotland, supposing Ireland, were to ask for a Parliament not subject to the control of the Imperial Parliament, what is the boldest going to do then? That is a question of vital importance. When Scotland has developed her views on this question, if no one, according to

the right hon. Gentleman, is to have the courage to resist the claim to a Scotch Parliament subject to the Imperial Parliament, what is the boldest going to do when the inevitable demand is made for a Parliament which will not be so subject? The right hon. Gentleman then said that if you pass this abstract Resolution you will throw into the background all those great and important questions upon which Scotland has set its heart.

MR. GLADSTONE: That was not my expression at all.

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Well, throw into the background the questions concerning Scotland which are now in the foreground. The right hon. Gentleman mentioned particularly Licensing and Disestablishment. I wonder the right hon. Gentleman could use this argument without a smile, because it amounts to this—that Scotland is to wait until all the important Scottish questions are settled before she is to have a separate Parliament in order to settle them. Does he not see that if all those interesting questions are before the Scottish people, now is the time to give Scotland Home Rule, and the sooner the better? Then Scotland will, indeed, have a chance of having the Licensing and Disestablishment Questions settled. “Not at all,” says the right hon. Gentleman, “we in the Imperial Parliament, we in this overworked and overloaded and incompetent Parliament, are to settle Disestablishment and Licensing, and when those difficult questions are disposed of then give Scotland Home Rule if she wants it.” I cannot help thinking that when the right hon. Gentleman was occupied in the difficult task of at once making a speech which will satisfy the national aspirations for Home Rule in Scotland, and which will give sufficient reason why he is going to vote against a Resolution to give Home Rule to Scotland, he used an argument he had better have left alone. I think I have now gone through all the topics mentioned

in the right hon. Gentleman’s speech. I will only say, in conclusion, that surely we should be mad if at the time when every nation in America and in Europe is drawing closer the bonds which unite separate parts, we were to scatter and divide. Should we not be especially mad if we engaged in this task with regard to Scotland, about which it can be conclusively proved that the fruits of the Union have been an unmitigated blessing, as I believe, to both countries, and especially to Scotland? The Union found Scotland poor, despised, and oppressed among the nations of Europe. Great as has been the progress in England since 1707, it has been absolutely insignificant, trivial, and contemptible compared with the improvement that Scotland has made in everything which makes a nation great. Are you really going to lay sacrilegious hands on institutions which work so well? I speak, as I have a right to speak on this question, as a Scotsman, and I say that if I found, or believed, that the Union between England and Scotland had destroyed anything which is valuable or characteristic in our national life, I should feel sorely tempted to vote with the hon. Member. But it has not been so, and the whole history of Scotland proves that it has not been so. We have not been overshadowed by the larger nation. We have not had our national life crushed by the life of England. We have not suffered in any essential particular of our civilization from its being attached to the civilization of the neighbouring country. We have, on the contrary, gained the inestimable privilege of feeling ourselves citizens of one great community, and of taking our full share in the management of this great Empire. I will not be a party, and those who sit near me will never be parties, to anything which can, even in the smallest degree, tend to diminish the great heritage which has been handed down to us.

MR. R. T. REID (Dumfries, &c.): I am not going to occupy much of the time of the House, but I must say it is somewhat characteristic of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland, the chief champion of the Union in the House,

not to be aware of the date with which his own country entered into that Union. I cannot congratulate the right hon. Gentleman on his historical accuracy. But I desire to express my entire concurrence with the right hon. Gentleman in one thing which he said—namely, that if this Motion tended in the smallest degree to withdraw Scotland or Scotch business from its full share in the proceedings of this House and the Imperial Parliament, I for one would readily vote against it. I do not believe that any of my countrymen would tolerate for a single instant the withdrawal from this Parliament of any portion of Scotch influence here, but that is not the question raised here to-night. We are dealing with a practical grievance which must be acknowledged to exist, and that is the habitual neglect of all Scotch business. Is there a Member on the Tory Benches who can deny that proposition? Is it not the case that during the past few years Scotch Members have been habitually out-voted on questions thoroughly affecting Scotland by English Members? We have no hostility to English Members, but we do most deliberately object to being obliged to come hat in hand to the English Members to ask them to give us an opportunity for considering our Scotch Bills which are required in the interest of our people. I will only give one illustration. Who knows Scotland and does not know that it is scourged with the evil of drink? Who does not know that many, even Conservative Members, are anxious to see that evil removed? But anyone who watches the proceedings of this House knows thoroughly well that we have no chance whatever of dealing with the matter. Now, what is remarkable about the speech of the Chief Secretary is this, that he does not offer, on behalf of the Government, the smallest hope to Scotland or the Scotch Members of ameliora-

Mr. R. T. Reid

tion in this matter. He has heard the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian, and he has heard the speeches of the other Scotch Members, and yet he does not deny the allegation. He admits the grievance, and holds out no prospect whatever of any remedy. These are serious facts which are under the consideration of the House. The hon. Member for Caithness has been cruel in placing many Scotch Members in a dilemma; but for myself I have no hesitation as to how I am going to vote. I am going to vote for the Resolution. If I believed it meant what was described by the Chief Secretary for Ireland, I should not support it, but I consider that it means that Scotch business ought to be managed by Scotchmen, and in Scotland, without interfering in any sense with this Parliament, or indeed with our presence here as we are. It is in that sense, and that sense alone, that I will support the proposal of my hon. Friend. I go further, and say that even if I were not prepared to accept the full words, and the full extent of the Resolution, I think the grievances are so great, and the hopelessness of a remedy, after the speech of the Chief Secretary, has become so marked, that I should be disposed to stretch a point a little in order to indicate by my vote on this occasion the supreme resentment I feel—and it has been expressed by men of both Parties in my constituency—at the neglect, the habitual and scandalous neglect, of Scotch business in this House.

***MR. HOZIER** (Lanarkshire, South): If this were the first Parliament summoned under the original Act of Union between Scotland and England, I can well imagine that the hon. Member for Caithness would have a very substantial ground of complaint; for, according to that original Act of Union, Bute and Caithness had only the right to send a Member to Parliament alternately, and Bute had the first turn. If that arrangement were still in force, the Member for Caithness would at this moment be gnashing his teeth in outer

darkness, and panting for the opportunity of pouring forth his winning words to a listening and delighted Senate. But he would not have the only, or the chief ground of complaint, for the vast majority of the Members of this House would also have a very just ground of complaint. We should all be looking forward with dismay to the prospect of having in the next Parliament to exchange the magnificent eloquence of my right hon. Friend the Member for Bute (the Lord Advocate) for the sort of oratory with which the hon. Member for Caithness is so very fond of favouring us. Happily this double grievance, like many other grievances, has been removed, and for many many years Scotland has, under the Act of Union, thriven and prospered exceedingly. Let us look for a moment at the real meaning of the present Motion. It is brought forward by the hon. Member for Caithness as the spokesman of the Home Rule Association of Scotland, and it ought to be remembered that the Scottish Home Rule Association emphatically decline to accept any Local Government Bill such as is ordinarily meant by the term. In a letter of the 5th of December last to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian, they say they decline to accept any Local Government Bill, on the ground that it ought to be preceded by Home Rule legislation, and we are therefore led to the conclusion that what is meant is some such scheme as that which was introduced in the case of Ireland. On this point I am certain that no Scotchman would accept any scheme that would exclude the Scotch Members from the Imperial Parliament; and if you once admit the Scotch Members there, then arises the difficulty of distinguishing between Imperial and Scottish business, which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian distinctly said, when speaking of Ireland, was a difficulty which it passes the wit of man to overcome. But, even if any such distinction could be made, we must remember that in the vast majority of Bills it would

be absolutely necessary that there should be uniformity between the two countries. Take such cases as the Factory Acts and Mining Acts. I believe I am more advanced on Labour questions than almost any hon. Member on this side of the House, and probably more than most of those on the Opposition Benches, but there is no one who can appreciate more distinctly the great difficulty and danger that would be caused by any distinction between Scotland and England in such cases. Further, I should like to ask the hon. Member for Caithness, whether, among the powers he proposes to give the Scottish Parliament he would include power to deal with such questions as those relating to Church Establishments and Religious Endowments. I understand the hon. Member to say "Yes." Then I say that he goes far further than did the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian with regard to Ireland, because in the Bill of 1886 such questions were specially taken away from the Irish Parliament. But if so, why? Does he mean that he is quite willing and even very anxious to trust the Protestants of Scotland, but that he declines to trust the Roman Catholics of Ireland? The hon. Gentleman professes to be an advocate of what he calls religious equality. Is that the hon. Gentleman's idea of religious equality? We know that among those who at present profess Home Rule principles there are many waverers. The hon. Member for the Luton division of Bedford (Mr. Cyril Flower) who won a race on Saturday that some of us had the pleasure of witnessing, is not the first Member of the House who has brought two horses to the start, one called "Home Rule," and the other called "Sultan," or something else. He is not the only man who has hesitated up to the last moment which of the two horses he should ride. He is not the first, and he will not be the last, to finally reject the horse called "Home Rule," and to ride and win on the other. And then calls the horse "Home Rule" after all! I have noticed that most of these waverers have a way of following the lead of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian, and the right hon. Gentleman has given them the advice

contained in two lines of a comic opera—

"Let us see how things may go
That isn't quite yes and isn't quite no."

So we know exactly the spirited course which they will pursue. For my part I will venture to take this opportunity of saying that I most cordially welcome the measures of Local Government which were last night introduced by the Lord Advocate with so much credit to himself and with so much prospective advantage to Scotland. I trust the people. I believe in the people. And I have far too great confidence in the good sense and wisdom of the people of Scotland to imagine them capable of being led astray to break down the Union which, whatever may be said, has done, and is doing, an enormous amount of good, not to England only, not to England chiefly—but both to Scotland and to England combined and united.

*MR. WALLACE (Edinburgh): I regret that I have to rise, even at this late hour, for the purpose of proposing an Amendment to the Resolution of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Caithness. That Amendment is to add to the Resolution of my hon. Friend the words, "at such time and of such a character as may be desired by the Scottish people," so that, if my Amendment be carried along with the Resolution, the Resolution would read as follows:—

"That, in the opinion of this House, it is desirable that arrangements be made for giving to the people of Scotland, by their Representatives in a National Parliament the management and control of Scottish affairs, at such time and of such a character as may be desired by the Scottish people."

I have said I regret to move an Amendment of this kind, because until to-day I was perfectly satisfied with the form of his Motion, which I regarded as meeting a necessity such as in my opinion does exist for giving expression to the profound and constantly growing dissatisfaction of the Scottish people at the apparently incurable neglect of their

business by the Imperial Parliament, and their increasing conviction that there must be some decisive and radical change. But on coming down to the House, I found to my surprise that my hon. Friend's Resolution had assumed an entirely different form by which it would commit me to a precise and definite plan, with respect to which I do not understand that the Representatives of Scotland at the present moment hold any mandate from their constituencies. To my mind, it would be as fatal to our democratic principle to force Home Rule in the shape of a National Parliament on an unwilling people as it would be to refuse it to them when they desired it; and having no authority from my constituents, and knowing none from my country, to support my hon. Friend's Motion, I feel bound, for my own protection, to interpose an Amendment which will make my duty to the Scottish people plain to them and to this House, and to my own mind. I feel satisfied that if the time should come when the people of Scotland, having maturely reflected on the matter, desire anything in the nature of a domestic Government such as is shadowed forth in this Resolution, it will be a reasonable and proper demand, and one which may be safely conceded by Parliament; but until they have given their voice in the matter I do not feel myself authorized to take up the position which my hon. Friend and his Secondor consider themselves justified in taking to-night. I believe that the attitude of the people of Scotland in regard to the question of Home Rule is in a state of formation. I agree with what has been stated as to the condition of the mind of Scotland with regard to the way in which its affairs are treated, or maltreated here; but whatever may be the conception of the remedy which exists in the Scottish mind, I wish to impress on the House this fact, that the attitude of Scotland towards the question of Home Rule within its own borders is determined at the present

moment by its attitude towards the question of Irish Home Rule; and that the simple reason why there is not greater excitement manifested in the shape of Petitions to this House, and of enthusiastic and crowded public meetings in Scotland on the question of Scotch Home Rule, is to be found in the circumstance that they consider it a national duty to devote their strength in the meantime to the promotion of Home Rule for Ireland. I know it would be out of order to enter on the question of Irish Home Rule on this Motion, but in order to indicate the attitude of the Scottish mind on its own Home Rule question I must be permitted briefly to state what is the attitude of the Scottish mind towards the question of Irish Home Rule. The mind of Scotland is, as a whole, fully made up on this question. The Scotch people regard the demand for Irish Home Rule as sincere, and also as safe and certain to be fulfilled. They regard it as sincere. They do not look on the excitement in Ireland on this matter as some do, as merely a factitious demand created by agitators. They regard the question of Irish Home Rule as perfectly safe. They are not disposed to accept the teaching of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, who comes down to their first seat of national learning and seeks to teach that national organization is equivalent to Imperial disintegration. And they are not disposed to believe that nations are moved by irrational and insane considerations, and, therefore, they believe that Ireland, even if she had the power to separate herself from the British Empire, would not, apart from lunacy, seek a separation from which she would have nothing to gain. Once more, I say that the Scotch people are of opinion that Irish Home Rule is certain to come. They do not believe that the policy of Her Majesty's Government can be successful, even if persevered in. They do not believe, taught by the traditions of their own country, that mere force can suppress a novel force like national aspiration, or that it can be even touched by physical violence, unless resort is had to those bloody methods of extermination, which I do not believe even Her Majesty's Govern-

ment would attempt in the present day. They do not believe that plank beds are a refutation of political truths or of historical facts. Accordingly, they are content to await what they believe to be a certain victory, when this matter comes to the point. But they, at the same time, know that victory will not be obtained except through a struggle, and they do not object to a hard struggle, either in this or in any other matter, because when their blood is up they are rather fond of a fight than otherwise. At the same time they know that it will be a hard struggle. They think that to carry Irish Home Rule is not unlike pulling a camel through the eye of a needle. They know that is a difficult operation, although they also believe that, with a long pull and a strong pull and a pull all together, it can be done. But they have sense enough to see that the pulling of two camels simultaneously through the eye of the needle could be done by nothing short of a miracle. And, therefore, they do not expect to be able to carry Irish Home Rule and Scotch Home Rule simultaneously and successfully through. So they have at once the wisdom and generosity to be content that their own question shall for a time stand by until, with their help, and with the help of the friends of the cause, the question of Irish Home Rule shall be settled in that successful way in which it is certain to be settled eventually, both because they believe that the necessity of Ireland is greater than their own, and also because they recognize the fact that Ireland was first in the field. Therefore it is, Sir, that I am not able, without the words of the Amendment which I have suggested, to agree with the Motion of my hon. Friend. I may further say that I am not quite certain that, in the condition of mind of the Scotch people now, they will regard with entire satisfaction the language of the Resolution, because it is worded so as to exclude a Scottish Executive, of which he makes no mention whatever. I rather suspect that the Scottish people will regard that as possibly an unintended but not the less a decided smack in the face to Ireland; because if, as the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Midlothian has said, national aspirations are equal in their rights all over the world, it may be in-

ferred that, as Scotland is equally a nationality with Ireland, Ireland can do without an Executive if Scotland can. Therefore, I rather suspect that this Motion in that respect will not meet with favour in Scotland; and it would have met with a different reception had it been otherwise worded. And I think that in another respect this Motion will not meet with the complete approbation of the Scottish people in the frame of mind which they now maintain towards the Irish people, because it speaks in the most vague and undefined way of the nature of the legislative power which is to have control of Scottish affairs.

SIR C. DALRYMPLE rose in his place and claimed to move "That the question be now put;" but Mr. Deputy Speaker withheld his assent and declined then to put that question.

*MR. WALLACE resumed: You know it is the fact that it uses the word "Parliament," and I venture to submit that the word "Parliament," or even the phrase "National Parliament," is not definite. It may mean a Council of any description, with undefined powers, and it is not necessarily identical in character with the Imperial Parliament. It simply means an assembly for the purpose of legislative discussion. If that be so, the Scottish people do not know what sort of a Council, or National Council it is that my hon. Friend is driving at. For anything we know, it may be akin to one of those numerous Councils which are springing from time to time from the incessantly parturient brain of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham—a Council which may have possibly to report its proceedings as if it were in the nature of a subordinate Committee to the Imperial Parliament, and not anything in the nature of an independent Parliament. I know very well that the offer of such an assembly, call it by what name you please, will not create any enthusiasm in the Scottish mind. I do not think

Mr. Wallis

I shall be performing my duty as a representative of the Scottish people if I were to give my support to the Motion of my hon. Friend. But while this is so, I know that there is the utmost dissatisfaction in Scotland with respect to the condition of its business in this Parliament, and that being so, without going over the ground travelled by other Members, I desire to submit to the House the Amendment which I now propose to add to the Motion of my hon. Friend the words "At such time and of such a character as may be desired by the Scottish people."

MR. E. ROBERTSON (Dundee): I rise for the purpose of seconding the Amendment moved by my hon. Friend the Member for East Edinburgh. I do so because it correctly expresses the views which I hold on the question now before the House.

DR. CAMERON rose in his place and claimed to move "That the Question be now put."

Question, "That the question be now put," put, and agreed to.

Question put accordingly.

The House divided:—Ayes 79; Noes 200.—(Div. List, No. 70.)

It being after One of the clock, Mr. Deputy Speaker adjourned the House without question put.

HANSARD'S PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES.

No. 2.] THIRD VOLUME OF SESSION 1889. [APRIL 18.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Wednesday, 10th April, 1889.

MR. SPEAKER'S INDISPOSITION.

The House being met, the Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of Mr. Speaker, owing to the continuance of his indisposition.

Whereupon Mr. Courtney, the Chairman of Ways and Means, proceeded to the Table; and, after Prayers, took the Chair as Deputy Speaker, pursuant to the Standing Order.

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES)

SIR JOHN MOWBRAY reported from the Committee of Selection; That they had nominated the following Members to serve on the Standing Committee for the consideration of all Bills relating to Law and Courts of Justice and Legal Procedure which may by Order of the House be committed to such Standing Committee:—Mr. Tyssen Amhurst, Mr. Asquith, Mr. Atherley-Jones, Mr. J. B. Balfour, Mr. Bartley, Mr. Beach, Mr. Beadel, Mr. William Beckett, Mr. George Cavendish Bentinck, Mr. Jacob Bright, Mr. Bryce, Sir George Campbell, Sir Edward Clarke, Mr. Jesse Collings, Dr. Commins, Mr. Cremer, Mr. Curzon, Mr. Darling, Mr. H. T. Davenport, Colonel Dawnay, Sir John Dorington, Mr. Dugdale, Viscount Ebrington, Mr. Arthur Elliot, Mr. John E. Ellis, Mr. Elton, Sir Thomas Esmonde, Mr. Finlay, Mr. Herbert Gardner, Mr. Herbert Gladstone, Sir William Vernon Harcourt, Mr. T. M. Healy, Mr.

Staveley Hill, Mr. Samuel Hoare, Mr. Hobhouse, Mr. Isaacs, Sir Ughtred Kay-Shuttleworth, Mr. Kenyon, Mr. Compton Lawrance, Mr. W. F. Lawrence, Mr. George Shaw Lefevre, Sir Charles Lewis, Mr. Lockwood, Mr. Macartney, Mr. Francis Maclean, Mr. Swift MacNeill, Mr. Madden, Mr. Mahony, Mr. Marum, Mr. Story-Maskelyne, Mr. Matthews, Mr. Milvain, Mr. John Morley, Mr. William O'Brien, Mr. Pickard, Mr. Picton, Mr. Thomas P. Price, Sir John Puleston, Mr. John E. Redmond, Mr. Bannerman Robertson, Mr. T. W. Russell, Sir Charles Russell, Sir Richard Temple, Sir George Trevelyan, Mr. Whitmore, Mr. Arthur Williams, Mr. Wodehouse, and Mr. Stuart Wortley.

Sir J. MOWBRAY further reported from the said Committee that they had nominated the following Members to serve on the Standing Committee for the consideration of all Bills relating to Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping, and Manufacture which may, by order of the House, be committed to such Standing Committee:—Mr. Addison, Mr. Asher, Mr. Baring, Mr. Barran, Sir Walter Barttelot, Sir Michael Hicks Beach, Sir Edward Birkbeck, Mr. Bolitho, Mr. J. C. Bolton, Mr. Bonsor, Mr. Boord, Mr. A. H. Brown, Mr. Brunner, Mr. Burt, Mr. Joseph Chamberlain, Mr. Childers, Mr. Colman, Mr. W. J. Corbet, Sir James Corry, Mr. Craig, Sir Charles Dalrymple, Mr. Stormonth Darling, Baron Henry De Worms, Mr. Dixon-Hartland, Sir George Elliot, Mr. T. E. Ellis, Colonel Eyre, Mr. R. U. Penrose Fitzgerald, Mr. Gilliat, Sir Julian Goldsmid, Mr. Grotrian, Mr. A. W. Hall, Mr. F. Hardcastle, Mr. Heneage, Sir William Houldsworth, Mr. Howell, Mr.

Hoyle, Mr. Jackson, Mr. William Lowther, Sir John Lubbock, Mr. Peter M'Donald, Mr. M'Lagan, Mr. Mundella, Mr. Muntz, Mr. Murphy, Sir Stafford Northcote, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Sir Richard Paget, Mr. Parnell, Sir Joseph Pease, Mr. Richard Power, Mr. Rathbone, Mr. Edmund Robertson, Mr. Oraig Sellar, Mr. Sexton, Mr. Shiel, Mr. William P. Sinclair, Mr. Samuel Smith, Mr. Ernest Spencer, Mr. T. D. Sullivan, Mr. Tomlinson, Sir Richard Webster, Mr. Wharton, Mr. Whitley, Mr. S. Williamson, Mr. C. H. Wilson, Mr. Winterbotham, and Mr. Wood.

Ordered, That the Report do lie upon the Table.

REGISTRATION OF ELECTORS ACTS (ORDER IN COUNCIL).

Copy ordered—

"Of the Order in Council as to the Instructions, Precepts, Notices, and Forms under the Registration of Electors Acts.—(*Mr. Stansfeld.*)

METROPOLITAN FIRE BRIGADE EXPENSES BILL.—[Bill 89.]

Order for Second Reading read, and discharged.

Bill withdrawn.

Q U E S T I O N .

THE MARQUESS OF LONDONDERRY.

MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): I wish to ask the Solicitor General for Ireland if it is true, as reported, that Lord Londonderry has offered to resign his position as Lord Lieutenant of Ireland.

The SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. MADDEN, University of Dublin): This is the first that I have heard of the suggestion.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

AGRICULTURAL TENANTS (IRELAND) BILL.—[BILL 7.]

Order for Second Reading read.

*MR. CRILLY (Mayo, N.): At the outset of the remarks I intend to offer in explanation of this Bill, the Second Reading of which I now move, I wish to express my regret that I find myself in the position of having to introduce into this House once more one of those never-ending Irish Land Bills which

have been troubling hon. Members in this Chamber ever since they undertook in 1800 the thankless and profitless task of legislating for the Irish people—a task which would have been much better discharged by the Irish people themselves, to the mutual advantage of both England and Ireland. Unfortunately, Irish Land Bills have been haunting this House, occupying its time and overburdening its records to a far greater extent than any other question that ever came before it, and even if this measure were to pass into law, if we are to accept the statements of the right hon. Member for West Birmingham (Mr. J. Chamberlain), and if we are to believe other inspired oracles, this is by no means the last Irish Land Bill that is going to be forced upon this House. It is pre-ordained, if these oracles are to be believed, that the final Irish Land Bill which is to trouble this House—the crowning measure of legislation which is to solve for all time this huge agrarian difficulty, is to come from the fertile brain and cunning hand of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham. There can be no doubt that one of the most interesting and entertaining works of fiction which will delight and surprise literary circles in the coming time, a work of fiction far surpassing in attractiveness "The Last Days of Pompeii," "The Last of the Barons," "The Last of the Tribunes" or "The Last of the Mohicans," will be "The Last of the Land Bills, by the Right Hon. Joseph Chamberlain." If, however, Irish Land Bills are continually knocking at your door, it is all your own fault. You have never failed in the past, nor in the present, to pursue your old vicious "dog in the manger" policy. You refuse to deal with the question in a thorough-going and drastic fashion yourselves, and you decline to send us about our business to College Green, where we should speedily be able to settle the difficulty for ourselves. As to the particular Bill which I propose to discuss to-day, I have no doubt we shall be told that it is a large and comprehensive measure, containing unprecedented proposals. My answer in anticipation is, that if this is a large and comprehensive measure it is framed for the purpose of meeting large and comprehensive evils. And as you cannot make war with

rose water, so you cannot grapple with and remove gross scandals and colossal evils without taking action at once bold and far-reaching. My contention in this matter is that this is not a large and comprehensive measure in the sense of its being either unprecedented or revolutionary. It is a proposal to do two things—to give in the first place natural and legitimate effect to principles and measures which have already been accepted and endorsed by this House; and, secondly, to put beyond doubt some points on the Statute Book in reference to Irish land legislation—points which the framers and promoters of that legislation never meant should be involved for a single instant in the slightest obscurity. The Bill is, consequently, at one and the same time an extending and an explanatory Bill. It seeks to carry out the spirit of the Land Acts of 1870, 1881, and 1887, in so far as those Acts evinced a desire to do justice to the Irish tenant, and to give him legal protection in the enjoyment of his own property. It seeks, further, to bring within the region of common sense definitions which, as they stand, are so complex and involved that they puzzle and bewilder the highest and most competent tribunals in the country. As to the details of the Bill, I do not disguise that they may be viewed with apprehension by those who are willing to take on themselves to-day in this House the office of champions of the heartless evictions which have taken place in Donegal, Galway, and Kildare, by the organizers of what has been justly described as “the devil’s work” in Ireland. The Bill seeks to afford more efficient protection to the tenant’s own improvement in his holding; it would bring about a revision of the Statutory term of 15 years; it empowers the Land Court to deal with the question of arrears, it amends the law relating to leaseholders, and it regulates the question of turbary. If the improvements which the Irish tenants have made in their holdings in the past were unreservedly their own, if the accumulations of arrears which have grown up in past years as the inevitable consequence of rack rents were readjusted, as you have readjusted them in Scotland, and if the Irish tenants had free and speedy access to an impartially constituted Land Court—can it be ima-

gined for a moment that the world would be shocked at the heartrending scenes which have occurred at evictions at Glenbeigh and Clongorey; would there be found in Donegal a desolation which almost amounts to civil war; and would you have at your doors the shame and disgrace of a Clanricarde’s infamies? It is because we are anxious to put some kind of stop to these atrocities and injustices that we come to-day to this House to ask you to pass the Second Reading of this Bill. We put in the forefront of the measure the question of the protection of the tenants’ improvements. To re-state the case on behalf of the tenants’ improvements in Ireland would be to repeat a story which has been told *ad nauseam*; but it is a matter of fact and history that no Irish reform was ever carried in this House until it had been dinned into our ears time after time and year after year, and, perhaps, when we have further dinned into our ears the justice and necessity of Home Rule, it will probably be granted, and then, probably, no thanks will be returned, because you will have been compelled to pass that measure. All the improvements in Irish agricultural holdings have been made by the industry and capital of the tenants themselves, and the landlords, as a rule, have not contributed a single farthing towards them. The Report of the Devon Commission in 1845, the Bessborough Commission in 1881, and the Cowper Commission only a couple of years ago, reported that the improvements and equipments of the farms were solely the work of the tenants. Lord Cowper, speaking on the 21st of April, 1887, with the special knowledge he had gained as Chairman of the Commission, said:—“Until recently the landlords did not make improvements on the land, and when the tenants made them their rents were immediately raised.” A great Englishman, recently deceased—the late Mr. Bright—on one occasion made the famous declaration that if the land of Ireland were denuded of the tenants’ improvements, it would simply run to prairie value. Your Royal Commissions, packed and picked by yourselves, guided and influenced by Irish landlords, have all reported that the tenants and not the landlords of Ireland have made the improvements. Why, then, are the tenants not given that to which they

are justly entitled? If these improvements are the tenants' own, why, in the name of justice and common sense, do you not make them their own at once? It is only in a Biblical sense, I suppose, the Conservative Party in this House are prepared to render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's. But I do not ask you to protect the improvements of the tenants in their holdings in Ireland merely because the Royal Commissioners have reported that they were made by the tenants themselves. I ask the Government to declare, as the Act of 1881 declared, that no rent shall be put upon the tenant on account of the improvements he has made. In that year this House enacted that no rent should be payable on improvements of the tenant or his predecessor in title, unless compensated by the landlord or his predecessor in title; but the jugglery of the Land Courts in Ireland have defeated the intention of the Act of Parliament. The famous judgment in the case of *Adams v. Dunseath* set at naught the clauses of the Land Act of 1881, which sought to give the tenants protection for the improvements they had made, notwithstanding the fact that Lord Chancellor Law, one of the leading men who framed the Bill of 1881, was against the interpretation put upon the Act by his fellow judges. There is also the opinion of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. Gladstone), who said, on the 9th of August, 1881—

“That was not the basis on which they proceeded now; the tenants' improvements were the tenants' own property, and he (Mr. Gladstone) would not admit the principle that the time during which the tenant had enjoyed the improvements was any reason why they should pass away from him.”

I seek, therefore, by this extending and explanatory Bill, to give effect to the evident intention of the House when it passed the Act of 1881. I further contend, in connection with the question of tenant improvements, that it would be almost an impossibility for such disgraceful and atrocious scenes as the burning of Clongorey and Glenbeigh to have taken place, if the tenants had not been rented on their own improvements. Further, we seek to grapple in this Bill with the great and burning question of arrears; and if our case in favour of the tenants' improvements is a strong case, our case

in favour of the appointment of some tribunal such as the Land Court to deal with the question of arrears is simply irresistible. The Bill does not lay down any hard-and-fast line to compel the Court to wipe out arrears. We do not propose absolutely to wipe out or cancel the arrears, but to leave it optional with the Court to decide on the merits of each case that comes before it; nor do we propose to deal with the matter in any revolutionary spirit. The fact is, that we have simply followed the text of the Crofters Act, and surely, if you deal with the arrears of the Scotch crofters in a fair and generous spirit, there is no reason why you should not deal in the same fair, just, and impartial spirit with the accumulations on the heads of the unfortunate Irish tenants. I would here ask how has the Crofters' Act worked in Scotland? Its working has been such as to show how necessary it was to pass that Act. The Scotch crofters never would have been able to have made headway if their arrears had not been so dealt with. What was the action of the Crofters Commission? I will give the House a sample of how they have dealt with arrears in Scotland. In Caithness, out of a total of £831, they cancelled £625, which amounts to a reduction of 74 per cent. In Orkney the total of £4,094 was reduced to £2,295, which is 55 per cent, while in Ross and Cromarty a total of £13,358 was brought down to £9,337, which is a reduction of 74 per cent. If you take the whole returns of the Scotch Crofters Commission you will find that the total average of arrears cancelled in Scotland during the last 12 months has been 68 per cent. Why, I ask, do you not follow the same equitable course in Ireland? The Irish tenant has had the same difficulties to contend with as the Scotch crofter. He has found in the last 10 years that his industry has not enabled him to get out of the land the rack rents the landlord has demanded, and the result is, that arrears of an extraordinary and extravagant character have accumulated, in consequence of which we now ask you, in the spirit of fairplay and justice, to deal with these arrears as you have dealt with those of the Scotch crofters. What is happening in Ireland at the present time, not merely every week, but every day? The land-

lords are just as heartless now as ever they were in the past. It was only the other day—on the 1st of April—that Judge Curran, the County Court Judge at the Killarney Quarter Sessions, asked why he was worried by the Solicitor for Lord Lansdowne because he would not bully the poor tenants who had come into Court to pay the instalments of rent he had fixed for them. These tenants had come into Court, and he had adjudged that they should pay the arrears owing in so many instalments spread over a certain time, and when the tenants came to the Court to pay the instalments to Lord Lansdowne's agent, the solicitor to Lord Lansdowne refused to accept them, because the unfortunate tenants had found it impossible to pay the costs in addition to the rent-costs, which would go into the pocket of the solicitor. My hon. Friend who comes from Cork (Mr. O'Hea) knows that some of these unfortunate creatures had to walk as much as 40, and even 50, miles to bring the paltry instalments of Lord Lansdowne's rent, and yet the solicitor, instead of welcoming this sign on the part of the tenants that they were willing to pay their rent, sent them home again all the miles they had come, because they would not, or could not, pay the law costs. Judge Curran is reported to have said that whenever he made a suggestion he was told he was coercing the landlords, whereas he asserted he was not coercing them but merely asking them to do what was right. Well, Sir, we want the British House of Commons to put power into the hands of some recognized authority—we do not care which tribunal, but we suggest the Land Court—which will enable it not merely to ask, or request, or even beseech, the landlords of Ireland to do what is right; but which will enable it to coerce the landlords, if necessary, into so doing. The Irish landlords have never yet been known, except in very rare cases, to do justice to their tenants, unless they were compelled; and it would now, perhaps, be well for this House to let the landlords, in addition to the Irish people, have a touch of coercion. Not merely have we had this scene in the County Court of Killarney; but, only the other day, this House was moved by hearing the heart rending story of the attempted

eviction of an old man of 86 years of age at Roscaberry. Let me read what then took place, and in doing so I appeal to the feelings of hon. Gentlemen opposite as well as on this side of the House. I make the quotation as an example of what we wish to put an end to. We want, by the action of the Legislature, to stay the cruel hands of landlords such as the one who is responsible for these proceedings. It is stated that a little after 6 o'clock in the morning the Donovans at Roscaberry were startled by a loud knocking at the door, and young Donovan opened the door. The Shrieval party consisted of the Sheriff's officer, the Sheriff officer's assistant, and a bailiff, protected by 25 policemen. The bailiff made entry by using a crowbar on the door, and then removed the furniture and other effects. In the meantime two doctors examined old Donovan, who lay, weak and debilitated, in bed, and they announced that this old man, of over 86 winters, was fit for removal. They then took the poor man out of bed, and, in spite of the entreaties and remonstrances of his family, they proceeded to put on his stockings, shoes, and vest; but when it came to putting on his coat the old man swooned from weakness, to the consternation of all around him. The doctors, who were then in the yard, were apprised of what had occurred. They were quickly on the scene, and exhibited much uneasiness. They applied a galvanic battery to restore animation, and a messenger was sent for stimulants to the landlord's house, which was some distance away. Brandy was procured, but for a time matters looked serious. It was considered that life was ebbing fast; but after a time the old man showed signs of returning animation, and the doctors, after a consultation with the police, retired, leaving old Donovan in his bed, and the landlord in possession. That, Sir, is one of the scenes with which the unfortunate Irish tenants have been familiar for many years past. I have quoted this case from the *Daily News*, and I suppose the Solicitor General for Ireland, having been prompted and tutored by the hon. Gentleman the Member for South Antrim (Mr. Macartney) will say in reply, "The account you have read from the *Daily News* is sadly exaggerated." But, I

may say that there certainly is a ground for the report, because it appeared in the Cork papers, as well as in those of London. If these proceedings had never occurred the case would not have been reported, and have remained, as it has done, without the slightest contradiction from the Loyal and Patriotic Union. I would ask, why was this shocking scene enacted? Simply because the tenant could not pay his arrears. The tenant had a lease of his farm, the Government valuation of which was £24 15s., and the old rent, which has been reduced to £29 by the Land Commission, was £42. The tenant owed two years' rent, which was £84, and the local Catholic clergyman, Father Hill, tried to effect a settlement on these lines—a year's rent in hand, at the old rent, and the other year's rent to be paid in annual instalments of £10. This offer the Sub-Sheriff considered very fair; but the landlord would not accept it and proceeded to evict. Now, what would have happened in this case, if, at the time you appointed the Crofters Commission, you had also appointed a similar tribunal to deal with arrears in Ireland? If you had gone on the basis of the remissions made to certain Scotch crofters the arrears of Donovan's rent would have been brought down to £22, so that the year's rent of £42 which was offered would have covered that amount, with £20 to boot. But, if you take the general average of reductions by the Scotch Crofters Commission on the whole year, which was 68 per cent. Donovan's arrears of £84 would have been brought down to £27, and the year's rent of £42, which the tenant offered and the landlord refused, would have more than covered the reduction by £15. Moreover, if we had had in Ireland the same tribunal as that granted to the Scotch crofters there would have been no attempt at eviction; no scandal and no outrage. It is not merely in Cork, or Munster, or in Leinster, or the unfortunate province of Connaught—one of the divisions of which I represent—that the arrears they cannot pay are the cause of the eviction of tenants, but even in that Utopia—that paradise of tenants, namely Ulster, for which the hon. Member for South Antrim will speak in a little time—the arrears are accumulating in an extraordinary way, and the

landlords are trying by impossible means to recover the rents it is impossible for the tenants to pay. I hold in my hand a sample of the Easter gifts that are being sent to the Ulster tenants, and I am sorry the hon. Member for South Tyrone (Mr. T. W. Russell) is not in his place, to see what a chivalrous body of landlords there are in that part of Ireland. This is a writ from the representatives of the Marquess of Downshire, and my correspondent says that some hundreds of tenants on the Downshire estate have been served with similar ejectment notices. The writer of the letter I have here is a rev. gentleman in County Down, whose name I will give if it be desired, and he it is who makes the statement I have just quoted. And this is what takes place, not in rebellious Munster, Leinster, or Connaught, but in the much vaunted Ulster. In this case, the unfortunate tenant's annual rent is £3 14s., and there lie to his debit five years' arrears, making a total, with costs, of £20 7s. How is that man to get the money to pay such a sum? We say you should afford him the same relief as you have given the Scotch crofters, because, equitably, the Irish tenant is as much entitled to a reduction of his arrears as the Scotch crofter, or any other tenant. I would earnestly appeal to the House to do something in this matter of arrears. If the Government will not listen to me—and I do not suppose they will—they may, probably, listen to a friend of theirs, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham (Mr. J. Chamberlain), who, I must say, does not, at the present moment, exactly seem to be a prophet honoured in his own country—and, I might add that, if not honoured in his own country, he is certainly not honoured in ours, though, perhaps, he is sufficiently honoured by the Government to induce them to take notice of the words he used in a speech made in this House last year. He then said—

“There is, undoubtedly, a grievance to be remedied, for the House has decided that the rents have become excessive in amount, and has authorized the Courts to deal with them by way of reduction. It appears to me to follow that arrears resulting from these rack rents should also be considered excessive, and ought to be dealt with by the Courts.”

Those are the words of the right hon.

Gentleman. He believed both the rents and arrears to be excessive, and we, who hold the same belief, ask the House to deal with these arrears in the same way as it has dealt with arrears in Scotland. Sir, I feel strongly that this question of arrears is a vital question in Ireland. It is the heart of the movement in that country, and if this House wants to kill the plan of campaign and wants to try and destroy, as far as possible, the legitimate and healthy influence of my hon. Friends the Members for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon) and North East Cork (Mr. W. O'Brien), it can only effect such a result by at once grappling with this question of arrears. It is clear that the Irish tenants can never pay the arrears now due, and they will consequently remain hopelessly in debt unless you come to their assistance in the same spirit with which you came to the assistance of the Scotch crofters. I have been looking at the report given in *Hansard* of the debate which took place last year on a subject cognate to this, and I notice that the hon. Member for South Antrim then expressed his fear that if any clause were carried dealing with this question of arrears, the effect would be to demoralize the Irish tenant, and induce him not to pay his rent; but rather to allow arrears to accumulate so that he might get off easy with his rent. Ah, Sir, it is not Bills passed by the action of Parliament that have demoralized the Irish tenant and made him dishonest, thriftless, and idle—if these charges can be laid against him, which I deny; but if there be any truth in them, and the fault lies at anybody's door, it is to be found at the door of the class in Ireland to which the hon. Gentleman belongs; because, in the past, the Irish tenant knew that if he put one hour's industry into his little holding, and spent one penny in improving and beautifying it, the landlord would step in and put a further increase on the rack rent he was then paying. I hope the hon. Gentleman will not get up in this House to-day, and accuse the Irish tenants of a desire to shirk their responsibilities; because the records of the House show that the debts the Irish tenants have incurred to the Government they have made honest and persistent efforts to repay. The Irish tenant of to-day is as honest as the Irish landlord—indeed, he is very much more honest

than the landlord. He has tried to pay for years and years an impossible rack-rent, and it is doing him an absolute injustice for any representative of any Irish constituency to come to this House and say he is dishonest and would take an advantage of the landlord in order that he might avoid the responsibility of paying his lawful debts. I have greater faith in the Irish tenant than the hon. Gentleman, for I believe that if he had the opportunity he would discharge his lawful debts more readily than the Irish landlords, as the records of the Bankruptcy Courts will show. In addition to the question of protecting the tenant's farm improvements and the other question of arrears, the present Bill proposes to bring within the scope of its operations the leaseholders of Ireland. Now, how do we stand with regard to this question? Our position on these benches has been always clear on this matter. We do not nibble at little points and go into infinitesimal details like the hon. Gentlemen the Members for South Antrim and South Tyrone. We say that we can only deal with this Irish Land Question in a radical fashion, and not by a piecemeal system of clipping a bit off here and a bit off there. We propose to remove the whole injustice at once, and, with regard to the leaseholders, we would extend the First Section of the Land Act of 1887 to all the leaseholders in Ireland. I remember that when the Second Reading of that Act was moved by the Chief Secretary, an Amendment was proposed by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Stirling Burghs who sits on the front Opposition Bench. The Amendment he moved was with the view of extending the Bill so as to bring within its scope all the leaseholders of Ireland, and on that occasion the hon. Gentleman the Member for East Mayo spoke strongly in the same sense. These hon. and right hon. Gentlemen were joined in their condemnation of the limitations imposed by the Bill by the hon. Gentleman the Member for South Tyrone, and, not merely did those three Gentlemen appeal to the Government to extend the scope of the Bill, so as to bring all the Irish leaseholders within its purview, but a noble Lord, who sits immediately behind the Treasury Bench, and about whom there is a considerable

amount of talk now going on in the country—I allude to the noble Lord the Member for Paddington (Lord R. Churchill)—made a speech on the Amendment, in the course of which he said—

“Both the hon. Member for East Mayo and the hon. Member for South Tyrone object to restriction. I find no difficulty in agreeing with both those Gentlemen in their objections to these restrictions. I hold, on high authority, that if the restrictions on Clause I are ratified by Parliament, the effect will be to exclude almost half of the leaseholders of Ireland from the operation of the Bill.”

Such has been the case, and what we want to do by passing this Bill is to put every leaseholder in Ireland on the same footing as those leaseholders who have been enabled to take advantage of the Act of 1887, by sweeping away the restrictions which, as the noble Lord pointed out, would have the result of keeping half of the leaseholders of Ireland outside the operation of the Bill. We want to sweep away these restrictions on the leaseholders of Ireland. The argument is used that a man with a lease of 999 years practically holds in perpetuity, and is not merely a tenant but owns the land. But if the rents paid under those leases are rack rents, I cannot see the justice of the argument. We do not want the leaseholders of Ireland to be rackrented in perpetuity. I think it may be unreservedly accepted that these men who hold leases for 999 years are rack rented, because of this very remarkable circumstance, namely, that all the rents fixed in the past by the landlords or their agents, whenever and wherever they are touched, crumble to pieces like dead sea fruit. It may, in Ireland, be in the Civil Bills Court, or it may be at the hands of a valuer visited by tenant or landlord; it may be in the Commission Court, or, in Scotland, before the Crofters Commission, where arrears are dealt with; but wherever those rents fixed by landlords in the past are touched, they melt away very considerably. Therefore, we are justified in asking that the long leaseholders who were rack rented should be dealt with in the same way as the tenants under 99 years' leases. The spirit of legislation, even on the part of Members of the Front Opposition Bench, when they were in power, was against the admission of leaseholders to the benefits of the Act of 1881, or subsequent Acts.

Mr. Crilly

In the Act of 1887, passed by the present Government, you have practically an acknowledgment that the leaseholders of Ireland were as habitually rack rented as were the struggling tenants from year to year. You would have done an unparalleled act of injustice if you had kept the leaseholders out of the Act of 1887; and you will perpetuate a cruel wrong if you do not extend the operation of this clause of the Act of 1887 to all the leaseholders of Ireland. I have gone carefully through the returns of the Land Commissioners showing the rents on leasehold farms which they have fixed since the Act of 1887 came into operation. Take, for instance, March. The leaseholders' rents, which in the aggregate amounted to £15,342, were cut down by the Sub-Commission Courts to £10,800. In May, the total rent of £35,822 was cut down to £25,340. These are leaseholders of whom I am speaking. In June the total rent of £32,000 was cut down to £22,500. In July the total rent of £40,000 was cut down to £28,000. The aggregate of the rents paid by leaseholders before the passage of the Act of 1887 amounted to the large sum of £285,509, and this aggregate rental has been cut down by the Land Commission Courts in Ireland to £204,096—or a reduction since 1887, of £80,000. This simply means that the landlords of Ireland, who in many cases forced their tenants to take unjust and iniquitous leases, have been robbing these unfortunate people to the tune of £80,000 a-year for many years past. Therefore when we see such a beneficial effect as that accruing to the tenants under 99 years' leases, we ask you to show fairplay and justice to the other leaseholders of Ireland, by bringing them within the operation of this Act, and by reducing their rents in the same proportion as that observed in the case of the 99 years leaseholders. We simply say that “Section 1 of the Land Act of 1887 shall, notwithstanding anything therein contained, apply to leases expiring within 999 years after the passing of the Land Law Ireland Act, 1881, and the second Section shall be read and considered as if the words ‘nine hundred and ninety-nine’ were substituted for the words ‘ninety-nine’ years in the second Section.” I appeal to the Solicitor General for Ireland to in some way or other come to the assist-

ance of these unfortunate leaseholders. I am not exaggerating when I say that within the last week I have had scores of letters from prominent men in Ireland who do not agree with me in my political opinions asking me to appeal to Her Majesty's Government to assist these leaseholders in some way or other, for it is simply absurd that one class of leaseholders should be excluded and the other admitted. Now, Sir, the clause also deals with the revision of the statutory term of 15 years in the Act of 1881. That is a long term; prices are uncertain and fluctuate, and it is unfair that the tenant should be kept under one rent for fifteen years. We say judicial term of seven years is long enough, and in support of this contention I may point out that you have seven years fixed in the Crofters Act. The Cowper Commission favoured the term of seven years rather than fifteen years. As to another section of the clause, we further say that the rents fixed in 1882-5, and since the Act passed, were fixed in days when prices were terribly high; and you have acknowledged by the passing of an Act in this House, by which you re-adjusted the rentals on the basis of prices, that these rents, fixed in those years, are too high. The clause also deals with the question of turbary, which is a burning subject in Ireland, or at all events a very important question, though it may not appear so to hon. Gentlemen opposite. We also propose to deal with what we call the eviction-made-easy clause of the Act of 1887. We propose to repeal that clause altogether. We find that since the Act passed, in 1887, 14,104 tenants have been converted from tenants into caretakers. That number of tenancies has been determined under Section 7 of the Act of 1877—namely, they had received ejectment notices, and had been converted simply into caretakers. Now, Sir, this is the Bill that I would submit to the House for its acceptance. I may not have as clearly, and as fully, and as exhaustively explained it as might have been done, but at all events I hope I have said enough to show hon. Gentlemen opposite, and my hon. Friends on this side, what is the scope and the intention of the Bill. I can assure you that this is no false light hung out by a Birmingham wrecker to lure the Irish

tenants into difficulties. It is a Bill framed by men who honestly believe that they know the position of the Irish tenant and what he wants. Therefore, I submit this Bill to the House with an absolute conviction in my mind that it is upon lines such as are found in this proposal that you must frame a measure which is calculated to bring to the Irish tenant-farmer peace, prosperity, and comfort.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

*MR. FLYNN (North Cork): I do not think my hon. Friend need have closed his remarks by suggesting that the Bill might have been explained more fully, and I congratulate him upon the clear and distinct manner in which he has brought the measure before the House. The Bill is intended not only to extend but remedy the acknowledged defects of the Act of 1881 which have been discovered since it was brought into practical operation. It is also a Bill for giving explicit meaning and extension to certain provisions of that Act which are at the present time used to the detriment of the tenant's property and the tenant's interest. With regard to the second section of this Bill, we know that the tenant's rent is now made payable upon the tenant's improvements. That, I think, has long since passed the stage of controversy. Notwithstanding the celebrated case of "Adams against Dunsneath," which interfered so very seriously and gravely with the intentions of the Act of 1881, perhaps it may be no harm to recall to the recollection of this House the history of this particular clause. The clause dealing with the fact that no rents should be payable on tenants' improvements, or his predecessor's in title, is that clause which in Ireland is familiarly called "the Healy Clause." It was introduced and explained by my hon. Friend the Member for Longford, and it was a clause the equity and justice of which was recognized in this House at the time. But when the Bill went to another place words were added which entirely eliminated that clause from the Act. The words added were—"Unless that he is otherwise compensated by the landlord." And I remember a very important decision in which it was held that the mere

fact of occupation for a certain length of time, the mere fact of having used and enjoyed his own improvements for a certain length of time was compensation by the landlord. Was ever a more monstrous or more absurd proposition put forward? I can well recollect that the decision in "Adams against Dunsneath" carried dismay to the hearts of tens of thousands of farmers in Ireland. It prevented a large number of them seeking relief in the Land Court at all. And that is one explanation of why, after the seven years' operation of the Act of 1881, such a small percentage of the tenants have sought the benefit of the Land legislation which this House is supposed to have placed at their disposal. There cannot be a doubt that the Land Commissioners all over the country have borne that decision in mind, and the inadequacy of the reductions they have made has been recognized by this House, for they have not been commensurate with the value of the tenants' improvements. Take the example of an estate in my own division—the small estate of Sir James Mackay, and which is now under the Plan of Campaign. Thirty years ago the valuation of the estate was £199; the rental at the time was £205. It was raised in 1855 and again in 1870, to £500. In 1887 a certain number of tenants sought the benefit of the Land Act, and the £500 was reduced to £446, so that the rental has been raised from £205 to £446. It was within the knowledge of everybody in the locality that the increased value of the land was due to the tenant, for it was originally mountain, marsh, and moor till the improvements were made by the tenants; yet, when these tenants seek relief in the Land Court, their rents are reduced by such small proportions that it was evident the Commissioners, in fixing the rents, fixed them upon the tenants' own improvements. Out of that small estate I take the case of two or three particular tenants, in order to illustrate the working of the Clause. Mr. Ring's holding was valued at £24 30 years ago; rent £31; raised to £38 in 1870; and the judicial rent was fixed at £49—approaching an increase of nearly 100 per cent. Then, in the case of Mr. O'Leary the holding was valued at £10 30 years ago; rent £12; raised by stages to £26; reduced by the Court to £20. Mr. Mahoney; valu-

ation £13 10s.; rent only £12; raised to £35; and allowed to remain at that amount by the Commission. The people have since found themselves unable to pay these judicial rents on account of the fall of prices, and the landlord not having offered them a reduction; and they have been obliged to adopt the Plan of Campaign, upon which the hon. Gentleman the Member for South Tyrone pours the vials of his wrath. Take the case of the Kenmare estate; and take two townland in the parish of Rathmore, which originally yielded £40 yearly, and which was eventually raised by the agent, Mr. S. M. Hussey, to £132. The land, which was a stretch of bog, had been improved in the meantime by the tenants. In the case of another townland he raised the rent from £30 to £48 and £68. Mr. Hussey was a man described as the quintessence of benevolence before one of the Judges of the Commission, yet when the lease fell in, in 1870, he raised the rent from £68 to £190, thus confiscating, for the benefit of the Earl of Kenmare, the whole of the tenants' improvements, in the most wanton and unjust manner. These figures are taken from Plan of Campaign estates, and they will explain to the House and to the country, perhaps, the reason why they have been forced to adopt that form of combination in order to secure themselves against this sort of conspiracy. It is the same on the Ponsonby Estate. I could read to the House scores of names, and show the repeated increases of rents upon the tenants' improvements. The clause of the Act of 1881 which purposed to deal with that state of things has been inoperative and ineffective, and has not stopped the injustice of which the tenants of Ireland complain. Another part of this Act which is of very great importance indeed, is Section 3—presumption in respect of improvements. I think the House is convinced by the statement of my hon. Friend, if it requires to be convinced, that the Court is entitled to presume that the improvements made upon a holding have been made by the tenants. I think one of the clearest proofs of that is the clause named after a Member of the Liberal Disunionist Party, or the "Heneage Clause," by which English-managed estates were, under certain

circumstances, excluded from the benefits of the Acts of 1881. How many cases of that kind have arisen? I would like some information on this point from the Solicitor General for Ireland. There have been very few cases, showing that the presumption that the improvements have been made by the tenants is not a presumption alone founded on our arguments and assertions, but borne out by the operation of the Act during the last nine years. Earl Cowper's opinion has been referred to by my right hon. Friend. The noble Lord's statement was that the average rent of arable land in Ireland was about 11s. 6d. per acre, and that 6½d of that 11s. 6d. represented the landlords' expenditure. I should like to know how the hon. Gentlemen opposite, who will probably speak in the course of this Debate, will get over the statement of Earl Cowper, whom you could hardly accuse of undue sympathy with the tenants of Ireland. Earl Cowper has been Lord Lieutenant of Ireland; he has acquired a large and wide knowledge of the land question, and his statement is one that must be founded on the best possible information, and therefore we are entitled to receive it as a final statement on the point. This presumption as to improvements made by the tenants has received remarkable confirmation on an estate in the county of Cork, in the Division which my hon. Friend the Member for North East Cork (Mr. W. O'Brien) at the present moment represents in durance vile. On the Kingstown Estate, before the Sub-Commissioners—two of whom at least had been unfairly chosen by the Land Commission—Mr. Webber, the proprietor, acknowledged, in cross-examination by my hon. Friend the Member for the City of Cork (Mr. T. M. Healy), that it had not been the practice for 40 years back on that estate to contribute one penny towards the improvement of the tenants' holdings, although it had been the custom to do so formerly. Under the able management of the case by my hon. Friend, it was proved that a large amount of improvements had been made; and yet when the decisions of the Land Commissioners came to be published we found that they had fixed the rents upon the improvements which had been proved to be the property of

the tenants. There cannot be a doubt that in that case the rents fixed were unfair and unjust, and therefore I say that Clause 3 of this Bill is absolutely necessary in order to carry into effect the intention of the Legislature in 1881. Clause 10 enacts that a stay of proceedings in connection with arrears shall be made by the Court. I think that is one of the most important provisions of this Bill. It is a clause to which we ask the particular attention of the Government, as it is one which in my opinion will test the genuineness and *bona fides* of the statements of right hon. Gentlemen opposite. I regret, therefore, that the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) should have thought it right to turn his back upon the discussion of this Bill. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer in this House and on public platforms has said that the evictions in Ireland have been utilized by the Nationalist Party as stage tricks. Clause 10 of this Bill, if it passes, will do away entirely with any chance of making capital out of these unfortunate and harrowing scenes. Ninety-nine-hundredths of these evictions taking place in Ireland at the present time are due, unfortunately, to this question of the accumulation of arrears. Only two days ago I saw in a certain paper a report of a case in which there was a process against a Mr. John Driscoll for one half-year's rent, which was only just due. The valuation of the holding was £53 and the rent £80. Mr. Driscoll had served an originating notice a year and a-half previously, but had been unable to get his case heard before the landlord took out the process against him. If he is unable to pay he will, of course, be ejected in due course, notwithstanding the fact that he has taken measures to get a fair rent fixed. In my own constituency there is a case of still greater hardship. The landlord's name is Clancy and the tenant's name Sullivan. The farm is near Kanturk. The rent is £160 and the valuation less than half that amount. Sullivan served an originating notice a year and a-half ago. He owed one year's rent a few months ago, and though he offered a large portion of it to the landlord, the latter was inexorable, and demanded the full rent and costs. This the man could not pay,

and all his cattle were seized. £126 was realized by the sale, and will the House believe that for a small balance the tenant's interest in his lease was sold to his landlord for £35? The tenant is in consequence completely broken, his interest in his farm is gone, and his property has passed into the hands of his landlord, and all for one year's rent at more than double the valuation. That case illustrates the necessity for this clause. If the clause had been law, that man when he served the originating notice would have been able to obtain a stay of proceedings. We are told that there is an Arrears Clause in the Act of 1887. So there is, but, like many other Clauses in Acts dealing with Ireland, it has been utterly inoperative. A County Court Judge well known for his impartiality—Judge Waters—[*Ministerial cheers*]. I suppose no County Court Judge who does not increase sentences on appeal or deliver violent harangues on the condition of the country is supposed to be impartial by hon. Gentlemen opposite. Well, hon. Gentlemen will hardly dispute the legal knowledge of Judge Waters if they deny his impartiality. Speaking at Dungarvan on this matter recently, he said—

“I do not believe there is any one on earth that understands the 30th Section. There are conflicting decisions upon it, and there was a decision the other day in the Court of Queen's Bench that makes utter rank nonsense of the Section.”

I have never been able to understand, and I believe it would pass the art of even an occupant of the Front Treasury Bench to explain, why it is that this question of arrears has not been dealt with for the Irish tenants as for the Scotch crofters. This question of arrears is a burning question. It is a question that at the present moment is productive of more disturbance in Ireland than possibly any other cause that could be named. One advantage would be obtained even by landlords from the clause, as it would give them a chance of honestly recovering a portion of the arrears. This House may pass Coercion Acts, but the bulk of the arrears in Ireland is practically as irrecoverable as if it had been thrown into the Atlantic. This fact would be recognized by every man who is not so utterly steeped in stupidity as the average Irish landlords are.

Mr. Flynn

This is a matter which, if the House is in earnest in dealing with the Irish Land Question, will at once receive its consideration. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary (Mr. A. J. Balfour) has said somewhere that the Irish tenant is the spoilt child of the Legislature. If so, Sir, he has been handed over to a cruel step-father at a very early age. What, I ask, is the use of giving benefits to the Irish tenants with one hand if you take them away with the other? If you pass this Bill it will do much to relieve the tenants in Ireland, and it is because we believe that it will do much towards restoring social order and peace in Ireland that we, on these Benches, bring forward this measure in the knowledge that it will not be unjust to the landlords, and that it will give the merest justice to the tenants themselves.

MR. MACARTNEY (Antrim, S.): I rise to propose that this “Bill be read a second time on this day six months.” I think that the hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Flynn), before referring to the absence of the Chief Secretary, might have looked at the condition of his own Benches. The mover of the Bill maintained that the measure is of the greatest importance to the tenantry of Ireland, and yet five-sixths of the Party are absent from the House, including the Leader. The hon. Member for South Armagh (Mr. A. Blane) last year moved a precisely similar Bill, and admitted that if it became law it would not satisfy the Party opposite. I now understand the hon. Gentleman who moved this Bill to say that a measure which upsets the settlement made in 1881, which stirs up the arrangements of the Land Act of that year, with regard to the condition of the tenants, the principle of improvement, and the question of arrears is not a large and comprehensive Bill. That shows how utterly futile it is for this House to enter into the consideration of measures brought forward with regard to land in Ireland by hon. Members opposite, unless they produce a Bill embodying what they really want—namely, the abolition of all rent. They prefer to nibble at it by degrees. Instead of introducing a Bill like the present one, it would be more honest and straightforward of them to propose that rent should at once be abolished. That is their main object and policy;

and if they can get the House to agree to the principles of the present Bill, they will be found next year bringing forward a Bill that will go much further. When the country understands the principle on which these hon. Members are proceeding it will have nothing to do with them, because they are seeking to carry out what is really an attack on all property. Hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway opposite contend that the Land Acts of 1881 and 1887 have proved to be failures. I assert, on the contrary, that the intention of the Legislature in passing those Acts has been carried out, and that they have been successful in conferring on the tenants the benefits which it was meant they should receive. Nearly one-half of the occupying tenants of Ireland have taken, or are taking, advantage of the provisions of the Act of 1881. And what has been the result? The average general reduction of rent over the whole of Ireland during the past seven years only amounts to 19·7. There are 97,000 cases in which tenants have of their own free will entered into agreements with their landlords without the intervention of the Court, and in those cases the tenants have agreed to pay rents, the reduction upon which is 3 per cent less than that effected by the Commissioners. Moreover, the Reports which have been laid before the House as to the rents fixed from the very commencement up to the present time show that the Commissioners have always dealt effectively with cases of over-renting where they have occurred. The Irish tenants are able to take care of themselves, and they would not consent to reductions of only 16 per cent, unless they were fair and adequate, when large reductions were being given in other cases by the Courts. If the action of the Land Commission had been inadequate in the case of yearly tenants, leaseholders would not have been eager to go before the same tribunal, but, directly certain classes of them get the opportunity, they do so in large numbers. Up to August, 1888, the reported reductions granted to leaseholders averaged 29·6 per cent in the Commission Courts, and 33·1 per cent in the Civil Bill Courts. At the same time the rents of yearly tenants were reduced by 28·3 per cent in the Commission Courts, and by 27·8 per cent in the Civil Bill Courts. These figures show that the rents reserved in

leases are not generally so extortionate as they have been represented to be, although there are cases of over-renting. A Report of 259 cases in the county of Cork shows that the Land Commission have done their duty and have adequately and successfully grappled with the question of over-renting. In 13 cases the reductions were less than 20 per cent; in 113 cases more than 20 per cent; in 91, more than 30 per cent; in 40, more than 40 per cent; the highest reaching 65·7 per cent. The figures show that the Land Commissioners are always ready to deal with over-renting when it is brought to their notice, but that at the same time they recognize it as an exception and not as a general rule. It is also clear that it is the practice of the Commissioners to deal in a thoroughly effective manner with all tenants' improvements. In the amended form of schedule the improvements must be stated in detail, and the detailed statement must be verified by inspection. I have attended Sub-Commission Courts when the alleged tenants' improvements vanished when an attempt was made to inspect them. I have heard a tenant swear that he has spent £30 an acre in improvements, and yet declare that while he had been making them the value of the farm had been deteriorated by 25 per cent. Specific evidence has been given as to drains, and yet nothing could be discovered when the Committees went to the farm but the trap said to be at the end of a drain. In my province the landlords have never been hostile to the tenants getting the full benefit of their improvements; and although a few discontented tenants formed an association and held meetings, they failed to return their candidate to Parliament. That the judicial rents have been satisfactory to the tenants is shown by the prices paid by tenant farmers for tenants' interests. I have from time to time made extracts from the newspapers referring to such cases during the last few months. I do not contend that I have a complete list, but I have since last October been able to collect 37 cases in which tenant farmers have purchased tenants' interest. These 37 cases are taken from 15 fairly representative counties in different parts of Ireland. These counties are—Antrim, Armagh, Clare, Cork, Donegal, Down, Fermanagh, Kerry, Limerick, Longford,

Monaghan, Queen's County, Tipperary, Tyrone, and Wexford. The aggregate acreage of the 37 cases is 1,142; the aggregate purchase money £13,199, which gives an average of £11 per acre, the prices ranging from £5 up to £32. In one remarkable case in Donegal the tenant's interest sold for twice what it brought in; the open market fifteen years ago, when the rental was £3 more. The value of the tenant's interest had risen from £205 to £400. Now, I object to legislation on arrears, not because it will be injurious to landlords, who I do not believe will recover any material portion of existing arrears, but from the point of view of the tenants who have paid their rent—some nine-tenths in the county in which I live. The hon. Member for South Tyrone (Mr. T. W. Russell), who takes a different view on this question to me, knows perfectly well that his action was not at all popular among the tenant-farmers of Tyrone. The proposal really is to relieve tenants who have made no effort to pay their rents from burdens which others have successfully borne. The County Court Judges have ample power to deal with arrears when they are brought before them by notices of ejectment. The results of the last Arrears Act are not such as to encourage Parliament to pass another. The vast majority of men now in arrears are the same men who were relieved of their arrears in 1883 and had never paid any rent since. They have been utterly demoralized by that Act. I have never accused the Irish tenants at large of a desire to evade their liabilities to their landlords, although that accusation has been put into my mouth by hon. Members opposite; but I have said, and I repeat now, that there is a class of tenants in Ireland who desire to evade their liabilities not only to their landlords, but to everybody else. The existing law gives power to the Courts to deal adequately and fully with the question of arrears. There have come before the County Courts since August 1887 and up to 1888, 18,299 objectional decrees. Only 3,000 tenants out of the 18,000 were able to satisfy the Judges that the arrears had not arisen from their own default, or that there was reasonable ground for granting an extension of time for payment. The hon. Member

(Mr. Crilly) referred to the case of Donovan, and read an extract from the *Daily News*. That extract, like most statements relating to Ireland which appear in the *Daily News*, was inaccurate, and I am not surprised at that, considering that that paper's Irish correspondent is a man on the staff of the *Freeman's Journal*. Surely the hon. Member could not have been present when his right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary informed the House what the real facts of that case were, stating that Donovan was one of the healthiest and strongest men of his age in the county, and was not known to be confined to his bed except on the eve of an eviction.

MR. CRILLY: I based my statement on a telegram from Father Hill, who said that on the day of the eviction he had administered to Donovan the sacrament for the dying.

MR. MACARTNEY: I do not question the *bona fides* of the hon. Member; but I believe he has been misled. I believe all the statements made by hon. Members opposite with regard to brutality at evictions are as devoid of foundation as that made with regard to the case of Donovan. The hon. Member also referred to the case in Down—and a more unfortunate case he could hardly have brought forward—in which the tenant has not paid any rent for five years. It is evident that that is one of those cases to which I have referred, of a man relieved of arrears in 1883, and never having paid any rent since. If that man could have satisfied the County Court Judge that his inability to pay rent did not arise from his own fault, he would have got terms as to the payment of the arrears. Then the hon. Member for North Mayo denounced the landlords, and based his denunciation on the evictions which, he said, were going on day by day. There is so much exaggeration on the question of evictions that I think I am entitled to ask the House to go into the exact figures. The number of tenancies determined in the June quarter, 1888, by notice of ejectment was 3,270, and by other processes 338, making a total of 3,608. The ejectment notices would run out in the December quarter, 1888. In that quarter, however, there were only 251 evictions, or about one eviction for every 14 ejectment notices. In nine cases out of ten the landlords had been forced to serve

ejectment notices in order to get payment of rent. The total number of tenancies determined in 1888 was 11,821, while the total number of evictions was 773, or one eviction for every 15 tenancies determined; or, to take it another way, only one eviction in every 650 tenants in the whole of Ireland. No one can, in the face of these figures, contend that the accusations of hon. Members opposite are in the slightest degree accurate.

MR. SEXTON: Will the hon. Member give figures showing the number who, after being restored as caretakers, were expelled on summary order of the magistrates?

MR. MACARTNEY: The figures I have given cover every case of eviction, and include all persons turned out of their homes. The hon. Member shakes his head, but it is so. Upon these grounds I ask the House to agree with me that they have not had sufficient information to justify them in assenting to the Second Reading of this Bill. Hon. Members opposite have not proved that the Land Acts of 1881 and 1887 have failed in their objects. The only other reasons for passing the Bill would be that there is great agricultural distress; but hon. Members who know the condition of Ireland judiciously leave that on one side. They know the condition of agriculture in Ireland is remarkably prosperous at the present time. The agricultural statistics of Ireland show an increase in the acreage in 1888 as compared with 1887, under wheat, barley, and rye of 43,760 acres, and a diminution on the oat crop of 34,197 acres, showing, therefore, a net increase in the acreage under cereals in 1888 over 1887 of 9,563 acres. But while there is a decrease in the acreage under oats, there is an increase in the yield, which is 2,500,000 cwt., that being above the average of the crop of the last ten years. Then take another crop—potatoes. Though there has been a decrease in the gross produce, that decrease is very, very small as compared with the average over ten years—only .04 per cent. There has been an increase in the yield of turnips, mangold wurtzels, flax, and hay over the average of the last 10 years. There is very considerable evidence of increase in the prosperity of the country. Many hon. Members may

not have had the opportunity of observing that the heads of three of the largest trading concerns in Ireland, addressing their shareholders, have admitted the improving signs in trade, and have attributed this to the increase in agricultural crops, among other causes. One of the leading makers of agricultural implements in the North of England, at Gainsboro', has stated that his travellers have returned from Ireland with more orders during the last three months than in his whole Irish business for the previous five years. No hon. Member on the other side, not even the hon. Member for Galway (Mr. Pinkerton), who attempts to set up as an authority on agricultural matters, will deny that agriculture is in a much more cheerful, much more promising condition. That cannot possibly be contradicted; it must be admitted by anyone who reads the detailed Reports supplied to Parliament from the Agricultural Department. I admit there is one crop in the Southern part of Ireland—an important crop, but, fortunately, not so important as it was 30 or 40 years ago—in some parts of the West of Ireland, in one county in Leinster, and in one county of Munster the potato crop has been deficient.

An hon. MEMBER: Donegal.

MR. MACARTNEY: Yes, in parts of Donegal and in parts of Connaught. In some parts the potato crop has been deficient. Hon. Gentlemen who look at the Returns will see that the deficiency is only in some parts of Donegal that those who are responsible for the Reports admit that the crop has been deficient to the extent of 50 per cent. I have rather wearied the House, I am afraid, with these details, but I am sure the House will understand these details were necessary to meet the arguments urged by the hon. Gentleman opposite. I may abstain from dwelling on the vague declamations and accusations against Irish landlords and those who are in any way remotely connected with Irish landlords with which the House is perfectly familiar. I submit no basis has been shown on which to proceed for disturbing the relations that now exist between landlords and tenants in Ireland, and for upsetting well-considered measures dealing with the land which have been acted upon for the last seven or eight years.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months."—(*Mr. Macartney.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

MR. PINKERTON (Galway): I have no reason to complain of the manner in which the hon. Member has moved the rejection of the Bill. If the mantle of the hon. and gallant Member for North Armagh has fallen upon the hon. Member, I must admit he wears it with more dignity, and I congratulate him upon having the good taste to dispense with the cap and bells. In opening his speech the hon. Member for South Antrim alluded to the absence of Irish Members from these Benches, and I thought the remark came with very bad taste from him, looking at the Benches opposite, where scarcely any of the Orange Party who are fond of posing as the friends of the tenants are to be found in their places. The hon. Member protests strongly against what he calls our attempt to pull the Act of 1881 to pieces, forgetting that his own Party did that by the Legislation of 1887. Why, if they were satisfied with the settlement, did they pull the Act up by the roots to see if it was growing? The hon. Member says that half the tenants of Ireland have taken advantage of the protection of the Act, and that the results have shown that the Land Commissioners have discharged their duty fairly. Now, I do not want to say an offensive word against landlords individually. As a whole they have acted cruelly, but I also know that the men most to be pitied are the landlords who have felt disposed to act fairly to their tenants, disposed to exact fair rents only, but who have been restrained by the influence of other landlords on the other side of the fence. I have always contended that if there is any class other than tenants who should advocate further land reforms, it is these landlords who are disposed to act honestly. As the Land Act is now administered, if a tenant enters the Court with a rack-rent he leaves the Court still rack-rented; if he has a moderate rent he receives the same reduction as if it were a rack-rent. Settlements out of Court are forced upon the tenants by landlords, owing to the fact that there

are outstanding arrears, and these settlements prove conclusively that the Land Act is wrongly administered. The Sub-Commissioners have been able to strike a balance, but the rack-rented tenant remains rack-rented and the tenant under a moderate rent obtains a small reduction. With regard to another argument that has been brought forward, the hon. Member proved conclusively to his own satisfaction that tenants were bound to regard the settlements out of Court as satisfactory, because in Antrim there had been reductions of 30 per cent and in Down of 38 per cent—

MR. MACARTNEY: In some instances there were.

MR. PINKERTON: I am prepared to admit 30 per cent was obtained in some cases, but this reduction did not meet the necessities of the case. I am fully prepared to admit that the landlord thought that sufficient for the day was the evil thereof, and that we should have been satisfied with a less amount of reduction, but our objection is to the system by which the Land Act is put in force by men altogether ignorant of agricultural values. In this Return furnished to us we find ex-military officers, ex-land agents, and others appointed as Sub-Commissioners as qualified by their practical knowledge of the value of land; but I assure you that they are simply rack-rent land agents. How can you possibly ask tenant-farmers to place confidence in men of this description who are simply political partisans? Here I find in the list Colonel Magill appointed as having "a practical acquaintance with the value of land!" Mr. M. P. Lynch, "a barrister-at-law, practical farmer and land-agent!" Mr. John Headech "landed proprietor and practical farmer;" Mr. Jerome Guiry, "Justice of the Peace, landed proprietor and practical farmer;" Mr. John Golding, "practical farmer and land agent;" Mr. John Cunningham, "practical farmer and land agent;" Mr. Andrew Conyer, "Justice of the Peace, landed proprietor and practical farmer;" Lieutenant-Colonel Bayly, "Justice of the Peace and land agent;" and further on we have the name of the brother-in-law of the hon. Member for South Tyrone to whom is attributed, "practical acquaintance with the value of

land," though it is, I believe, very limited indeed. I suppose he acquired it from the hon. Member for South Tyrone (Mr. T. W. Russell), who must have a very profound knowledge of agricultural matters indeed. One thing the hon. Member for South Antrim mentioned in regard to tenants' improvements: he said that tenants had in some cases made good their claim for such improvements.

MR. MACARTNEY: I gave some exceptional cases.

MR. PINKERTON: He mentioned, I think, County Down.

MR. MACARTNEY: No; I mentioned no such.

MR. PINKERTON: Then I misheard the hon. Member. Three or four years ago, when visiting South Down, I saw land which was originally valued by the Government valuator at 1s. an acre; yet at that moment the landlord was exacting 30s. I saw how the farms had been carved out of the hill sides, and huge pyramids of stones collected 6 feet in diameter, and a practical farmer estimated that the cost of the labour of reclamation would be represented by £50 an acre. Although the Government valuation was 1s. an acre, the landlord had the unblushing effrontery to charge 30s. an acre! I ask hon. Members to point to any single instance in Ireland where landlords' improvements have any existence, or where 1s. has been expended to every £10 spent by the tenant?

MR. MACARTNEY: I am sorry to interrupt the hon. Member, but it was, and is the custom, on many of the tenant right estates in the North of Ireland, for the landlord to give assistance in building the house, and in some cases it is the invariable custom for the landlord to find the slates.

MR. PINKERTON: I am deeply indebted to the hon. Member for reminding me of that fact. I have met with several cases of the kind, and I remember being in Court when a London Company had to meet an application for fixing fair rent. In every case where assistance was rendered, whether by supplying slates for the roof, by erecting a pump, or whatever it was, everything was duly entered in a book, and the tenant was charged with interest on the outlay. I have no doubt the hon. and gallant Member for North

Down can show a clear sheet so far as he is concerned; he is one of the good landlords in Ireland, but as an honest man he should assist us in compelling other landlords to act in the same manner as he acts without compulsion. Further, the hon. Member for South Antrim said that in the North of Ireland no landlord refused to give his tenant the full benefit of his improvements.

MR. MACARTNEY: Generally. There are exceptions.

MR. PINKERTON: Well, I have had the honour of holding under one who was reputed a good landlord, but I know that he recouped himself by trebling the rent at the end of the lease. I may regard that as a friendly recognition by the landlord of the value of improvements, but the effect is to stamp out all benefit from the improvement. The hon. Member for South Antrim twits us with having tenant associations with high sounding names, who meet and pass resolutions in a small room; but is the hon. Member aware that the Route Tenants' Defence Association met a few days since in the Town Hall of Ballymoney? It was not a meeting in a small upper chamber, called an Orange Hall, where the assembled ragmen and stonemen of the district passed resolutions condemning the Irish Party, and showing the people of Ulster how they were the salt of the earth. I am indebted to the hon. Member for the information he supplied, that the hon. Member for South Tyrone is in bad odour with his constituents.

MR. MACARTNEY: I never said such a thing.

MR. PINKERTON: That he is unpopular on account of the action he has taken.

MR. MACARTNEY: No. I may be allowed to explain. I was speaking of arrears of rent. I said my hon. Friend disagreed with me last year on the question; and I was using the result of that disagreement as an argument that his method of dealing with arrears is most unpopular with the tenants who pay their rent. My hon. Friend knows that the view he holds is not popular among the tenant farmers he represents.

MR. PINKERTON: The Route Tenants' Defence Association, at a meeting in the Town Hall at Ballymoney, passed a resolution with regard to statements that appeared in a published

letter of the hon. Member for South Tyrone. That resolution was as follows:—

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: Perhaps the hon. Member will say what the statements were?

MR. PINKERTON: Yes, decidedly. The resolution was as follows:—

"That in view of the circumstances of agriculture within our own experience, and the expression of authoritative opinion throughout Ulster, we deem it incumbent to describe the following passage which appears in a letter to the *Times*, from Mr. T. W. Russell, M.P., as founded upon inadequate information, likely to mislead the public mind, and to frustrate the claims of the farmers to immediate and complete redress of their hardships."

Then follows the passage from the letter—

"As to agriculture, the admirable Returns of the Registrar General enable us to estimate the situation in this respect with something approaching accuracy. No doubt in some parts of the country—and these, unfortunately, the poorest—the potato crop has been a failure, amounting in some districts to less than half an average. But, taken as a whole, the crops have been more than average, and prices, especially of cattle, have been very good. Both in yield and prices the farmers were better off last year than they have been for many years."

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: I stand by every word of that.

MR. PINKERTON: Yes, I know the hon. Member is prepared to stand by anything; but here is the criticism of men of Ulster who are in sympathy with the present Government, but who are not in sympathy with a man who acts as dishonest traveller for the landlord party. The resolution then proceeds—

"In contravention of the foregoing statement, we affirm that the failure in potatoes has not been confined to the poorest districts of the country; that the crops, as a whole, have not been above, but below the average; that prices for them have not been very good; and that in yield and prices the farmers were not better off last year than in many previous years. In many cases the conditions are worse. It is admitted, however, that an increase has arisen in the price of store and milch cattle; but the increase is in one department only, and does not largely affect the circumstances of the small farming community. Taking into account the position which Mr. Russell occupies as the representative of an agricultural constituency, we trust he will be more careful in future to give a true representation of farming affairs in Ireland. We desire, further, to state that, so far as we have examined the Returns of the Registrar General, they do not confirm the view which Mr. Russell has taken of the agricultural situation."

Mr. Pinkerton

MR. MACARTNEY: May I ask the hon. Member, are there any facts alleged in support of this statement by the Farmers' Association?

MR. PINKERTON: Yes; I will come to that in due time. I hold that the methods of preparing these official returns are misleading. I hold that any hotel proprietor is likely to be misled in agricultural matters, and men who have practical acquaintance with these matters know how erroneous the reports may be. As an example of how official averages are made out, let me mention the method. Men are sent to different market towns, and they note, say, the highest price paid for oats, forgetting that it may be only one sample that has fetched that price, and that there may be a hundred others that only realize the lowest price. Similarly, in the butter markets they quote the highest price for a package of butter, and in the same way lose sight of the great proportion of samples that fetch the lowest price. We know as a fact that there is a considerable quantity of inferior butter sold, and yet the official average is arrived at by taking the highest and the lowest quotations. So men are sent to local markets to ascertain the price of cattle, and the same account holds good. I have watched the men taking the returns; they go from one corner to another; in one they find a yearling reaches £10, in another they find the average £4, and so they return the average as £7, whereas there may be hundreds sold at £5 and only five or 10 at the highest rates. In regard to these Official Returns perhaps the hon. Member for South Antrim is not aware that the Liberal Unionist Association at Coleraine has prepared Resolutions in regard to these Official Returns, which I understand are to be submitted for consideration on Saturday, condemning these Returns in unmeasured terms. Now in reference to the administration of the Act of 1887. We are prepared to prove that the Commissioners have exceeded their authority by increasing rents, and unreasonably, in my opinion. I think Judge O'Hagan has correctly interpreted the Act, and that the increases by the Commissioners have been unjust and unreasonable. The words of the Act are to say what alteration, if any, ought justifiably to be made. I hold it is an unjustifiable thing to in

crease a rent because prices happen to be a little higher owing to failure of crops in other districts. As a practical farmer I can assure you that over a considerable portion of Ireland, so far from the potato crop being up to the average, the yield has been a third of that in the previous year.

AN HON. MEMBER: There were three crops in 1887.

MR. PINKERTON: The past year has to many agricultural tenants been the most disastrous since 1879. The hay crop was almost a complete failure, and so was the yield of oats; the increased quantity of straw was a poor compensation. Yet, in the face of these exceptional circumstances, the Land Commissioners have increased rents—and justify their action by the Act of 1887. I am perfectly well aware that the price of grazing cattle has increased considerably, but the benefit of that is limited. What benefit is it to men compelled to sell cattle to pay their rackrents in June and July? The graziers of Ireland have undoubtedly benefited, but I predict that owing to the present price of store stock they will lose, to a great extent, the benefit they derived last year. In the face of a most disastrous year, and a most inclement season, how the Commissioners can justify their action passes my comprehension. Suppose an epidemic of rinderpest were to break out among the cattle in Ireland and destroy two-thirds of them, would it be fair to base rents upon the increased price that would be put upon the remainder? Would that be an equitable readjustment of rents? The fact is this—it is simply an attempt to play into the hands of the landlords by the Commissioners, out of all sympathy with the tenants. It is not surprising there should be agitation in Ireland, and I may tell you that agitation will not be confined to the South and West. You have done much to help the national sentiment in Ireland by the way in which you have handicapped Judges and administered the Act. There has been a decided attempt to coerce Sub-Commissioners, and they know their tenure of office depends on the way they increase rents. I suppose the hon. Gentleman knows of the visitations passed by a number of Protestant tenants in Down and Tyrone expressing their disgust at the

administration of the Act, and suggesting that they might, if an amendment of the Act was not passed, be reluctantly compelled to join the Home Rule party?

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: I rise to order. This statement has reference to something that took place in my own constituency. Instead of saying this, they absolutely declared—

*MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Order, order. A correction of a statement of fact is not a point of order. It is a very common error hon. Members fall into.

MR. PINKERTON: No doubt the wish is father to the thought, and the hon. Member for South Tyrone has no desire that Home Rule principles should spread in the division, but in spite of this desire the tenants are becoming tired of a man who attempts to blow hot and blow cold, who is the tenant's friend in Ulster, and stands by the landlord's side on English platforms, who is an advocate of Temperance principles in Ireland, but the paid apostle of beer in England. As to sales of tenant right, the hon. Member for South Antrim must be aware that all the cases he quoted were exceptional cases, or due to the fact that men, having made money in America, Australia, or elsewhere, had a special object in view.

MR. MACARTNEY: I do not want to interrupt the hon. Member, but in everyone of the cases I quoted the purchase was made by tenants in occupation of adjoining land. I can give full particulars of names.

MR. PINKERTON: My experience of the purchase of tenant right is probably as extensive as that of the hon. Member. I know many cases in which men were willing enough to pay exceptional prices, and often with the assistance of friends. I have no intention of justifying such purchases. With regard to what has been said as to the unfairness in the way of dealing with arrears to tenants who have strained every nerve to pay their rents, and therefore are not on the same footing with those in arrear, I say that power should be given to the County Court Judge to determine whether the arrears of rent were owing to the fact that the tenant had been rackrented in the past and the tenant's energies cramped by the piling up of a load of arrears, numb-

ing his arm and weakening his efforts. It is a common thing in the North for landlords to give reductions; but these are well understood to be conditional upon the tenant's obedience to the wishes of the landlord; but if the tenant is foolish enough to assert his independence and take hostile action, then these reductions are added together and brought up against him. ["No, no."] I can give chapter and verse for it. I know of a case in the immediate neighbourhood of Ballymoney where the landlord gave £10 and £20 reductions, on condition that the tenant signed an agreement to take a judicial rent and not go into Court; and I know of a case where, the tenant having refused to do this, a claim of £100 for arrears was made by means of adding up the £10 annual reductions for ten years. The hon. Member may express his satisfaction with settlements out of Court as evidence that landlords are prepared to act fairly to their tenants, but all I can say is that tenants hold a very different opinion. And now, in regard to the number of evictions. I do not know whether the hon. Member is an Antrim landlord, but, at any rate, he is an Antrim Representative. We know that in the North of Ireland there are several ways of turning a tenant out without having recourse to the Court. If a tenant is unable to meet his rack rent as well as the just claims of his creditors, he does not wait until he is evicted: he attempts to sell his interest and such is the strong land-hunger among the people that there are those found to step into his shoes and pay for the privilege of paying a rack-rent. It may be from a desire to consolidate his holdings, to square his farm, the arrangement is made; but in any case the tenant who sells his rights disappears, goes abroad, and his case never appears in the papers; but it may be just as much a case of gross injustice as if he were dispossessed by the strong arm of the law. There are hundreds of cases in which men have been robbed of just claims for improvements, owing to the fact of their means being exhausted by the rack-rents imposed upon them. I could point to hundreds of cases where tenant right has been sold at a nominal rate, owing to the fact that tenants, having been rack-rented, could not bring forward

their claims, and they are obliged to take what they can get from men who, having more money than sense, pay an exceptional rent for holdings. The hon. Member was, no doubt, right in giving the number of evictions through the actions of superior Courts; but we have no record of the number of tenants turned out by the action of Superior Courts.

MR. MACARTNEY: The statement I made combined all evictions, no matter by what process.

MR. PINKERTON: And the hon. Member went on to quote the opinion of three leading firms as to agricultural prospects; he traced the sale of a few more yards of calico by Sir J. Arnott, or the increase of sales by travellers of an English firm to returning Irish prosperity; but I challenge the hon. Member to go to any division in the North of Ireland—to go even to the Orange Hall at Ballymoney, and call a meeting of tenant farmers, and he will not find ten Conservative farmers rise to support the view he has propounded to-day. He has thrown it in my teeth that I was unsuccessful in my attempt to get returned for County Antrim. I did not succeed, but I certainly made a better fight than did some of his friends in other divisions. I did not occupy a discreditable position, and if my purse had been longer, possibly I might have been returned. Undoubtedly Conservatism in the North of Ireland hankers after the man with the long purse as a Constitutional representative. In conclusion, I would appeal to hon. Members who represent Northern constituencies to examine the circumstances for themselves, to see the state of agriculture, to see the position of the tenants, and not to be led astray by official Returns and statements put forward in the landlord interest. Go to the North of Ireland, go to the centre of law and order and call an open meeting of the people, and I am prepared to become a Liberal Unionist if you can bring 40 farmers from County Antrim to justify the position the hon. Member has taken up.

*THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (MR. MADDEN, Dublin University): I listened with attention to the speech of the hon. Gentleman who has just sat down, and I waited with some interest for the time when he would approach the particular pro-

visions of the Bill we are now discussing, and show its relation to the topics he was bringing under the notice of the House; but that period did not arrive. The hon. Gentleman who moved the Second Reading of the Bill has, however, stated fully and clearly to the House the reasons for which he asks us to accept the Second Reading of the Bill. At the outset of his remarks he reminded us that a measure such as this had been repeatedly rejected by the House, and he went on to say that it was an explanatory Bill and one which carried out the spirit of the land legislation passed from 1870 to 1881. Well, Sir, I desire to point out to the House that the statement of the hon. Member was absolutely correct. This Bill, or a Bill like it, has been often rejected by this House. And who has it been rejected by most often in this House? Why, by the authors of the legislation of 1870 and 1881, and they have rejected it on the ground that so far from its being a Bill carrying out the objects of that legislation, it was subversive of its main principles; and by no hon. Member was that proposition more forcibly maintained than by the hon. Gentleman the Member for the Bridgeton Division of Glasgow in 1884 when this subject was under discussion. Well, again, the hon. Member who introduced the Bill recommended it to the House because it would supply a plain definition of "improvements" and "predecessors in title." I believe it would; but we must go beyond that and see what, as a matter of justice and fair play, the practical effect of the very clear and unmistakeable definition he seeks to import into the land legislation of Ireland would be. It has been said in former debates that the whole question as to tenants' improvements is at this moment involved in very great difficulty and obscurity. Now, I admit that when the Acts of 1870 and 1881 were passed there was some considerable difficulty in ascertaining the exact meaning of the term tenants' improvements and the relation of the Acts to each other, but I cannot admit that after the decisions given under those Acts up to the present time the same difficulty, and doubt, and obscurity still remain; still less can I admit that, as a matter of fairness and justice, if they do remain they should be removed in the way suggested by the hon. Mem-

ber who moved the Second Reading of the Bill and his supporters. Attention has been called in this Debate to the decision in the case of "Adams and Dunseath." I am not going to inflict upon the House a disquisition upon that decision, nor am I going into any legal discussion of the Bill, but I may say that I can quite understand how the hon. Member as a layman approaching that case found himself in a considerable difficulty from the facts of the case. Yet, I do think that the main principles which have been conclusively established by that decision can be popularly stated, and can be separated from the complicated facts of the case and made perfectly intelligible; and that they are fair and just. What are the main principles of the decision? First of all, what was meant by the term improvements, under the Act of 1870 and the Act of 1881, as interpreted by the decision in the case of "Adams and Dunseath," was not the improved letting value of the land in consequence of the improvement, but the improvement itself. That was a clear and fundamental principle, and that principle is directly assailed by this Bill. One of the main and most important points in the present Bill is to revolutionize and subvert that principle, and to establish that the improvement which is to be the property of the tenant is the improved letting value of the holding. Now, just let us consider that question as a matter of justice and fair play. We have often heard the relation of landlord and tenant compared to a dual ownership. The landlord brings into this partnership, as it were, the land with its capacity for improvement, which varies infinitely in different cases, and the tenant brings—as I will assume for the sake of argument—his money and money's worth to the improvement of the soil. As a matter of fairplay and common sense, to whom, then, should the improved value belong? [An hon. MEMBER: To the tenant.] An hon. Member opposite says to the tenant; I understand that to be his view, but that would be applying to dual ownership or partnership a principle which has never been applied to such a relation. In some exceptional cases, I admit, the improvement should be entirely, or almost entirely, appropriated to the tenant, but in most cases that would be unjust on the partnership principle. The late

Mr. Butt, who will, I think, be accepted as an authority by hon. Gentlemen opposite, once gave an illustration on this point. He supposed the case of some rich land with an immense capacity for improvement, but which happened to be covered with water. A slight expenditure of money would drain the land, and it would then become worth £4 or £5 per acre. Was it to be said that the occupying tenant of that land, with its vast capacity of improvement which was the property of the landlord, was to appropriate the entire improved value? That is an extreme case. The improved value in any given instance might be due mainly or chiefly to the inherent capacity of the soil, or to the expenditure of capital and labour upon it. What the law now does is to remit all these questions to the adjudication of the Court; but the present Bill says that, whether the improved value arises chiefly or mainly from the expenditure, or mainly and chiefly from the capacities of the soil, it shall belong absolutely to the tenant. Another principle in the Bill relates to the definition of the term "predecessor in title." On that subject, what was decided in the case of "Adams and Dunseath" was decided in favour of the tenant; and it was this: Under the Act, of 1870 a technical and narrow construction has been put on the term predecessor in title; and the Court decided that a more liberal construction should be given to the words in favour of the tenant under the Act of 1881. The interpretation given to the term in "Adams and Dunseath" is fair and reasonable—namely, that if the tenant proves a succession in title, even though the title may be not the same, the requirements of the Act are satisfied. But the present Bill provides that "predecessor in title" shall be construed as predecessor in occupancy whenever it appears to the Court that the justice of the case so requires. Could anything be more absurd than to leave a question which ought, first of all, to be decided by the House as a matter of principle to the discretion of the Court in each particular case? The Bill seeks to introduce another principle on the subject of improvements. Before the Act of 1870 the improvements passed to the freehold; but since the passing of that Act the question of presumption has become a vital question, and I submit that the amendment of the law then introduced

was a fair and reasonable protection to the tenant as regards that question; while the clause in the present Bill would be grossly unfair to the landlord. The Act of 1870 gives presumption during a period of 20 years, with certain safeguards as to the improvements of the tenant. What does this Bill seek to effect? It seeks to create a presumptive period extending to 50 years, and a period beyond which it would be impossible in most cases to adduce any positive evidence. A more unfair proposition could not be submitted to the consideration of the House. Taking the propositions of the Bill together, they simply mean, in a naked form, the doctrine of prairie value. There are other provisions in this Bill and I do not wish in the slightest degree to minimize any of them. I certainly do not desire to minimize the importance of subjects which the hon. Gentleman who moved the Second Reading of the Bill has brought so fully and exhaustively before the House. The next question which was dealt with was the question of arrears. I do not think it can be seriously suggested that this is a Bill, which can be accepted as a settlement of the arrears question, nor do I think this is an occasion on which we should argue or dilate on the arrears question. The House and the country are in possession of the views of the Government on that subject, and I do not think it necessary, therefore, to argue the question now. This Bill is simply a provision in respect of arrears applicable to tenants who make application to have a fair rent fixed. It would have no effect on the question of arrears on existing judicial rents. It is not a general Arrears Bill, and it is supported by an analogy which I think is a false one—namely, the analogy of the Crofters Act. What was done in the Crofters Act was this: A large class of tenants were, for the first time, admitted to a Court for the purpose of having a fair rent fixed. The true analogy is to be found in the Arrears Act of 1882, which followed the Land Act of 1881. It is urged that the Government may be asked to accept this provision because it is taken from the Crofters Act. But surely hon. Members will recognize the desirableness, first of all, of considering the circumstances in which that Act was passed, and then the totally different

different state of circumstances which prevail in the present instance, in regard to which the Crofters Act cannot be adduced as an authority. I admit the importance of the question of the long leaseholders. I have very great sympathy with them, and I am sure that every consideration will be given to any fair proposition brought forward on their behalf. But then, when a proposition is submitted to the House, we must see whether it is fair, just, and reasonable, and whether the particular proposition submitted is consistent with the general scheme of legislation of which it is offered to us as a part. What has been the course of legislation in regard to leaseholders? The framers of the Act of 1881 thought that the leaseholders might fairly be left to the contracts they had made; and the views of legislators for many years afterwards was in the same direction. The special protection afforded by the Land Court was considered to be due to a different class of tenants: On what principle was the case of the leaseholders dealt with by the Act of 1887? On the basis of admitting leaseholders to the benefits of ordinary agricultural tenants. But, looking at the question broadly, a line must be drawn between two widely different classes of leaseholders. There are the ordinary agricultural tenants who take leases which may fairly be described as agricultural leases; there is another class, who may be described as land speculators, persons who take leases altogether outside the ordinary terms of a lease as a matter of speculation is the ownership of land. But this is a totally different kind of ownership, and the House is aware that when the Legislature admitted the leaseholders to the benefit of the fair rent clauses they treated them in the same way as the ordinary agricultural tenants, the vast majority of whom hold from year to year. This was done in a liberal spirit, and the Act of 1887 adopted a term far in excess of any term which could be fairly represented as that of an ordinary term of an agricultural lease. There is a topic which is always presented in discussing this matter. It is said—"You may have a man with a 99 years' lease, and another with a 98 years' lease, and is it right, on account of a small matter which was not attended to at the time of the drawing of the lease, to make

all this difference between the two cases?" It is unfortunate, no doubt, that the distinction has to be made. But unfortunate speculations may be made in land as well as other things, and I will ask the House to go with me to this extent—that we must in some way distinguish between leaseholders who may fairly be admitted to the benefit of the Act and those who may be described as investors, purchasers, or speculators in land. You must draw the line somewhere. The same observation would apply as to the hardship of distinguishing between one case and another, no matter where you draw your line of demarcation. But the question for the House to consider is, has this distinction been fair and reasonably drawn in the Act of 1887, and are there sufficient reasons now submitted by the promoters of this Bill to upset the settlement which the House then arrived at? I submit that no case has been made out for upsetting the settlement of 1887. The Bill next deals with the length of the judicial term; but, as very little argument has been addressed to the House on that point, I will not detain the House long with regard to it. I will merely state this—that the Bill presents this question in a very different form from the recommendation of the Cowper Commission. The Bill, if adopted as it now stands, would again throw into the Land Court a large number of Irish tenancies; indeed, the agrarian question would be largely re-opened. Now, I do think, in these circumstances, that the House will ask for a stronger argument than has been adduced before it will involve the whole of Ireland in this turmoil and paralyse the business of the Land Court as a consequence of such legislation. With reference to the question of turbary, which is another important matter, I would remind the House of how the case stands. As I understand it, when an application for the fixing of a fair rent comes before the Sub-Commission the question of turbary is gone into, and if the tenant has rights they are preserved. According to the Bill, a tenant might apply to the Court to grant him a right of turbary where, owing to the customary management of the estate, he has a reasonable expectation of continuing in the enjoyment of any turbary. This cannot be regarded as either fair

or reasonable. Where a tenant has a right of turbary there is no necessity for the Court to grant him such right, and where he has no such right he ought not to get it merely because the landlord out of liberality has previously allowed him to enjoy the privilege. If the Bill were to become law it would prejudicially affect the good landlord, by converting into a legal obligation that which he had conceded as a matter of generosity, whilst it would protect the legal rights of the bad landlord who had unreasonably refused the use of turbary to his tenants. The mere statement of the case will, I think, show that the proposal of the Bill is unfair and unjust in the extreme. A great deal has been said with regard to the case of "*Adams v. Dunseath*," which decided that the enjoyment by the tenant of a holding with its improvements, without an increase of rent, should be an element for consideration in the fixing of a fair rent. Is not that perfectly just? Where the improvable value of land is extremely great, and where, by a small expenditure of labour or money by the tenant, the letting value of the holding is very greatly increased, and where, after such increased letting value has been created, the landlord allows the tenant to continue upon the holding at the old rent, ought not the forbearance of the landlord in not increasing such rent for a number of years to be taken into consideration, and regarded as in the nature of compensation allowed to the tenant for his improvements? If this were not the law the effect would be that the bad landlord, who has immediately increased his rent, would be placed in a much better position than the good landlord who has abstained from raising his rent. This would not be just. I do not see in the Bill anything that can be regarded as a serious attempt to deal with the question of arrears, or anything that can be considered as a successful attempt to deal with the question of long leaseholds. It only purposes to deal with long leaseholds, as I have endeavoured to show the House, on principles which are inconsistent with those which the House has adopted; and in regard to all other matters of detail I would describe the Bill as a review of the Irish Land Legislation of the past 20 years, with an endeavour carefully to

eliminate from previous Land Acts every reasonable provision for the protection of the just and fair rights of the landlord; and on behalf of Her Majesty's Government I must, therefore, state that they will feel bound to oppose it.

*MR. SHAW LEFEVRE (Bradford): The Bill before the House, as has been very properly stated by the Solicitor General for Ireland, consists of a number of separate and important questions, each distinct from the other, and we cannot say that there is any distinctive line of principle running through the whole of the Bill. The measure, however, is one proposing to amend the Land Acts of 1881 and 1887, and I do not think that either those sitting on this Bench, or still less the Irish Members, can be considered as estopped from raising these questions. We are fully entitled to re-open certain of the matters dealt with in the Land Act of 1881, for the settlement effected by that Act has been altered in most respects on the initiative of Her Majesty's Government by the Act of 1887. Many of the clauses of the Bill I have already voted for, in the shape of Amendments to the Act of 1887, and I shall, therefore, support the Bill, though with reservations as to parts of it. I cannot but think that the mode in which the Act of 1887 was passed through the House was a very unfortunate one. I fully recognize that the Act was a very important one, and has produced very great good to the tenants of Ireland; but if the Irish Members had been consulted by the Government previous to its introduction or during its passing, I believe it might have been made a better measure, and might, possibly, have proved a settlement of the question. Whatever Amendments were made in the Bill were not made in deference to the remonstrances and the demands of the Irish Members, but in answer to the demands made by the Dissident Liberals, and for the purpose of preventing a defeat of the Government. Now, one of the most important questions with which the present Bill deals is that relating to improvements of their holdings made by tenants. I think that nobody can read the Judgment in "*Adams v. Dunseath*," and compare it with the speeches made in this House when the Land Bill of 1881 was under discussion, and when the Amendment inserted in the House of Lords came down

to this House for consideration, and refuse to admit that the decision in "Adams v. Dunseath" was directly opposed to the intentions of this House. It is a fact which corroborates this statement that Lord Chancellor Law, who had been closely concerned in the passing of the Land Bill of 1881 through the House, dissented from the Judgment of the majority in that case, and was of opinion that the decision would necessitate amending the Act. Some Amendment of the law is clearly required in regard to that important point. I am not prepared, however, to say that the clauses dealing with it in the present Bill may not go somewhat too far, and they certainly will have to be very carefully considered in Committee, if the Bill should reach that stage. There must be compromise between the Government and the persons mainly interested—namely, the Representatives of the Irish tenants in this House, and I cannot but think that if the Government will go into Committee with the idea of coming to a final conclusion on the matter, it will not be difficult for them to come to a satisfactory settlement. I agree with the Solicitor General for Ireland that the Bill as now drawn does not deal conclusively and effectually with the subject of arrears, because it only deals with arrears of judicial rents. That, however, is not a defect in principle, and can be cured in Committee. If the Land Act of 1887 had been passed a year sooner, or if, when passed, it had dealt with arrears, the country would have been spared all those grievous troubles which have sprung up in Ireland since then. Almost every one of the prosecutions and convictions under the Coercion Act can be traced directly or indirectly to disputes between landlord and tenants resulting from evictions for non-payment of arrears. I may illustrate that by referring to the case of the Vandeleur estate, the disputes with regard to which, I have heard with pleasure, are likely to be settled by arbitration. I must congratulate the hon. Member for Canterbury (Mr. Henniker Heaton), on having had the good fortune to induce the landlord to refer the matter to arbitration. The hon. Member has been more fortunate than I was. I had a long correspondence with the agent of the estate nearly a year ago on this subject, and endeavoured in vain to induce him to agree to arbitration. If that course had then

been adopted, all the grievous troubles which have occurred in the interval would have been avoided. The main, if not the only, dispute which has arisen in that case is as to the arrears of rent which have grown up during the last three or four years. The Vandeleur case is after all only one of the many instances of disputes of the same kind. I believe I am right in saying there are something like 30 or 40 disputes similar to that on the Vandeleur estate, and what I have to suggest to the Chief Secretary is, whether it would not be wise in the interest of the peace of Ireland, and with a view of bringing all these disputes to a conclusion to take the opportunity afforded by the introduction of this Bill to deal with the question of arrears. I am the more disposed to give the right hon. Gentleman this advice in consequence of the new policy which has been lately devised, and is now being carried out in Ireland for transplanting Protestant tenants from Ulster to take the place of evicted Catholic tenants in other parts of Ireland, a policy which, I say, is fraught with danger to the peace of Ireland, a policy which is likely to revive religious animosities and ill-feeling which may last in every district where it is tried for many years, and possibly for generations to come. Within the last few days we have been told that Lord Massareene has been able to persuade something like 20 Protestant tenants to come from North Antrim for the purpose of taking farms on his estate in Louth from which Catholic tenants have been evicted. I have seen an advertisement in an Antrim paper inviting Protestant tenants, as Protestants, to take the farms. The following are the terms of the advertisement:—

"There are several vacant farms to be let in the counties of Louth and Meath, in close proximity to the important seaport and market town of Drogheda. None but Protestants need apply. Special advantages are offered to suitable tenants. For particulars, apply to Messrs. Dudgeon and Emmerson."

There can be no doubt that that advertisement applies to the Massareene property, and in pursuance of that advertisement several tenants from Antrim have been persuaded to offer themselves for the farms. According to the statement made by the hon. Member for South Tyrone in the *Times* a few days ago, they are to be allowed to enter at rents in many cases much less than the judicial rents, and in cases where

judicial rents have not been fixed at were willing to reinstate those tenants on something like 25 per cent less than the increased rents. This is not the first time in the history of Ireland that a policy of this kind has been tried. The late Mr. A. M. Sullivan, in his interesting work entitled "Young Ireland," shows that 40 years ago the then Lord Lorton proceeded to clear a part of his estate in county Longford of its Catholic tenants, and to replace them by Protestants. County Longford, previous to that time, had been one of the most quiet and orderly parts of Ireland; but the character of the district was completely changed in consequence of the action of Lord Lorton. It became the scene of most deplorable events, of outrages and murders. I will not fully state what took place lest I should be thought to prophesy what may now result, but I would advise hon. Members to read the account in Mr. Sullivan's work, where the evidence of Lord Lorton himself, in an inquiry in the House of Lords, is reported. I think the Chief Secretary would act wisely if he expressed disapprobation of the new policy which has been announced. The question of arrears has been a great difficulty in the settlement of many of these questions. For my part, I have never been one of those who have found any fault with Captain Vandeleur in his *bona fide* dispute with his tenants—a dispute in which each party believes himself to be in the right. In such disputes, I hold that the proper mode of settling it is by friendly arbitration, and I rejoice that that course is to be adopted in this case. I cannot but think that if the same course were adopted in all other disputes of a similar character which arise in Ireland, the same good results might follow. In the case of the Vandeleur property, unquestionably the result of arbitration will be peace and content among the tenantry, and the moment the evicted tenants are replaced in their holdings there will be an end to all bickering, and there will be no necessity for coercion, evictions, or persecutions. The same results, I venture to suggest, would follow from a similar policy if it were adopted on the properties of Lord Massareene and Lord Clanricarde. I believe that to be in the case of those two estates, the only remaining difficulty to the question of reinstatement of the evicted tenants; and if Lord Massareene

the same terms as those he is prepared to give to the other tenants, the dispute would quickly be settled. In like manner, if Lord Clanricarde were prepared to reinstate the evicted tenants, and give them the same abatement of rent which he is willing to give to the other tenants, I believe we might easily effect a settlement of the question. Peace and content would be restored to Ireland by friendly arbitration, but if that is not resorted to, I fear we shall have a continuation of the present disputes, to be followed by further evictions, and probably by a renewal of prosecutions and evictions under the Coercion Act. I have myself the strongest conviction that these disputes can only be settled either by friendly arbitration between the two parties, or by some independent authority, under the powers of an Act of Parliament, in the absence of friendly arbitrators. I believe it is absolutely essential for the peace of the district where these disputes occur, that there should be some measure in the direction of dealing with the arrears, and I venture, therefore, to hope the Government will take this opportunity afforded by the Bill now before the House to deal with the question. I believe that the arrears may be very easily and simply dealt with, without involving any risk of introducing dangerous principles for the future. One possible course would be to schedule the disputes which have occurred, and to deal individually with them under the Bill. That would, perhaps, avoid the necessity of dealing with the subject of arrears by some general provision, but of the wisdom and necessity of dealing with this question, in order to bring these disputes to an end, and to restore peace and quiet to districts now unfortunately disturbed in consequence of these troubles, I think very few people can possibly doubt. I trust, therefore, that the Chief Secretary, before this debate closes, will be able to promise that the Government will deal with the subject, and I hope that he will further express an opinion against the policy now being pursued on the Massareene property, of transplanting Protestant tenants from the North of Ireland to the evicted farms in other districts. Everyone who knows anything about Ireland, and who is familiar with its circumstances, will admit that a policy of that kind can only endanger

the peace of the country, and is in the interests neither of the landlord nor of the Government.

MR. CHANCE (Kilkenny, S.): I quite admit that it is idle at the present time to expect that either the Government or the House would accept an Irish Bill of any kind, but I have no doubt that when this House has become a little older, and when, perhaps, a couple of dozen important bye-elections have resulted adversely to Ministers, they will readily accept a Bill of the character of the one now under discussion, and, perhaps, it may be introduced by hon. Gentlemen opposite. But this Bill and the debate serves at least one or two purposes. It tests the truth of the representations made by hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite at the election of 1886, when they said that though they could not agree to dismember the Empire, they would heartily support any measure which would give justice and fairplay to the Irish tenants—that in cases where it was proved that grievances existed, some remedy would be applied, and that they would be delighted to accept the co-operation of the Irish Members in the settlement of the remedy. Now, this debate has shown that the Government are by no means inclined to carry out the pledges which they so freely made in 1886. They have postponed, indeed, carrying them out for two years longer in, perhaps, the half-formed belief that when a couple of years have passed away, they may not be in a position to discuss these matters at all. This Bill has been met by two different kinds of opposition. The first opposition—that by the hon. Member representing one of the divisions of Antrim, who usually speaks for the extreme Orange party—was, undoubtedly, frank and plain. The hon. Member went through a long series of statistics in order to prove to the House that the landlords were able to screw out of the tenants an increased proportion of rent last year, and that, as the harvests this year had been somewhat better, there was hope that they would be able to screw even more rent out of the tenants this year, and his case was that it would be unjust to interfere with the landlord in that operation. In his speech he scarcely dealt with the Bill, or with the imperfections in the law which the hon. Member who proposed it so ably pointed out. What he said to this House

was practically, “I won’t discuss the justice or the injustice of the land tribunals of Ireland; I told the House we were lucky in screwing a little more rent, year after year, out of the tenants, and I beg the House not to interfere with us, but to leave us in a dark corner, and to let us screw out of the tenants whatever we can.” But the opposition of Her Majesty’s Government was somewhat different; they did not venture in this instance to give notice of opposition to this Bill; they contented themselves with waiting for a friendly lead from an Orange landlord; and, having got that lead, they put up the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Dublin University, not to discuss the principle of the Bill, but to enter into a highly technical and quibbling discussion as to the precise phraseology of the Bill, a discussion which when the hon. and learned Gentleman is a little better versed in Parliamentary usages, he will know he should have reserved for the Committee. The Bill is an exceedingly modest one, and it does not deserve the attack of the hon. and learned Gentleman, nor his assertion that it has practically dislocated the existing law, because it is not intended to do that. On the contrary, it is calculated to render the law both symmetrical and logical. The hon. and learned Gentleman never made the assertion that the Land Court of Ireland was either logical or symmetrical, and he knows perfectly that it is not. There is no Member of this House who is more thoroughly acquainted with the technicalities and crooked ways of the Acts of 1881 and 1887. He knows that, as the result of the Act of 1887, the leaseholders have been handed over to a tribunal appointed under the Act of 1881, and that no provision has been made to adjust the discrepancies which must naturally arise as between the cases of the leaseholders and the Irish tenants. Now, Sir, the first object of this Bill is one which I think ought to obtain some sympathy, even from the Orange Tory Conservative Party. That object is the admission of leaseholders to the benefits of the Land Act. Undoubtedly, certain classes of the leaseholders have been admitted to the benefits of that Act, and I quite admit it is impossible to say that it is just to admit a tenant holding under a lease having 98 years to run, and unjust to admit one holding under a lease of 99 years. Naturally,

the hon. and learned Member did not take up that position, for which he knows there is no justification. He spoke somewhat inferentially of the case of the tenant taking land for the purpose of sub-letting; but let me point out that the difference between the two classes of tenants is simply that one tenant holds from year to year, pays a certain rent, and is entitled to give up his holding at the end of the year, while the other tenant pays a yearly rack rent, and is under the additional disadvantage of not being able to shake himself free from the tenancy, as he or his representatives are bound to pay the rent for the whole term, and there is absolutely no possibility of getting out of a bad bargain, even at the expense of the forfeiture of his improvements and interest in the farm. It would seem, therefore, that a tenant holding under a long lease at a rack rent is in a worse, rather than in a better, position than a tenant holding from year to year. Surely the doctrine of sacredness of contract, which was formerly in such high favour with the House, having been abandoned by the Conservative Party, no case can now be made out for the exclusion of these leaseholders from the benefits of the Act. The second main object of this Bill is to secure for the tenant freedom from being rented on his own improvements. I quite admit that it would be unjust that a tenant, by reason simply of making a drain through a piece of land at the expense of a few pounds, should be held to be entitled to the whole of the increased value of the land. But that is not what we ask. The position we take up is that the industrious tenant should not be, by reason of his own industry and thrift, in a worse position than the idle and extravagant tenant. It is idle to deny that the decision in *Adams v. Dunseath* places the worthless tenant in a better position than the thrifty and improving tenant. I do not wish to attribute improper motives to the Judges who came to this decision; but it is an unfortunate circumstance that the three Liberal Judges held that the tenant should not be rented, while the four Conservative Judges, who formed the majority of the Court, held that he should be rented upon his improvements, and, above all, each of those four Judges differed from each of his colleagues as to the grounds for the decision. Lord Justice May, in his judg-

ment, interpreted the Healy Clause of the Land Act, 1881, simply to mean that if a tenant at his own expense increased the annual value of his holding by £30 or £50, he should be rented on the increased value, and should only be exempt from rent on the value of the stones and tiles used in the work, and he afterwards humorously asked what rent could be put on tiles and stones in such a case. The second proposition was this—that under the law as it stands at present a doctrine—more worthily found perhaps in the mouth of the pickpocket or burglar—is set up by the Land Acts of 1870 and 1881 that if a man improves his land and enjoys those improvements for a given number of years, they then become the landlord's property. Surely that is not sound doctrine. I am certain the hon. and learned Gentleman will agree with me that under the law as it at present stands the presumption in the case of the leaseholder is that the improvements belong to the landlord and not to him. Every Royal Commission and Select Committee which has sat on the subject of the Irish land has unanimously reported that in the vast majority of cases the improvements have been made by the tenants, and yet, Sir, the hon. and learned Gentleman gets up in this House and gravely asks us to perpetuate the law. The last point with which this Bill deals is the question of fixing the value of the tenancy. I assume that at least some hon. Members in this House are theoretically acquainted with the operation known on the Stock Exchange as purchasing at option. But the Irish tenant, by the law, is in a worse position than the speculator in purchases at option. For the landlord at present is allowed to put a value on the tenancy, and at the end of ten, twelve, or fourteen years the tenant must redeem at the price, even if values have receded. That surely should be put an end to. I need not discuss the question of arrears, because on that point the Bill is simply a reprint of the provisions of the Scotch Act already passed by Tory Members of this House. But I would point out in conclusion that, by destroying unjust rents and arrears, you destroy the very foundations of the Plan of Campaign; and that though right hon. and hon. Gentlemen opposite go about the country praying for the pacification of Ireland, they are not willing to pacify it by simply doing

justice to the tenants. They prefer rather to rely on the Crimes Act, the Special Commission, and Gentlemen like Mr. Plunket and Captain Segrave.

The House divided:—Ayes 168; Noes 229.—(Div. List, No. 71.)

Main Question, as amended, put, and agreed to.

Second Reading put off for six months.

TRUST FUNDS INVESTMENT BILL.— [BILL 6.]

Order for Committee read and discharged.

Bill committed to a Select Committee.

SUPPLY—REPORT.

Resolutions [9th April] reported.

CLASS I.

(1.) "That a sum, not exceeding £7,210, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1890, for the Expenses of the Erection and Maintenance (including Rents, &c.) of Buildings for the Department of Science and Art."

(2.) "That a sum, not exceeding £8,847, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1890, for the Maintenance and Repair of the British Museum and Natural History Museum Buildings, for Rents of Premises, Supply of Water, Fuel, &c., and other Charges attendant thereon."

(3.) "That a sum, not exceeding £23,702, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1890, for Diplomatic and Consular Buildings, including Rents and Furniture, and for the maintenance of certain Cemeteries Abroad."

(4.) "That a sum, not exceeding £8,286, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1890, for maintaining certain Harbours, &c., under the Board of Trade."

Resolutions agreed to.

RATING OF MACHINERY BILL.—

[BILL No. 21.]

Order for Second Reading read, and discharged.

Bill withdrawn.

AGRICULTURAL HOLDINGS (SCOTLAND) ACT (1883) AMENDMENT BILL.

[BILL No. 58.]

As amended considered; read the Third Time, and passed.

PARTNERSHIP BILL. [BILL No. 151].

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

COLONEL HILL (Bristol, S.): I beg to move the Second Reading of this Bill.

DR. TANNER (Cork, Mid): I object.

COLONEL HILL: I appeal to the hon. Member to allow the Bill to proceed.

DR. TANNER: Let it be promoted by a respectable Member of this side of the House.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. Member must be aware that he is guilty of a gross abuse of the Forms of the House.

DR. TANNER: I said, Sir, let the Bill be promoted by a respectable Member on this side of the House.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, order!

THE SUGAR BOUNTIES QUESTION.

MR. MUNDELLA (Sheffield, Brightside): I must appeal to Her Majesty's Government that they will for the convenience of the House, and to save time in the debate which is coming on tomorrow on the question of the Sugar Bounties, give us the correspondence for which I have given notice to move? The correspondence which has already been published in the Blue Book is altogether trivial in character. As the right hon. Gentleman opposite has already given permission for the correspondence to be published, I must appeal to him to have it circulated and thus save a good deal of trouble and some acrimony perhaps.

*BARON H. DE WORMS (Liverpool, E. Toxteth): I must respectfully decline to accede to the suggestion of the right hon. Gentleman, as the correspondence is not of an official character. As a matter of fact, it has been printed in pamphlet form by the gentleman to whom it was addressed, and circulated among Members of the House.

MR. MUNDELLA: I have not seen it.

Motion made, That the House do now adjourn.

DR. TANNER: I wish to make an explanation. A few minutes ago I objected to a pseudo-Liberal measure being brought forward by hon. Members sitting opposite, and I wish it to

be distinctly understood that as long as I continue to be a Member of this House and such measures are brought forward by hon. Members opposite, I shall strenuously oppose them to the utmost of my power. When I made use of the words "a respectable Member on this side of the House," I merely spoke of the Liberal Members, and not of the traitors who sit on those Benches, and support the Party opposite.

COLONEL HILL: The measure is backed by Sir B. Samuelson, Sir Charles Palmer, and Mr. Seale-Hayne, and others, who, I should think, do not come under the category which the hon. Member has just mentioned.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, order!

THE OLPHERT ESTATE.

QUESTION.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): I wish to ask the Chief Secretary a question of which I have given private Notice, whether it is a fact that the eviction of Olphert tenants, comprising 70 families, and affecting 350 individuals in the county of Donegal, will be commenced to-morrow; whether in the years 1879, 1881, 1883, and 1884, they were supplied from charitable sources with potatoes and seed; and whether, owing to the failure of the potato crop last autumn, those families are again being supplied from charitable sources with the means of subsistence; and whether, therefore, the Government will promise not to employ the Forces of the Crown to expel them from their homes, to burn the buildings down with petroleum, or demolish their houses with the battering ram?

MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W): Before the right hon. Gentleman answers that question I would inquire if he has any information as to the occurrences to-day in Judge Curran's Court on the appeal of Mr. William O'Brien, and if it is true that, in consequence of the refusal of the trustees of the estate to accept the offer to refer the matter to arbitration, the learned Judge has decided that, instead of the sentence of six months' imprisonment passed in the Court below, no punishment shall be inflicted in this case? I would ask him, further, in regard to the tenants on the Olphert Estate, whether it is not a fact that they have been deprived of their main assistance

by the committal to prison of Father M'Fadden on a charge of murder, and if he will use his influence, in view of the miserable condition of these seventy families, to prevent the father of one of the aides-de-camps of the Lord Lieutenant of Dublin Castle evicting these poor people, and running the risk of the terrible danger of social disorder in this unfortunate district?

*THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (MR. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): These questions have been given me without notice, and I have been unable to make inquiry into the facts. With regard to the Olphert estate, the reports I have seen on the subject of the condition of these people certainly do not bear out the suggestions which are contained in the question. As to Judge Curran's decision, I cannot believe the version which has reached the right hon. Gentleman is accurate, and I prefer, before expressing any opinion, to await full information.

*MR. H. J. WILSON (Holmfirth): I wish to remind the right hon. Gentleman that the tenants in Donegal are in a most deplorable condition, even if the official information does not exactly tally with that contained in the question of the hon. Member; and I therefore hope that the right hon. Gentleman will do something to prevent the newly-purchased battering ram being used in the destruction of their homes.

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Cambridge): I am going over to Donegal on Friday night, and if the right hon. Gentleman will entrust his instructions to me I shall be happy to convey them.

MR. MURPHY (Dublin, St. Patrick's): With reference to the evictions on the Olphert estate, I wish to ask the right hon. Gentleman if he will consider as to whether, in face of the strong opinion expressed by Judge Johnson at the Ulster Assizes, he should allow the Forces of the Crown to be used except for the purposes of protecting the Sheriff?

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not think that version of the learned Judge's remarks is accurate.

House adjourned at three minutes after Six o'clock.

HANSARD'S PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES.

No. 3.] THIRD VOLUME OF SESSION 1889.

[APRIL 30.]

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Thursday, 11th April, 1889.

COMMISSION.

The following Bills received the Royal Assent:—Army (Annual); National Debt Redemption; Drainage and Improvement of Lands (Ireland) Provisional Order.

REPRESENTATIVE PEER FOR IRELAND.

Writs and Returns electing the Lord Rathdonnell a Representative Peer for Ireland in the room of the late Lord Dunsany, deceased, with the Certificate of the Clerk of the Crown in Ireland annexed thereto: Delivered (on oath), and Certificate read.

AGRICULTURAL HOLDINGS (SCOTLAND) ACT (1883) AMENDMENT BILL (No. 42.)

Brought from the Commons; Read 1st, and to be printed.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) PROVISIONAL ORDERS BILL.

Brought from the Commons; Read 1st; to be printed; and referred to the Examiners.

STANDING COMMITTEES.

REPORT FROM COMMITTEE OF SELECTION FOR STANDING COMMITTEES.

That the Committee have (in pursuance of Standing Order No. L.) nominated the following Lords to serve as Chairman of Standing Committees:—

E. Cadogan (L. Privy Seal.)	E. Kimberley.
E. Derby.	E. Selborne.
E. Carnarvon.	L. Balfour.
E. Milltown.	L. Esher.
E. Camperdown.	L. Herschell.

That the Committee have (in pursuance of Standing Order No. XLVII.) nominated the following Lords to serve on "the Standing Committee for Bills relating to Law, &c." :—

L. Halsbury (L. Chancellor.)	L. Sudelley.
V. Cranbrook (L. President.)	L. Elgin (E. Elgin and Kincardine.)
M. Salisbury	L. Aberdare.
M. Bath.	L. Coleridge.
M. Ripon.	L. Norton.
E. Stanhope.	L. Watson.
E. Milltown.	L. Brabourne.
E. Belmore.	L. Bramwell.
E. Beauchamp.	L. FitzGerald.
E. Strafford.	L. Monk Bretton.
E. Selborne.	L. Northington (L. Henley.)
V. Oxenbridge,	L. Monkswell.
V. Cross.	L. Hobhouse.
L. Clinton.	L. Lingen.
L. Sundridge (D. Argyll.)	L. Ashbourne
L. Colchester.	L. Esher.
L. Wigan (E. Crawford.)	L. Herschell.
L. Rosebery. (E. Rosebery.)	L. Grimthorpe.
L. Chaworth (E. Meath.)	L. Thring.
	L. Macnaghten.
	L. Basing.

That the Committee have (in pursuance of Standing Order No. XLVII.) nominated the following Lords to serve on "the Standing Committee for General Bills" :—

E. Cadogan (L. Privy Seal.)	E. Spencer.
D. Richmond.	E. Bathurst.
D. St. Albans.	E. Carnarvon.
D. Bedford.	E. Harrowby.
D. Rutland.	E. Brownlow.
D. Westminster.	E. Camperdown.
M. Abercorn. (D. Abercorn.)	E. Granville.
E. Mount-Edgcumbe. (L. Steward.)	E. Kimberley.
E. Lathom. (L. Chamberlain.)	E. Ravensworth.
E. Derby.	E. Wharnccliffe.
E. Pembroke and Montgomery.	E. Northbrook.
E. Suffolk and Berkshire.	E. Fife.
E. Doncaster. (D. Buccleuch.)	V. Sidmouth.
E. Jersey.	V. Gordon. (E. Aberdeen.)
E. Cowper.	L. Knutsford. (One of Her Majesty's Principal Secretaries of State.)
	L. Ashford.
	L. Balfour.
	L. Boyle

(E. Cork and Orrery.)	L. Fermanagh
L. Hopetoun	(E. Erne.)
(E. Hopetoun.)	L. Watson.
L. Foxford	L. Hothfield.
(E. Limerick.)	L. de Vesci
L. Harris.	(V. de Vesci.)
L. Ker (M. Lothian.)	L. Rothschild.
L. Wemyss	L. Revelstoke.
(E. Wemyss.)	L. Wantage.
L. Poltimore.	L. Elphinstone.
L. Wenlock.	L. Colville of Culross.
L. Egerton.	L. Herschell.
L. Kenry	L. Hillingdon.
(E. Dunraven and	L. Grimthorpe.
Mount-Earl.)	L. Stalbridge.
L. Hartismere	L. Kensington.
(L. Henniker.)	L. Brassey.
L. Sandhurst.	L. Thring.

Read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

PRIVATE AND PROVISIONAL ORDER CONFIRMATION BILLS.

Ordered, That Standing Orders Nos. 92 and 93 be suspended; and that the time for depositing petitions praying to be heard against Private and Provisional Order Confirmation Bills, which would otherwise expire during the adjournment of the House at Easter, be extended to the first day on which the House shall sit after the Recess.

SMOKE NUISANCE ABATEMENT (METROPOLIS) BILL.—(No 13.)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

***LORD STRATHEDEN AND CAMPBELL:** My Lords, the circumstances under which the Second Reading of the Bill is urged upon the House, impose a statement which might have otherwise been easily avoided. Glad should I have been to move it formally and silently. It is hardly possible to do so, as I have to ask your Lordships—to some extent, at least—to rescind a Vote you previously arrived at. After the Bill had been repeatedly affirmed in principle, after it had been endorsed by a Select Committee, who went into it most accurately, after the Government had given notice of some further Amendments, and thus declared that it ought to go on, it was defeated in 1887 by the union of the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack with a noble Earl who often sits on the cross-benches (Earl of Wemyss), but who is not here this evening. Were it not for this to me disastrous combination, the Bill might now have been upon the Statute Book, and fogs such as we

observed to-day and yesterday at least considerably mitigated. I am ready to admit that the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack may have been misled by the noble Earl on the cross-benches. That noble Earl was under a very strong but most inaccurate impression, that the Bill gave local bodies a power to visit the interior of houses. But such a power is conspicuously absent. The local body may prohibit smoke, but cannot dictate any special manner of preventing it, or ascertain the cause from which it has arisen. The noble and learned Lord—to do him justice—did indeed advance a reason of his own for opposition to the measure. It was, that the vestry had too much discretionary power, because no maximum had been laid down as to the fine they may exact in certain cases. If the noble and learned Lord had moved the introduction of a maximum, the supporters of the Bill would have been ready to accede to it. But now a maximum is given. It is the same maximum as that provided by the Acts of Lord Palmerston against smoke in factories. It was objected to the Bill from other quarters that it enabled the vestry to exempt houses beneath a certain value, and so would operate unequally amongst the different classes of society. The exemption is removed, although its removal may tend to make vestries less inclined to use the privileges which the Bill confers upon them. The power of regulating new constructions, so that smoke may be prevented in them, which was accorded to the Metropolitan Board of Works, is transferred to the London County Council. It would have been possible to make the London County Council the sole executive authority. But the avowed principle of the Bill has always been that householders are only to be controlled by local bodies they can influence. If any one dislikes the Bill, or dreads its operation, he has only to go down to the vestry, and persuade them not to make a byelaw or exercise the power delegated to them. It may be observed without the slightest disrespect, that it is impossible to estimate beforehand the disposition or the prudence of the new councils. But setting that aside, as regards inspection, the vestries have machinery the London County Council has not yet arrived at. From what has reached me

I am led to think that if your Lordships hesitate about the Bill it is from doubt as to the facility of checking smoke in private houses. In a former Session I enumerated a dozen modes of doing so. But as the number may have gone too far and tended to confusion, I will now only mention two or three which satisfy the difficulty. The object of a householder would be to reduce disturbance to a minimum. Without the slightest alteration in his fireplaces, he may burn coke and wood together. The heat is good, the flame sufficient, and hardly any smoke emerges. If that plan is objected to, he may slightly alter his existing fireplaces, still burning coal, in a manner Mr. Ernest Hart explained to the Select Committee. If he is willing to go further he may adopt the fireplace of Sir William Siemens, in which coke and gas are seen to operate together. The result is excellent when once attained, but it involves the necessary work for bringing gas up to the fender. The Bill has been subjected to the Vestries and the London County Council. No adverse resolution has been carried. It is true that some expense may be involved to those who do not act on the first of my suggestions for burning coke and wood together. A noble Lord who sat on the Select Committee formed an estimate of what he apprehended as the new and serious taxation to be imposed on the Metropolis, in order to restrain the smoke of private houses. But Mr. Rollo Russell, in an admirable lecture about a year ago, pointed out how much expense may be avoided which the smoky atmosphere occasions. Mr. Rollo Russell is a son of the late Lord Russell. He began life at the Foreign Office, where accuracy is traditional. His lecture was delivered to the Society of Arts before Sir Douglas Galton, and thus exposed to every variety of criticism. He is by far the most accomplished expert on the subject now before us. Some of the calculations he has given in an interesting table may be more useful than any argument which I could add to those in the possession of your Lordships. Extra washing for a city with suburbs containing 4,000,000 inhabitants, £2,000,000. Restoring gilding, metal work, shop-fronts, signs, names of streets, advertisements at stations, monuments, &c., (e.g., Albert Memorial) £100,000.

Destruction of mortar, cement, &c., repointing and pointing bricks (see Angus Smith), £20,000. Chimney sweeping: 1,000,000 chimneys at 1s. each, £50,000. Escape as smoke or soot of 1-100th of fuel burnt into atmosphere and chimneys, £100,000. Waste of one-fourth of the coal used by uneconomical and smoke-producing kitchen ranges and fireplaces, £1,000,000. Increased mortality: impairment of health, illness and consequent expense caused by smoke fogs and smoky air; lowered vitality hindering quick recovery from illness, and in general reducing capacity for work; children kept from school, &c., £320,000. Damage to trees, plants, shrubs, flowers, vegetables, fruits in and around London, in woods, parks, gardens, squares, conservatories, windows, nursery-gardens, orchards, &c., £50,000. Total, £5,200,500 per annum. It may be said that figures are uncertain, and that your Lordships ought not to be too readily directed by them. In that case, I give up the £200,500. I will even reduce the £5,000,000 to £2,500,000. It would still exceed the highest calculation of the outlay which this Bill, if law, could fasten on the aggregate of householders. Mr. Rollo Russell is not the only witness or authority we can refer to. There is an interesting passage from the correspondence of Mr. Motley, which is, perhaps, the publication of the moment. Mr. Motley was well known to many of your Lordships as the Minister of the United States and the historian of the Netherlands. In November 1859, when the evil had not reached its present magnitude, Mr. Motley wrote from the Oatlands Park Hotel at Walton, 20 miles from London—

"I do not object to fog, always except a black fog, a London fog. I was obliged to pass the day in town yesterday, and to breathe unmitigated coal smoke for six hours. When the fog settles down in London, the smoke from millions of chimneys settles down with it. It cannot escape upwards, and so every breathing being is turned for the time into a chimney. I was a chimney all day yesterday, and rejoiced that I was not born in that station of life, not finding it exhilarating."

What Mr. Motley said in 1859 exactly harmonizes with our own experience as to the fogs of the Metropolis mixed up with smoke, and those which only spring from vapour in the country. On the 31st of December last there was a good

deal of mist in the vicinity of Frome and Bath, or further in the West of England. In London only it led to darkness, danger, a variety of accidents, including a collision on the railway between Victoria and Ludgate Hill. None who arrived that day in the Metropolis—it happened to myself—would doubt as to the necessity of passing a Bill like that before your Lordships. There is a quaint and vehement expression of the late Mr. Carlyle which has also recently appeared, although not based indeed on his experience of London—

“Are we doomed to the everlasting curse of choking atmosphere and sulphurous vapours which it is taught are the portion of devils, not still living men? I vow and swear that free air is the birthright of every free man.”

My Lords, the Bill indeed may be defeated by the union which was fatal to it in 1887, and which I am not able to outnumber. In that event its framers will rely for ultimate success on the mechanical inventor, who knows with what facility the smoke of London may be obviated; the painter, to whom daylight is indispensable as talent; the architect whose greatest works are marred or thrown into obscurity; the sculptor, who foresees the blackness of the marble which he handles. They will rely also on the whole of that sex who, as married women and young ladies, are compelled to pass weeks and months in an atmosphere by which their beauty is deteriorated. But in reading the Bill a second time to-night, the House will merely go back to its original position and affirm that to improve the air of the Metropolis something beyond the Acts of Lord Palmerston is called for. That name reminds me I shall have to move without the frequently-afforded aid of Lord Mount Temple, who has now closed his irreproachable career of virtue and activity. I am obliged, also, to lament the absence of the Duke of Westminster, who is retained, by some indisposition, in the country. However, I am authorized to mention that a letter has reached me from the noble Duke to the effect that his opinion on the subject—explained to the House before—is perfectly unaltered; that he regards the Bill as necessary to the health and comfort of the town with which he is now officially connected, beyond the well-known ties which previously attached him to it.

Lord Stratheden and Campbell

THE LORD CHANCELLOR: The noble Lord has referred to me once or twice in the course of his observations; I can only say that my objections to a great part of this Bill remain unaltered, but I understand from those who represent the Department of the Government which particularly deals with a subject of this kind that they would rather have the various matters considered in Committee than decided summarily by rejecting the Bill. I will not persist in the intention I originally conceived of moving that this Bill be read this day six months, but at a later stage of the Bill, unless the objections which I shall urge are removed by Amendments in Committee, I shall certainly move the rejection of the measure.

EARL BROWNLOW: I feel that the noble Lord who moved the Second Reading of the Bill has a very strong argument in the condition of the Metropolis yesterday and this morning. On reading over the Bill I find that several clauses which, on a former occasion, I pointed out to the House as objectionable have been removed, and therefore I think the Bill is better than that which was brought forward by the noble Lord on a former occasion. The particular provision, however, which caused the Bill on the last occasion to be thrown out still remains—namely, the clause providing that private houses should be included in the operation of the Bill. I can only say that when the Bill goes into Committee it will be impossible for Her Majesty's Government to support that proviso in any way. At the same time there are in the Bill other points which, I think, might become law. I cannot help regretting that the noble Lord proposes to make the Vestry the local authority for the purpose of making bye-laws. It appears to me that it would be far better to have the bye-laws made by some higher authority, say the County Council, the Vestries only having power to adopt them if they choose.

THE EARL OF MEATH: I am sure the public outside will be delighted with the attitude which the Government have taken up on this Bill. I think the public would have been disappointed if the Bill had been rejected altogether on the Second Reading. As a Member of the London County Council, I may be allowed to say that I am very glad that,

under Clause 5, power is given to the County Councils to alter or to make bye-laws. I am also glad to hear from the noble Lord who has just sat down that the Government will agree to that, because there is no doubt in my mind whatever that, until the Government do make up their minds in one way or another to deal with private houses, we shall never get rid of the great smoke nuisance in the Metropolis. After all, it is the millions of chimneys belonging to private houses that create the nuisance, not the factory chimneys.

LORD HERSCHELL: I should like to say one word upon a point to which the noble Lord opposite called attention. Whatever legislation be determined upon in the shape of bye-laws to be made, I think that those bye-laws ought to be made by one body for the entire Metropolis. Nothing could be more objectionable than that there should be different regulations on this subject for different parts of the Metropolis; because, in one parish where the evil, so far as it was strictly local, had been remedied at great sacrifice and expense, the population might still be under the burden of the smoke from a neighbouring parish. It seems to me that, in any legislation on this matter, that should be one cardinal point.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read second time.

LORD STRATHEDEN AND CAMPBELL: I beg to move that the Bill be referred to a Committee of the whole House.

LORD HERSCHELL: I should think this was distinctly the class of Bill that should be referred to one of the Standing Committees.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Marquess of SALISBURY): I think the general feeling of the House will be with the noble Lord (Lord Herschell) that this Bill should go to one of the Standing Committees, where the examination into its provisions will, no doubt, be severe and salutary.

LORD STRATHEDEN AND CAMPBELL: I will defer to what seems to be the general opinion of your Lordships, and move that the Bill be referred to a Standing Committee.

Resolution agreed to.

Bill referred to Standing Committee for General Bills.

REFORMATORY SCHOOLS BILL.—

(No. 36.)

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

EARL BROWLOW: I ask your Lordships to give a Second Reading to this Bill, which is founded upon the Report of a Royal Commission which was appointed to inquire into the condition of certified Reformatory Schools, and to report what amendments of the law were expedient. This Commission was a very strong Commission, presided over by Lord Aberdare, who was assisted by a very strong list of noble Lords. They took a great deal of valuable evidence, and sent in a very full and luminous Report, which it is hardly necessary to say has been exceedingly valuable in the framing of the Bill now before the House. At the present time there are in England and Scotland 56 reformatory schools. Of these 55 are established entirely by voluntary agencies, and one—and that one in Scotland—was established by the Glasgow Juvenile Delinquency Board. These schools, representing a national and philanthropic work, though established by voluntary agencies, are entirely under the sanction and control of the State. This condition of things the present Bill does not propose in any way to alter. The object of reformatory schools is to place young criminals of both sexes under such careful educational restraint as may tend to wean them from the vicious courses into which they have fallen upon the very threshold of life, very often not by their own fault, but through the neglect and carelessness of their parents and guardians. The Bill does not involve any great change of principle from the existing system. In the Bill introduced and read a first time last year, there was a provision in Clause 3 that the inspection of reformatory schools should remain as before under the Reformatory School Inspectors, but that there should be a further concurrent power of inspection given to Her Majesty's Inspectors under the Education Department. This proposal of dual inspection excited such opposition on the part of school managers and others, that it has

been considered unadvisable to insist upon it. There therefore remained two alternatives, one to leave matters as they are, the other, to hand over these Reformatory Schools entirely to the Inspectors of the Education Department. Now, it certainly seems undesirable to remove young delinquents altogether from the control of the Home Office, and the Inspectors of the Education Department have no experience of reformatories or boarding schools. It is therefore proposed that these schools shall remain under their present Inspectors. If, however, it be thought that a higher standard should be reached, the Government will be glad to consider any suggestions in Committee. Clause 9 deals with the question of imprisonment. Opinions are divided as to whether children should always be imprisoned before being sent to a reformatory. On the one hand it is urged that the school should not be considered a punishment, and that the child should realize that punishment was over. On the other hand, it is urged that imprisonment necessarily has an injurious effect on the child. The Bill meets the difficulty by vesting a discretion in the magistrate; and Clauses 10 and 11 provide for the infliction of punishments other than imprisonment. It is provided that, in lieu of sending a youthful offender to a reformatory school, the Court may—

“(a) adjudge that the youthful offender, if a male, be whipped; (b) adjourn the case on the parent undertaking to punish the youthful offender to the satisfaction of the Court; (c) fine the parent any sum not exceeding one pound; (d) order the parent to pay to any person injured by the offence compensation not exceeding five pounds; (e) order the parent to give security for the good behaviour of the youthful offender.”

No commitment to a reformatory school is to be made of children under 14 years of age, unless a previous conviction is proved. Then, power is given to the Secretary of State to order the discharge of any youthful offender from a school, but it is also provided that—

“Where a youthful offender is discharged from a certified reformatory school, either on the expiration of the period of detention originally allotted to him, or in pursuance of an order of discharge by the Secretary of State, he shall, during a period of two years from the date of his discharge, remain subject to the conditions specified in the First Schedule to this Act, and if,

during that period, he fails to conform with any one or more of the conditions on which he was discharged, he shall be guilty of an offence against this Act, and shall, on summary conviction, be liable, in addition to any other punishment, to be ordered by the Court to be sent back to the same or another certified reformatory school, and to be there detained for any period which the Court may think fit, not exceeding two years from the expiration of the original period of detention.”

This provision will obviously be of especial value in the case of girls. Clause 20 provides that where a youthful offender has conducted himself well he may be, with his own consent, apprenticed to any trade, calling, or service (which would include enlistment in the Army) or be disposed of by emigration, notwithstanding that his period of detention has not expired. Clause 24 provides for a contribution by the Treasury to the various expenses, including the expense of emigration. County and Borough Councils are also to contribute. The only other provision which it is necessary to mention to your Lordships is that in Clause 27, which will enact that—

“The parent of a youthful offender detained in a certified reformatory school shall be primarily liable to pay for his support and maintenance therein.”

At the present time the parent is only made liable for a sum not exceeding 5s. a week; but, if it be clearly proved that the parent can afford it, there can be no reason why the parent should not be made liable for the whole cost of maintenance of the child. I have endeavoured, my Lords, as briefly as possible, to lay before you the principal changes proposed by the Bill. It is not a very complicated measure. It is much shorter and simpler than the Bill which will shortly be before your Lordships dealing with industrial schools. I now ask your Lordships to give the Bill a Second Reading.

LORD ABERDARE: The noble Lord is quite right in saying that this Bill is, in the main, a Consolidation Bill. I rather regret that the recommendation of the Commission in favour of inspection by the Education Department has not been adopted. The noble Viscount opposite, who has filled the office of Home Secretary, must know how difficult it is to get a good selection of schoolmasters for reformatory schools. The Commission considered that the

only way of overcoming that difficulty was by giving the appointment of masters to the Education Department, and giving the inspection of the teaching, so far as it was not technical, to the Education Department also. They were of opinion that the friction arising from the dual inspection would not be so great as was apprehended by some. When the Royal Commission was appointed, there was a general impression that a great many children were sent to reformatories who ought to be sent to industrial schools, and to industrial schools who ought to be sent to reformatories. A great effort has been made to reduce the number sent to reformatory schools. With respect to boys under 12, who, in the opinion of the magistrates, have been leading criminal lives, and the record of whose conduct is well known, I do not think that such boys are proper subjects for industrial schools. But I remember well that Mr. Baker, one of the greatest authorities on this subject, stated before the Royal Commission that offenders of that class have not only diminished in number, but were also exhibiting less atrocity of character. They were altogether more manageable. The number of reformatories has been lessened by two since last year, while industrial schools have greatly increased. That is encouraging. The boys who should be sent to reformatories are boys of hardened character. The enforcement of payment by the parents in England, and especially in Scotland and Ireland, has had a very beneficial influence. In Scotland the Returns show that there are a number of defaulters. In a prosperous country like Scotland there is no reason why parents should not be obliged to pay. I am anxious to interest the County Council as a contributory in the matter. As the noble Lord has said, there are a number of matters which will require careful discussion in Committee, and, no doubt, when that stage is reached it will be found possible to improve the Bill in many respects.

***LORD NORTON:** The measure now before us deals only with reformatory schools, but the other half of the subject relating to industrial schools, promised after Easter, was before the House last Session, and we know, therefore, that both Bills are almost in the same words. There is no difference be-

tween the schools provided by each: the only difference is between the classes of children sent to some or other of them. The second clause of the Bill before the House enables a Secretary of State to increase and multiply the classification of the subjects of these schools, and a conference of managers has suggested no less than four kinds of reformatories — for incorrigibles; for offenders who have been in prisons; for those who have not; and for very immoral girls. Two more classes of reformatories have been suggested — for troublesome cases from other schools; and for truants. Finer psychological distinctions have also been suggested, such is the tendency to multiply institutions by those who are deeply and scientifically interested. But, after all, the treatment of children in similar schools must be much the same, and though convicted children should be separated, no one can see any difference practically in the treatment of them at a reformatory or of others at an industrial school. It is a mere fancy, even if it were desirable, that any school should be made specially correctional during a child's whole education. A penal school is a horrible idea. Medicine cannot be mixed with dietary during all childhood. In the Government's view that children in both reformatory and industrial schools should be educated in a distinct Police and Home Office Department of Education, these two Bills, should be one, only indicating the description of children to be kept separately in each denomination of the schools alike provided for both. I have a Bill standing also for Second Reading which deals with both, but my Bill proposes to put all schools under the School Department. The children convicted of a crime are, after suitable and adequate punishment, proposed to be sent separately to reformatory schools; children found begging, homeless, or thrown in company with thieves are proposed to be sent to industrial schools. The Government division of the subject into two Bills will give this advantage — that the industrial school half cannot, at all events, be any longer divorced from our National School Department under any decent pretence whatever. To educate homeless and neglected children penally must cease to be a scandal to this country.

Two reasons were given by the Commissioners for still continuing some of these schools under the Home Office, and they seem both extremely bad reasons. They thought the Home Office must take charge of industrial schools apart, because it was connected with the judicial and police system of the country and with the administration of prisons, as if schooling of unconvicted outcasts could have anything to do with judgment and police or schools with prisons. The other reason was that the Education Department was not fit to superintend industrial training; and that diet and domestic care of children belonged more to the Home Office. But this is just what the Education Department is now proposing to undertake for national schools in general, and, if unfit, the Department should be made fit, and not schools taken away from it to another office as more fit. Pauper children who are of the same class are boarded and educated without the stigma of police control. The Commissioners were driven to half abandon their strange reasoning, and to commend industrial schools to the joint care of both the Home and Education Departments. In this dual government they seem to have failed of official acquiescence. But they fully admitted that no reason whatever existed for day industrial schools being taken out of the School Department, or being distinguishable from schools already in it. It is the dislike of that Department as too literary, and the desire to have an independent management—though that would still be possible under separate inspection—that make the Managers cling to the Home Office as an escape from interference. It is a great improvement in the present Bill that County Councils will have power to establish and maintain all these kinds of schools, and to enforce parental liability, and for the ultimate disposition of children whom they will have educated *in loco parentis*. The 10th clause, for alternative treatment of reformatory subjects by whipping, fining parents, and taking security from them for better conduct of their children is admirable, and properly distinguishes the penal from the educatory treatment—for the latter sending children home whenever there is a decent home for them to go to, so that

parents may not absolutely make a profit by the misconduct of their children. I think, my Lords, there are many good points in this Bill, but certainly it seems to me that before adequate justice can be done to its discussion we must have before us the other half of the Government scheme, and I shall, therefore, beg to postpone my own Bill.

THE EARL OF MEATH: I think this Bill will effect a great improvement in the legislation dealing with children of the criminal classes. There are two clauses which I am most heartily in favour of, the one which gives power to deal with girls who are leading bad lives, or are in danger of getting into evil, and the second is that providing for emigration. I am also delighted to find that the sending to reformatory schools is not compulsory, but that there are alternative punishments provided, one of which is whipping. I must express regret, however, that girls were exempted from whipping. I do not see why a girl of 10 or 12 years of age should be exempted. It is most unjust to boys. I am supported in that view by many ladies who have interested themselves in the education of girls. Miss Yonge, the authoress, has written very strongly both to me and to the public Press in this sense, as have also Mrs. Meredith, of the Princess Mary's Homes; Miss Bolton, and other ladies actively engaged in the benevolent work of rescuing children from vice. Charles Kingsley having been for most of his life opposed even to the whipping of boys, declared that his wife's experience had shown him the advantage and necessity of it in the case of children of both sexes. To my mind gross injustice is occasionally perpetrated owing to the present condition of the law upon this subject. I will give your Lordships an instance of my meaning. A short time ago, at Doncaster, a girl who gave her age as 8 was convicted of a theft of money. After she had stolen the money she invited her brother and a boy friend to accompany her to Lincoln. The boys actually did not know the money was stolen until they were in the train. They were all three captured. The brother was whipped with a birch rod; but the girl, the real culprit, was dismissed. Three days afterwards she was caught thieving again. The magis-

trates endeavoured to send her to a reformatory, but none would admit her, and she was again dismissed scot free. Is this justice? My lords, I call this injustice, and the very apotheosis of sentimental legislation. Such legislation is unjust, contrary to common sense and insincere. I say insincere, for if any of our own girls had at that age been guilty of such a crime we should not have hesitated to have inflicted upon her the proper punishment for a child of that age. Dr. Arnold has said very plainly indeed that in his opinion corporal punishment is of very great service with children of both sexes. Ten newspapers, several of them circulating among ladies, have also lately supported his view. Although I believe whipping to be, under certain circumstances, beneficial to boys, I am almost tempted to vote against that clause because it is unjust to them to limit the punishment to the male sex. Fear is expressed that the infliction of whipping on girls would arouse a sentimental outcry in the country. I believe there is no ground for that fear. The English people are, after all, amenable to common sense; and, in my view, it is only common sense that a child under 10 years of age, whatever its sex, ought to be whipped.

THE EARL OF HARROWBY: I think the success of reformatory education would be most seriously imperilled if it were transferred to the Education Department. The Education Department is obliged to look principally, almost entirely, to the intellectual side of education. Reformatory teaching requires peculiar qualities, not likely to be found in the ordinary teacher. The work is very difficult and perhaps thankless, and if there is not a sufficient supply of teachers it is probably because they are insufficiently paid. I hope Her Majesty's Government will press the Bill through this Session, as we have already waited for it long enough.

LORD CLIFFORD OF CHUDLEIGH: It is, no doubt, correct to say that the children who are sent to these schools are not criminals, but they differ very much indeed from the children who attend ordinary schools. They have not had honest methods of bringing up, but exactly the reverse. Therefore,

the education in these schools must materially differ from that in ordinary schools. The aim must be to wean the child from bad and criminal habits. I hope the Government will adhere to the methods of inspection which are proposed by the Bill. It would be a great misfortune if these schools were left to the inspection of the officers of the Education Department, who might be disposed to take too mechanical a view of their duties.

VISCOUNT CRANBROOK: There seems to be really no opposition to the Second Reading of this Bill, and the principal point referred to in the course of the discussion has been that of where control should be. I differ from the noble Lord's (Lord Norton) views and take a very strong view against removing these schools from the control of the Home Office. It is not necessary at this stage to discuss that question, but I thought it right to say this much, as my noble Friend behind me seemed to think that his views, so far as industrial schools went, met with the acceptance of the Government.

*THE EARL OF MILLTOWN: I should like to ask the noble Earl who has charge of the Bill why it does not extend to Ireland? I notice that provisions are made for extending it to Scotland, and I think the same ought to be done with regard to Ireland. I am especially anxious that the discretionary power given to the Court with regard to sending children to prison before they go to a Reformatory should be possessed by the Courts in Ireland, as I have the greatest objection to young children being sent to gaol when it can be possibly avoided.

EARL BROWNLOW: I certainly cannot consent, on the part of Her Majesty's Government, to the introduction of any clause providing for the whipping of girls.

Resolution agreed to.

Bill read 2^a accordingly, and committed to the Standing Committee for Bills relating to Law, &c.

REFORMATORY AND INDUSTRIAL
SCHOOLS BILL,—(No. 15)

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read and discharged.

COMMISSIONERS FOR OATHS BILL
(No. 6)

Amendments reported (according to order): Bill to be read 3^a on Tuesday the 30th inst.

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT,
1888.—QUESTION.

THE EARL OF BELMORE, in rising to call attention to the 54th, 57th, and 87th sections of the Local Government Act, 1888; and to ask Her Majesty's Government whether parties aggrieved by orders of the Local Government Board, made or confirmed under either the 54th or 57th sections, may petition Parliament, and be heard before a Select Committee, in the manner provided by the 87th section for cases to which it applies, said: My object in putting this question is not so much to get from my noble Friend (Lord Balfour of Burley) an interpretation of the clauses mentioned in the question, as to elicit from him what is the policy which Her Majesty's Government is of opinion ought to be pursued with those Orders of the Local Government Board which are laid upon the Table of this House.

*LORD BALFOUR: I think I can reply to this question in a very few words. Your Lordships, on referring to Sections 54 and 57 of the Act, will see that they deal with important subjects, such as the alteration of the boundaries of the county and making new county boroughs. But other matters referred to, such as the number of wards and electoral districts, are of less importance, and the policy of the Act is to deal with these different matters according to the different degrees of their importance. In regard to some of them it is provided by Section 54 that, while the County Council and the Local Government Board may agree on what is desirable to be done, and may embody their decisions in a Provisional Order, the policy of which is to regard those matters as of such intrinsic importance that they must be submitted to Parliament in the form of Bills confirming Provisional Orders. Section 87 provides that those Provisional Orders should be dealt with in the same way, in every respect, as other Provisional Orders are dealt with when they are brought before Parliament—namely, that if opposed, they should be referred to a

Select Committee, and that the parties should be heard by counsel. This applies only to the first four sub-sections, *a*, *b*, *c*, and *d*. In regard to the sub-sections *e* and *f*, they have reference to matters of much less importance, and upon them the decision of the Local Government Board is final. Section 57 relates to different classes of subjects. In regard to some of them the decision of the County Council and the Local Government Board taken together is final; and, in the first two or three classes, a Report has to be laid before Parliament by the Local Government Board if a certain number of electors oppose. But in regard to these matters, all that is done is that the Local Government Board makes a Report to both Houses of Parliament of what has been done, and leaves the opponents, should there be any, to take such steps in either House as they may think fit. What those steps would be would depend upon the circumstances in each case; but I think I am not going too far in saying that it would probably have to be by Motion disapproving the action of the Local Government Board. There is, therefore, no analogy between the procedure under the 57th section and the Tramways Act to which the noble Lord has referred.

THE EDUCATION CODE, 1889.

QUESTIONS. OBSERVATIONS.

*THE LORD BISHOP OF LONDON, in rising to ask the Lord President of the Council whether it would be possible to insert words in Article 85 (a) of the new Code which will make it clear that the requirement of 100 cubic feet of internal space and 10 square feet of internal area, for each child in average attendance, will either not be applied to existing schools or will only be applied in extreme cases, said: I should not like it to be supposed that, in asking this question, I intend to imply that the Government has any intention of putting severe pressure on the voluntary schools; and I should like to add that I have not yet had time thoroughly to study the Code, and the more I look into it the more important do the changes proposed in it appear to me to be. They seem to me to be so serious that it might be necessary that we should have a little more time thoroughly to examine them.

before giving an opinion as to the way they would work. I am glad the Government has given us two months instead of the statutory one month during which the Code might be considered in Parliament. No doubt the Government has paid regard to one of the fundamental recommendations of the late Commission of Inquiry into Education—viz., that both the Board schools and the voluntary schools should be considered as constituting an essential part of the educational provision for the country. There is no reason to believe that there is any desire on the part of the Government to hurt the voluntary schools in any way, but there is a great deal in the Code which affects them very much. I hope I may be permitted, after putting this question to-night, to reserve to myself the liberty of saying something at a later stage about the general working of the Code. I think it is impossible to exaggerate the importance of a great many of the changes. They grow under one's eye as one considers them, and the Government will probably find that it is really of value to the Department that they should know by some public discussion what would be the effect of a great many of these proposals. But the particular question which I ask now has been pressed upon me very much, because it is one of the very first things that struck the minds of the managers of voluntary schools. The 85th article of the new Code is so worded as to give generally a power to the Department to insist upon 100 cubic feet of internal space and 10 square feet of internal area being provided for every child in average attendance. There are a great many cases where that would be very oppressive. In many cases it would be almost impossible to raise the necessary funds. There are other cases, especially in London, where it would be impossible to obtain the necessary ground for enlargement. In many cases, again, the managers would, in the first instance, have been glad to comply with such a provision, but were discouraged and practically prevented by the Department itself from complying, because the Department refused to make any grant corresponding to the increased area. In these various ways there can be no doubt at all that anything like a universal requirement of this increased

accommodation in the schools would be so oppressive as practically to interfere seriously with the general principle of recognizing the voluntary schools as part of the provision for the education of the nation. I shall be glad, therefore, if the President of the Council is able to give some assurance that that is not the intention of the Government, and to say also whether it would be possible to insert words which would make it quite clear that this requisition is not to be applied to existing schools, or would only be applied in very extreme cases. I do not think it would be difficult to provide such words if there were a real desire to insert them, and I am sure it would make a very great difference in the way in which the Code is generally regarded in the country by those who have charge of these schools all over England.

***VISCOUNT CRANBROOK:** I should be the last person to deny that a full discussion of the new Code would be not only objectionable, but of immense advantage. I should also like distinctly to say that the Government recognize as fully as the right rev. Prelate the desirability of maintaining the settlement which has been made with respect to the education of this country. The voluntary schools are as much a part of our system as the Board schools, and are as much recognized in this Code as they have been on any previous occasion. The Government desire to do equal justice as between Board and voluntary schools, and thereby to promote the efficiency of our national education. With regard to the special question asked by my right rev. Friend, what is required by the Code is that—

“School premises should be healthy, well-lighted, warmed, drained, and ventilated, properly furnished, and supplied with suitable offices, and contain sufficient accommodation for the scholars attending.”

That refers to existing schools, and a note follows as to construction of new buildings, and it is said that the Department will “endeavour to secure the 100 cubic and 10 square feet for each unit in average attendance.” These words were introduced ten years ago to give the Department discretion, on which they have acted. No hard and fast rule is laid down, and the Department have only been desirous to act in accordance with the recom-

commendation of all the Royal Commissions—

"That the 100 cubic and 10 superficial feet should be the minimum accommodation provided for each child in average attendance in all school buildings in future to be erected."

At page 63 they remark that :—

"Superficial area is but a rough approximation to the actual accommodation of a school, and that the truer criterion, especially in schools for elder children, is to be found in the amount of seat room provided. We think that the demand for increased accommodation for each child in those buildings in which it has been hitherto calculated at eight square feet per child should be measured rather by the need of more seat room than by the simple calculation of superficial area. The proper measure of a school's accommodation should be the seat supply."

So long as there is adequate room for the children in average attendance, existing schools need not fear the interference of the Department on the ground or want of space. No raid upon schools heretofore sanctioned was ever contemplated, and there are many reasons why it would be unjust. They need not be apprehensive of any undue pressure.

THE EARL OF HARROWBY : It is impossible to say even two or three words on the subject of the New Code without expressing one's great sense of the difficulty of the subject. No one knows better than I do the extreme complexity and difficulty of these educational questions. A Bill in Parliament is bad enough, but a Code is always more difficult, because it is full of details of the most complex kind. I do not purpose at this moment to go into the question of the Code. If it were always to be administered by my noble Friend I should feel perfectly confident that all was right, but it may at some time have to be administered by someone very different. The point I wish to press upon noble Lords is this—that the Code proposes greater changes than have been made in our system of education during the last twenty years. I am utterly unprepared at present to give any opinion as to how this Code will work. It fails to embody many of the important modifications of the existing system which have been recommended by the Royal Commission, so that the Code cannot be described as the Code of the Commission. The Commission expressly state that their recommenda-

tions can only be taken as part of an entire scheme. I acknowledge the skill, labour, and goodwill to the cause of education with which the Code is framed; but at present one cannot express an opinion as to its educational effect. I can not, however, help thinking that if the excellent example of Mr. Mundella, which inspired the confidence even of his opponents, had been followed, it would have been a wise, generous, and considerate course. In 1881, when changes small and insignificant compared with those of the present Code were introduced, Mr. Mundella allowed the proposed Code to lie on the Table for a whole Session in order that a basis of general agreement might be found. I remember that there was hardly anything in Mr. Mundella's career as Vice President that met with more general assent and applause than that action. It is worth considering, in so grave a matter as this, whether it would not be better to follow a precedent so wise and generous, before the Government are finally committed to the great and vital changes which are embodied in this Code.

*EARL FORTESCUE: The more I have looked into the Code since the discussion the other day, the more I have been struck with the great magnitude of the alterations—many of which, I think, very great improvements—and the more I have felt that it requires very careful discussion as a whole, because of the working of the different alterations in conjunction with each other. I trust that before the expiration of the two months which have to elapse after the Code is placed on the Table, before it acquired the force of law, there will be time for full discussion which, in your Lordships' House, ought to take place soon after the Recess. The working of the Code in the country would be greatly facilitated by public attention out-of-doors being called to the various provisions which, at first sight, can hardly be adequately understood in their full bearing.

House adjourned at a quarter before Seven o'clock, to Tuesday the 30th instant, a quarter past Four o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thursday, 11th April, 1889.

MR. SPEAKER'S INDISPOSITION.

The House being met, the Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of Mr. Speaker, owing to the continuance of his indisposition.

Whereupon Mr. Courtney, the Chairman of Ways and Means, proceeded to the Table; and, after Prayers, took the Chair as Deputy Speaker, pursuant to the Standing Order.

TOWN HOLDINGS.

Ordered, That the Reports and Minutes of Evidence taken before the Select Committee on Town Holdings in Sessions 1886, 1887, and 1888 be referred to the Select Committee on Town Holdings.—(*Mr. Lewis Fry.*)

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have agreed to the National Debt Redemption Bill, Army (Annual) Bill, Drainage and Improvement of Lands (Ireland) Provisional Order Bill, without Amendment.

ROYAL ASSENT.

Message to attend the Lords Commissioners;—

The House went;—and being returned;—

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER reported the Royal Assent to the Army Annual Act, 1889; National Debt Redemption Act, 1889; Drainage and Improvement of Lands Supplemental (Ireland) Act, 1889.

QUESTIONS.

SCOTLAND—SEVERE SENTENCE FOR HAWKING.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) asked the Lord Advocate whether his attention had been drawn to a conviction, by Sheriff Hamilton, in the Edinburgh Sheriff Summary Court, on 9th March, of five boys, charged with having, without leave, hawked news-

papers for sale on the North British Railway Station; whether three of the boys, who had been previously convicted of similar trespass, were sentenced to six stripes with a birch rod, and the remaining two lads to two stripes; and whether these sentences of flogging for such simple trespass were authorized by law?

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. P. B. ROBERTSON, Buteshire): I have inquired into this case, and have ascertained that the facts are as stated by the hon. Member. The offence was the contravention of a byelaw issued under the Act 8 and 9 Vict. c. 33. The proper penalty would have been a fine, but the Act provides that, failing recovery of the fine, imprisonment shall follow. As the boys could not have paid a fine, the presiding Sheriff was anxious to avoid a sentence leading to imprisonment, and therefore ordered whipping. In so doing, however, he overlooked the terms of the Statutes which authorize whipping, for they allow it only as a substitute for a sentence of imprisonment, and not as a substitute for a pecuniary penalty, even although imprisonment may be the consequence of non-payment. I have no doubt that this distinction will be attended to in future.

WESTERN AUSTRALIA.—FORESHORE RIGHTS AT ALBANY.

SIR GEORGE BADEN-POWELL (Liverpool, Kirkdale) asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether petitions have been received from inhabitants of the town of Albany, Western Australia, praying that the present and prospective right of access to the foreshore of the harbour may be preserved to them as against threatened encroachments of a railway in course of construction by the Western Australian Land Company; and whether effectual measures have been, or will be taken, to prevent the Company acquiring a monopoly of access to the foreshore of the harbour, and thereby depriving the inhabitants of public rights of high value in the future?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Baron HENRY DE WORMS, Liverpool, Toxteth): Two Petitions on this subject have been received and are being carefully considered. I am unable to state what instructions the Secretary of State will be-

able to give in the matter; but, as at present anticipated, it will be possible to secure to the inhabitants all reasonable facilities under conditions fair to the Company.

THE SCIENCE AND ART DEPARTMENT.

MR. WHITMORE (Chelsea) asked the Secretary to the Treasury whether, as the anticipated inquiry by the Royal Commission on Civil Service Establishments into the Science and Art Department, and the alleged grievances of the messengers and attendants at the South Kensington Museum had been abandoned, or indefinitely postponed, he will now take steps to remedy their grievances, and to admit them to the benefits of superannuation and sick pay which are enjoyed by all permanent Civil Servants?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON, Leeds, N.): In answer to my hon. Friend, I have to say that these attendants and messengers were engaged and are paid by the hour. They were engaged on the understanding that all payments are for the full value of the services performed, and that no officer has any future claim on the Department. Persons so employed are not permanent Civil Servants of the State, and are not qualified for superannuation on retirement. By the Act of 1887, however, they, in common with all other persons employed on similar conditions in a public Department, become qualified after a service of not less than 15 years for the grant of a gratuity of one week's pay for each year of service. The case of these men has been considered by the Treasury on several occasions, and I regret that I do not feel that I can reverse the decision arrived at by my predecessors.

DISTRICT COUNCILS BILL.

MR. HOBHOUSE (Somerset, E.) asked the President of the Local Government Board whether he would introduce his District Councils Bill before Easter, in order to give the County Councils full time for the consideration of its provisions before it came on for discussion in this House?

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. RITCHIE, Tower Hamlets, St. George's): I am afraid I can hold out no expectation that the District Councils Bill will be

introduced before Easter. We must make much more progress with public business before I can hope to introduce it.

RAILWAY TERMINAL CHARGES.

MR. CAINE (Barrow) asked the President of the Board of Trade if the Railway Companies of the United Kingdom had all furnished the information required by a rule of the Board of Trade—namely, that they should “state as far as practicable the existing terminal charges in respect of the several classes of traffic, showing in each case the authority for making the charge;” and, if they had done so, where was the information to be found?

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Sir MICHAEL HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): The statements of the railway companies as to terminal charges are with the statements as to existing maximum rates. The statements are not in every instance combined with the proposed classification and schedule of maximum rates, but are contained in separate documents, which the railway companies did not in the first instance supply to persons applying. A circular, however, as I have already explained, was sent to the companies, and they have now undertaken to supply the supplementary statements.

MR. TOMLINSON (Preston) asked what extension of time had been granted?

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: An extension of time has been granted to small railway companies worked by other companies.

ARMY PENSIONS.

MR. BRADLAUGH asked the Secretary of State for War if he would state the conditions under which the pensions of officers, non-commissioned officers, and rank and file could now be commuted; and whether the limitations of age and number of years commutation differ in any rank, and in what respect?

*THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): The commutation of officers' pensions is governed by the Pensions Commutation Acts of 1871 and 1872, and by rules issued by the Treasury and by the Secretary of State for War. The amount allowed is fixed by the Commutation Board according to

tables, and depends upon the officer's age and state of health. No officer is permitted to commute so long as he remains liable for active service; he cannot commute more than half his pension, nor can he reduce his pension below £80 a year. The commutation of the pensions of non-commissioned officers and men is governed by 1st Will. IV., c. 41, and, subject to the recommendations of the Commissioners of Chelsea Hospital, is allowed by the Secretary of State for War in cases in which the pensioners desire to emigrate. The amount payable in commutation is fixed by the Act at four years' purchase. Permission to commute in such cases is only granted where a pensioner is upwards of 50 years old and can be medically certified to be in good health. The terms of commutation for non-commissioned officers and men are now under the consideration of the Government, and it is hoped that it may be possible to amend the Statute.

MR. BRADLAUGH: Am I right in inferring that the rate of commutation for officers is at the present moment at least three and a-half times that which it is for the men?

*MR. BRODRICK: I cannot say what the exact amount is, but the matter is under consideration with a view to amending the terms.

MR. BRADLAUGH: Is it under consideration in view of the great inequality of the rate between privates and officers?

*MR. BRODRICK: It is under consideration with a view to improving the position of privates in the terms of commutation.

THE METROPOLITAN POLICE ACT.

MR. LAWSON (St. Pancras, W.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department how often the powers of compulsorily taking land and houses for police stations and offices under "The Metropolitan Police Act, 1886," had been exercised; and whether the police buildings in the Metropolitan Police District were erected on freehold or leasehold tenure?

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. MATTHEWS, Birmingham, E.): I am informed by the Receiver of Police that compulsory powers have been exercised in six cases, and four cases are at present pending. The freehold properties

now number 121. There are 93 either held on leases or annual tenancies.

SCOTCH SALMON FISHERIES.

SIR EDWARD GREY (Northumberland, Berwick) asked the Lord Advocate if he could now say definitely whether the Government would introduce a Bill dealing with Scotch Salmon Fisheries this Session?

*MR. J. P. B. ROBERTSON: Owing to the other legislative engagements of the Government, regarding Scotland, made in this House, the Government are not in a position to find time this Session for a Salmon Fisheries Bill.

NEWFOUNDLAND—PROTECTION TO FISHERMEN.

DR. TANNER (Cork, Mid) asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether any special instructions had been given to protect the Newfoundland fishermen on the western coast of that island; and whether any specific assurance had been sought from the French Admiral commanding in those waters that the Newfoundland fishermen should not have their nets destroyed, as has recently been done?

BARON H. DE WORMS: The general instructions issued to the British naval officers sufficiently meet the objects indicated in the first part of the hon. Member's question. In reply to the second part of the question, I have to say that no complaint has recently been made to Her Majesty's Government about the destruction of British nets by order of French naval officers; but if any well-founded complaint should be made of the improper interference by the French with British fishermen, it will form the subject of representations to the French Government, with the object of preventing such interference in future.

MILITIA SUBALTERNS.

MR. I. DONAL SULLIVAN (Westmeath, S.) asked the Secretary of State for War whether the examination for Militia Subalterns for entrance into the Regular Army was held on 13th and 14th March; whether there were only about 200 candidates; whether four papers only were set, one in law, one in fortification, one in tactics, one in topography, there being four examiners, one in each subject; and if he will inquire

into the cause of the delay in making known the result?

MR. BRODRICK: The facts are as stated by the hon. Member. The result of the examination will be communicated to candidates to-day and published as soon as the list is printed. This being a strictly competitive examination, it was necessary to give the examiners sufficient time to do justice to the candidates. I may add that the result of this examination has rarely been published before the 15th of April.

THE PUBLIC EXECUTIONER.

SIR EDMUND LECHMERE (Worcestershire, Bewdley) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he had received any presentments made to Her Majesty's Judges by grand juries of counties and cities during the recent assizes, in reference to the expediency of placing the public executioner under the control of the Home Office; whether he had received copies of resolutions adopted by County Magistrates at the last Epiphany Quarter Sessions on the same subject; whether he would enumerate the counties and cities from which such presentments and resolutions have been received; and, whether he would, at the same time, communicate to the House the opinions, if any, conveyed to him by Her Majesty's Judges thereon?

MR. MATTHEWS: The answer to the first two paragraphs is in the affirmative. I have received such presentments from the counties of Surrey, Dorset, Westmoreland, Leicester, Worcester, Lincoln, Gloucester, Durham, Devon, Nottingham, York, Monmouth, Hereford, Derby, Salop, and Glamorgan. I have received resolutions of magistrates from the counties of Worcester and Monmouth. These presentments were forwarded to me without any expression of opinion by the learned Judges, except in the case of the Lord Chief Justice, who thought the suggested change a very right and rational one, and of Mr. Justice Denman, who thought that the carrying out of executions had better not be in the hands of the Government.

PRISON RULES.

MR. SUMMERS (Huddersfield) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he will take such

steps as may be necessary to bring about the extension to England and Scotland of the modifications in the Prison Rules which have been proposed by the Prisons Board in Ireland and sanctioned by the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant?

MR. MATTHEWS: Legislation will be necessary in order to extend to England and Scotland the modifications of Prison Rules which have been proposed for Ireland. Before proposing any such legislation to the House, I shall await the Report of the Committee of Inquiry into this subject instituted by my right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary for Ireland.

THE AUXILIARY FORCES.

MR. RADCLIFFE COOKE (Newington, W.) asked the Secretary of State for War whether, having regard to the fact that officers of the Auxiliary Forces have been invited to go up for examination in subjects obligatory on officers of the Regular Forces—namely, tactics, fortification, reconnaissance, and law, there would be any objection to such officers as accepted the invitation being allowed to attend the garrison classes, in the same way as officers of the Auxiliary Forces are allowed to be attached to Line Regiments, in order to learn drill and interior economy?

MR. BRODRICK: The number of officers who can attend a garrison class is limited to the number that can be efficiently instructed by the Staff Officer appointed for that purpose. Preference must, of course, be given to Regular Officers; but when there are not enough Regular Officers to fill a class there will be no objection to the vacancies being filled by officers of the Auxiliary Forces.

MORRIS'S TUBES.

MR. RADCLIFFE COOKE asked the Secretary of State for War whether he could give the names of the Militia battalions who used Morris's tubes at their last training; can he state why, by Army Order 22 of January 1889, p. 36, the issue of Morris's tubes to the Militia has been restricted to "a limited number of battalions," and on what principle the particular battalions are selected for the issue of Morris's tubes; are the colonels of the Militia battalions to whom the tubes are issued ordered to use them, or is their use optional; have

Mr. Donal Sullivan

any, and, if so, what alterations been made in the distribution of the prize money for shooting in the Militia, as was suggested by him in reply to a question on this subject put to him last Session; and whether he will consent to give a Return showing the number of recruits who fired their recruit's course only, and the number of recruits who fired both their recruit's and their trained man's course, and the names of the battalions in which this occurred?

MR. BRODRICK: The 3rd Battalion Essex Regiment, and the 3rd Battalion King's Own Scottish Borderers used the Morris tubes during the last training; and the 3rd and 5th Battalions of the Royal Fusiliers and the 4th Battalion of the Oxfordshire Regiment used them for the training of their recruits. The issue was restricted to such stations as were provided with galleries for the use of the Morris tube; where issued the use of the tube is obligatory. Alterations have been made in the distribution of the prize money for good shooting in the Militia, by reducing the value of the prizes given to the best shots of each battalion and each company, and giving a prize of 5s. to the best shot of each section. The revised Annual Musketry Return, which will be rendered by the Militia this year, will give the particulars as to the musketry practice of recruits asked for by my hon. Friend.

MR. ISAACSON (Tower Hamlets, Stepney): Is it not the fact that the use of Morris's tubes has been found to be a step in the direction of economy, and will the Secretary of State do everything in his power to encourage the use of them?

MR. BRODRICK: The Secretary of State is quite willing to encourage the use of Morris's tubes where open ranges cannot be found, with a view to improving the shooting of the Army.

IRELAND—COMMISSION ON PRISON TREATMENT.

MR. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he can now communicate the names of the Commissioners to inquire into prison treatment, and the terms of the directions upon which they are to act; whether he will state what operation the new rules are intended to have, and what instructions have been or are to be given to the prison officers to guide them

in the administration of these rules; and whether any rule will be framed to modify the existing prison regulations in regard to the obligation to perform certain menial tasks?

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I greatly regret that I cannot, even yet, give a full answer to the right hon. Gentleman with regard to the names of the Commissioners; but I have the satisfaction of being able to announce that just before coming to the House I heard that Lord Aberdare has accepted the Chairmanship. The general object of the new rules is to revert to the original intentions of Parliament with regard to prison dress and hair clipping, and to restrict compulsion on these points to cases where sanitary considerations make their imposition necessary or desirable. No distinction will be made between different classes of offences, nor will any change be made in that part of prison discipline which is intended to be punitive in its effects. With regard to the last paragraph, I understand that under the existing law any non-hard labour prisoner who is prepared to pay the cost of his own food may avoid the work to which the hon. Gentleman refers.

MR. SEXTON asked what the number of the contemplated Commissioners would be?

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR said the Commissioners would consist of five Members, Lord Aberdare being Chairman, and there being three Representatives of the English, Scotch, and Irish Prisons Board. The fifth Member had not yet been chosen.

MR. FLYNN: The right hon. Gentleman said in answer to a question from me that the Commission would consist of others besides Members of the Prison Boards.

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: What the hon. Member asked me was whether nobody, other than those connected with the Irish Prisons Department, would be selected, and, as I said in reply, that has not been the case. There will only be one Representative of the Irish Prisons Department.

MR. SEXTON: Will the Commission consist of persons interested in carrying out the Prison Rules?

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: It will be necessary to have official knowledge on the Commission.

MR. E. HARRINGTON, M.P.

MR. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the "remission of hard labour" by the Lord Lieutenant, in the case of Mr. Edward Harrington, M.P., has made no change in his occupation, and has deprived him of four ounces of bread and half a pint of milk daily?

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: There is a change in Mr. Harrington's diet, though not to the extent stated in the question. An average of 3 1-7oz. bread, 4-7oz. potatoes, and $\frac{1}{2}$ pint of milk is the real amount. The benefit to Mr. Harrington will not accrue until the work of preparing his defence terminates, which will, I presume, be soon. The prison doctor will, of course, see that Mr. Harrington has all the nourishment necessary for health.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE (Bradford Central): How long did Mr. Harrington undergo the sentence of hard labour?

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: It was decided that three months of the six months' hard labour to which Mr. E. Harrington was sentenced should be remitted.

EVICTIIONS IN DONEGAL.

MR. MAC NEILL (Donegal, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that, in the Gweedore and Cloughaneely districts of the county of Donegal, the decrees obtained by landlords for ejectment for non-payment of rent last Saturday, together with the decrees previously obtained, bring up the total number of families affected to 121, and that, since last autumn, the great majority of these families, including all the families on the townlands of Glashercoo and Curransport, on the Olpherts estate, have been subsisting on Indian meal; whether representations have reached him that the seed potatoes are not only deficient in quantity to crop the lands, but are unusually small; and whether the Government will employ the forces of the Crown to evict the people of these districts from their houses, or take means to save them from death by starvation?

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The Constabulary authorities report that the

decrees obtained by landlords in the Gweedore and Cloughaneely districts for ejectments for non-payment of rent amount to a total of 96. It is not the case that the great majority of these families, including all the families on the townlands of Glashercoo and Curransport, have been subsisting on Indian meal since last autumn. Some of the poorer doubtless have. Their families usually use Indian meal from February and March till the potato crop is ready for use. They commenced to use the meal sooner this year, owing to the smaller supply of potatoes. The local markets are well stocked with seed potatoes varying from 4d. to 6d. a stone. The potatoes of last year were small. There is no prospect of starvation, so far as can be ascertained; nor are there likely to be any cases of individual distress which could not be at once dealt with under the ordinary Poor Law.

MR. MAC NEILL: The right hon. Gentleman has not answered the last paragraph of the question. Will the forces of the Crown be employed in carrying out these evictions?

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I shall in this, as in every other case, use the forces of the Crown in support of the officers of the law.

MR. SEXTON: I have received a letter from my hon. Friend the Member for North Monaghan (Mr. P. O'Brien) in which he says—

"Seven families have been evicted without resistance. There were no potatoes or any other food found in any of the houses. In one case the door was smashed in without a warrant. A woman with a baby in her arms was struck in the face by an emergency man. Wood also struck the woman in my presence. Inspector Law and a force of police brought up a battering ram from Letterkenny. The evictions are proceeding."

May I ask if this battering ram was brought up by the police for the purpose of self-defence?

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: If the battering ram was brought up at all, it was brought up for the purpose of self-defence.

MR. MAC NEILL: As this battering ram is provided out of the public funds voted by Parliament, will the right hon. Gentleman lay a model of it on the Table for the information of the House?

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, order!

ZULULAND—SENTENCE OF FLOGGING.

MR. WALTER M'LAREN (Cheshire, Crewe) asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the Colonial Office had received any report from Sir A. Havelock respecting the case of a Zululand Magistrate who, in December last, inflicted the punishment of 25 lashes in three instances upon Zululand for the offence of continuing to plant in their maize gardens after the gardens had been given to Zibabu, and whose action in flogging these men the Resident Commissioner was reluctantly compelled to pronounce illegal; and whether the offending Magistrate had been still left in authority in Zululand?

BARON H. DE WORMS: This case was reported on the 17th January by the Governor, who stated that he was then making arrangements for relieving the Magistrate in question, who was acting temporarily in the absence of the regular Magistrate. There is no ground for the allegation that the Resident Commissioner acted with reluctance; the records of the case show that he dealt with the matter promptly and on his own initiative.

THE SUFFRAGAN BISHOP OF LONDON.

MR. SEALE-HAYNE (Devon, Ashburton) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the Bishop of Marlborough, Suffragan to the Bishop of London, and holding preferment to the value of £1,400 per annum in the diocese of London, also draws £1,000 per annum as Canon of Exeter Cathedral, and refuses to give up the latter preferment notwithstanding an engagement to that effect; whether the Bishop of Marlborough's duties, as Canon of Exeter, are only discharged by deputy; and whether this proceeding, by which funds applicable to the work of the diocese of Exeter are retained by a gentleman whose ministrations have been retained for the diocese of London, is a contravention of the Pluralities Act?

*MR. MATTHEWS: I am informed by the Bishop of Marlborough that he has resigned the Canonry of Exeter. The Bishop of London informs me that, by 26 Henry VIII., c. 14, the only Act

which regulates the appointment, duties, and privileges of suffragan bishops, a suffragan is empowered to hold two benefices, and it is clear that it was intended that provision for the payment of a suffragan should be made in this way. It is further declared that—

“Residence of the suffragan in the diocese where he is commissioned shall serve him for his residence as sufficiently as if he were resident in any other his benefice.”

The Bishop of Marlborough is, therefore, legally entitled to hold both his rectory in London and his canonry in Exeter. It is not the fact that the Bishop made any engagement to resign his canonry.

MR. SEALE-HAYNE: Is it proper that the funds of one diocese should be applied to work done in another?

MR. MATTHEWS: I have given the hon. Member the words of the Statute which apply to the matter.

THE SHERIFF CLERK OF FORFARSHIRE.

MR. CALDWELL (Glasgow, St. Rollox) asked the Lord Advocate whether it is the fact that by the conditions of his appointment the Chief Clerk for Forfarshire, Mr. Thomas Congleton, is obliged to devote his whole time to the duties of Sheriff Clerk; whether, in point of fact, he also acts as Clerk to the Commissioners of the Burgh of Newport; whether he recently acted as Presiding Officer at the election of Commissioners for that burgh; and whether the performance of these outside duties are compatible with the terms of Mr. Congleton's appointment.

*MR. J. P. B. ROBERTSON: Until I received notice of the question of the hon. Member, I was not aware of the fact that Mr. Congleton acted as Clerk to the Newport Police Commissioners. I have satisfied myself that he has only done so through a misunderstanding of the terms of his appointment, which prohibit him from holding any other office of emolument, though it does not specify that he is to give his whole time to the office, as is stated in the question. On being made aware that the holding of this office is not compatible with the terms of his appointment as Sheriff Clerk, Mr. Congleton at once intimated his intention of giving up the office of Clerk to the Commissioners of Newport.

IRELAND—SUB-COMMISSIONERS
UNDER THE LAND ACT.

MR. MATTHEW KENNY (Tyrone, Mid) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if any sitting of Sub-Commissioners under the Land Law (Ireland) Act has been held for the barony of Clogher, county Tyrone, since the passage of the Land Act of 1887; and, if not, if he could state the reason.

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The Land Commissioners inform me that the sittings of the Sub-Commissioners are not arranged according to baronies. A sub-commission sat for hearing cases from the Poor Law Union of Clogher, in the County Tyrone, in May last. There will be another sitting towards the end of this or the beginning of next month.

RAILWAY AND CANAL TRAFFIC ACT.

MR. ARTHUR ELLIOT (Roxburghshire) asked the President of the Board of Trade where, and by whom, objections lodged to revised classification and rates proposed by railway companies under "The Railway and Canal Traffic Act, 1888," are to be heard.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH said the objections lodged would in ordinary course be heard in London, at the office of the Board of Trade, but he proposed to make arrangements providing that where necessary they should be heard in Edinburgh and Dublin.

THE TONNAGE BILL.

MR. GOURLAY (Sunderland) asked the President of the Board of Trade whether he intends withdrawing the Tonnage Bill now before the House, and introduce during the current Session a Bill dealing with the whole question of the tonnage measurement of the Mercantile Marine?

*SIR M. HICKS-BEACH: No, Sir.

INTERNATIONAL LABOUR CONGRESS.

MR. CUNINGHAME GRAHAM (Lanarkshire, N.W.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether Her Majesty's Government has now definitely decided to take steps to have this country represented at the International Congress on labour questions convened by the Swiss Federal Council at Geneva?

*MR. MATTHEWS: No decision has yet been arrived at.

POSTMASTERS.

MR. PATRICK JOSEPH O'BRIEN (Tipperary, N.) asked the Postmaster General if it was his intention to place postmasters on the same footing as all the other officers in the Post Office as regards classification to annual increment; and, if not, would he state the reason for refusing the concession?

*THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (MR. RAIKES, University of Cambridge): The circumstances of the various post offices differ so materially that I do not think it would be practicable, from an administrative point of view, to adopt the suggestion of the hon. Member. Each case must, I think, necessarily be dealt with upon its own merits.

VOLUNTEER CAPITATION GRANTS.

MR. COBB (Warwick, S.E., Rugby) asked the Secretary of State for War whether the Colonel commanding the 2nd Volunteer Battalion Royal Warwickshire Regiment was acting with the approval of the War Office by making it known in the battalion some months ago that for the future the Capitation Grant earned by the several detachments would be placed at the disposal of the battalion as a whole, and not of the detachments earning the grant, as heretofore, and by since acting in incurring expenditure and otherwise, as if such alteration would be carried out; whether such alteration is in opposition to Rule 18 of the Battalion Rules, 1880; whether he is aware that the action of the Commanding Officer has produced great dissatisfaction among the members of the Rugby Town Company; whether he is aware that in consequence of the opposition to such action of the officer commanding the Rugby detachment the Colonel wrote to him such a letter as caused him to resign his commission; and whether he will cause inquiries to be made into the matter, with a view of taking steps to continue to each detachment the right of control over the Capitation Grant earned by it?

MR. BRODRICK: The commanding officer of the 2nd Volunteer Battalion of the Royal Warwickshire Regiment is acting under the General Volunteer

Regulations in administering the Capi-
tation Grant by a regimental financial
committee; but by the rules of the
battalion, as approved by the War
Office, the amount earned by each com-
pany is handed over to the Captain, to
be expended on the company under the
supervision of the Colonel and the regi-
mental finance committee. Any other
distribution of the money earned would
not be in accordance with the approved
Corps Rules. Nothing is known at the
War Office of the resignation of either
of the two Captains of the Rugby com-
panies. The Secretary of State is not
prepared to give absolute control of the
expenditure to Captains of companies.
Whatever is spent must be subject to
the approval of the commanding officer,
to whom the Captains are responsible.

SAMOA.

MR. WILLIAM M'ARTHUR (Corn-
wall, Mid): I beg to ask the Under
Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs
if his attention has been called to a
resolution passed by the Australasian
Federal Council, in which they express
their anxiety at the course of events in
Samoa, and impress upon Her Majesty's
Government the extreme importance to
British and Australian interests of main-
taining such treaties as exist, or con-
cluding additional treaties guaranteeing the
independence of the Samoan and Tongan
groups; and, whether he is yet prepared
to state to the House the names of the
English Commissioners to the Berlin
Conference on Samoan Affairs?

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF
STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS
(Sir J. FERGUSSON, Manchester, N.E.):
The Resolution in question was com-
municated to Her Majesty's Govern-
ment. The Council also asked to be
supplied with copies of existing Treaties
bearing on the subject, which was done,
and the Colonial Governments were
assured that Her Majesty's Government
were fully sensible of the importance
of the Imperial and Colonial interests
involved in the groups of Islands re-
ferred to. I am not yet in a position
to state the names of the British
Commissioners to the forth-coming
Conference.

IRELAND—EVICTIONS IN DONEGAL.

MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): I beg
to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord

Lieutenant of Ireland how many
families are affected by the impending
evictions on the Olphert estate in the
county Donegal; whether he is aware
that these families are in such extremity
of distress that they are at present being
maintained by means of a public chari-
table fund administered by the Bishop
of Raphoe; whether he has caused any
inquiry to be made as to the equity of
these evictions; whether he is willing
to use his influence with the landlord to
promote an arbitration; and when it is
proposed to carry out the evictions?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I understand
that the number of evictions on the
Olphert estate to be forthwith carried
out is 23, though the number of decrees
is 66. I am informed that there is a
fund for supporting the tenants driven
out of their holdings through the Plan
of Campaign in January. I believe
that the tenants have paid their rents
into the war chest; that if the Plan
were abandoned a settlement might
easily be come to with the landlord; and
that it is the promoters of the Plan, and
they alone, who are responsible for the
misery which has been or which may be
inflicted in the district.

MR. SEXTON: Does the right hon.
Gentleman suggest that the landlord
should not follow the precedent set in
the case of the Mandeville estate, and
that he should not enter into negotia-
tions which may lead to a settlement
without first insisting on the abandon-
ment of the Plan of Campaign which
would place the tenants at the mercy of
the landlord?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: It is not for
me to say what the tenants ought to do.
If they would make a reasonable offer
there would be no difficulty in coming
to a settlement. I think the Plan of
Campaign now stands in the way of a
settlement, as it holds the rents.

MR. SEXTON: Is not the right hon.
Gentleman aware that in every case in
which settlements have been come to,
the Plan of Campaign promoters have
immediately released the rents?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not
know that that proposition is perfectly
correct. I have heard of cases in which
the tenants have asked, but failed to get
their money back. But my point is
that unless the promoters of the Plan
of Campaign give their assent to the
arrangement which the tenants may be

willing to enter into, the tenants cannot make it, or else they will lose their money.

MR. SEXTON: But if the promoters of the Plan of Campaign indicate their readiness to hand over the money from what is called the "war chest" in the event of a settlement, what difficulty is there in taking steps to secure an agreement?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am perfectly certain that the landlord is desirous of making a settlement on fair terms, but the negotiations should be conducted with him and not with me.

GOLD COAST—THE MURDER OF MR.

DALRYMPLE.

SIR ROBERT FOWLER (London): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether Her Majesty's Government has received from the jurors at Accra, before whom the Tavie Chief, Bella Cobina, and Napad Seheb were tried and acquitted last August, on a charge of inciting, moving, and procuring certain persons unknown to murder Assistant Inspector Dalrymple, at Tavie, in the previous May, a memorial, pointing out that, in the *Gold Coast Government Gazette*, the Governor is reported as having stated that these two prisoners, and a third, Akoto Mamlay,

"had been acquitted of the charges laid against them, of being connected with the murders of Mr. Dalrymple and the Chavis, and that this had taken place in spite of the evidence, in the opinion of the Queen's Advocate,"

whether, before sanctioning the Ordinance of the Legislative Council of the Gold Coast, under which the three persons named are now imprisoned at Elmina Castle, Her Majesty's Government had access to the Minutes of the trial of last August, in which two of the prisoners were concerned, and, as regards the third prisoner, Akoto Mamlay, whether the charges against her have ever been submitted to a Court of Law; and, whether the Government will lay before Parliament the Minutes of the trial of last August, the Governor's Report thereon, and any other correspondence that has taken place with reference to these affairs?

BARON H. DE WORMS: In answer to my hon. Friend I have to say that a copy of the memorial—which has been

sent through the Governor—has been received direct from the Foreman of the Jury, but no action has been taken upon it pending its receipt from the Governor with his report, which may be shortly expected. In reply to the second question, when the Ordinance was sanctioned Her Majesty's Government were aware that the two first named prisoners had been acquitted of being accessories before the fact to the murder of Mr. Dalrymple, and that, in the face of that acquittal, the indictment against the three prisoners for the murder of the Chavis was not proceeded with. As I stated in reply to the hon. Member for the St. Austell division on the 8th instant, "it was considered necessary for the public safety that these persons should not be allowed to return to Tavie," and the Ordinance providing for their detention as political prisoners was therefore passed and sanctioned. Under the circumstances there would be no advantage in presenting the papers to Parliament, and their publication in the Colony is undesirable. I shall, however, be glad to give information on any particular point to my hon. Friend if he desires it.

INDIA—THE CRAWFORD CASE.

MR. J. M. MACLEAN (Oldham): I wish to ask the Under Secretary of State for India if it is proposed to publish the decision in the Crawford case simultaneously in England and in India?

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Sir J. GORST, Chatham): The despatch containing the decision of the Secretary of State in Council on the Crawford case, being due in Bombay on the 15th inst., will be laid on the Table on Tuesday next, together with other papers, including the report of the Commission.

BARRY LINKS ARTILLERY RANGE.

DR. CAMERON (Glasgow College) for Mr. BARCLAY (Forfarshire): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether the Government has been able to secure the Barry Links for artillery practice?

MR. BRODRICK: The Government has not yet been able to secure the Barry Links for artillery practice, but I am informed that an arrangement has been made with Lord Dalhousie's tutors

by which the Scottish National Artillery Association will be permitted to hold their meeting on Barry Links this year.

HER MAJESTY'S LEGATION AT BELGRADE.

MR. LEGH (Lancashire, S.W., Newton): I have to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether it is intended to convert Her Majesty's Legation at Belgrade into a Consulate General; and, if so, for what reason?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: No, Sir. There is no such intention as that stated in the question.

WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE BILL.

MR. RADCLIFFE COOKE (Newington, W.): I wish, Sir, to ask the honourable Member for Hanley whether he intends to proceed with the Women's Suffrage Bill this Session; and, if so, whether he will endeavour to secure a day for its discussion, or engage not to take it except at a time when it may be fully debated?

MR. WOODALL (Hanley): I have to thank the hon. Gentleman for his courtesy in giving me private notice of this question. The House is aware that, availing myself of the position obtained in the ballot, I put down the Women's Suffrage Bill for Second Reading on Wednesday next. The Leader of the House, in the exercise of his discretion, has intimated his intention to follow the general usage in regard to the Easter Holidays, rather than to act upon the precedent he himself established so recently as 1887. I do not propose to challenge this decision by putting the House to the trouble of a division on the Motion for Adjournment. And I have no hesitation in giving the assurance asked for by the hon. Member, whose solicitude in regard to the Bill has been evidenced by his vigilant and persistent hostility. There is, however, no chance of making any further progress with the question this Session in what remains of private Members' time. But after the recent declaration of the Prime Minister in favour of the enfranchisement of women, I am not without hope that the Government will endeavour to give effect to the opinion of Lord Salisbury by affording me some facilities for taking the opinion of the House. I propose, therefore, to defer the withdrawal

CHANNEL ISLANDS—THE CRIMINAL LAW AMENDMENT ACT, 1885.

MR. WALTER M'LAREN (Cheshire, Crewe): I wish to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1855 has been adopted in the Channel Islands; and, if not, what are the reasons which have prevented its adoption?

MR. MATTHEWS: No, Sir; this Act has not been adopted in the Channel Islands. The Act does not in terms apply to these islands. In Guernsey the Governor in 1885 called the attention of the Royal Court to the Act, and a Committee was appointed to consider it, but has not as yet reported. The Governor of Jersey does not inform me of the reasons which have delayed or prevented its adoption in that island.

IRELAND—THE RATHFARNHAM MAN- SLAUGHTER CASE.

MR. CLANCY (Dublin Co., N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been drawn to the evidence in the case of Charles Freckleton, an emergency man and gamekeeper, tried in Dublin on Friday and Saturday of last week for murder, from which it appears that Freckleton, in a public house at Rathfarnham, in the county of Dublin, deliberately fired three shots at three different persons in succession, killing one man on the spot, and wounding one young girl so seriously that for several weeks her life was despaired of; whether he has considered the observations of the presiding Judge, Mr. Justice Murphy, in which he expressed the opinion that the crime of Freckleton was both unprovoked and without any justification whatsoever, and declared "that there was no case in the books that would suggest that in a case of this kind the Judge should suggest that the jury should reduce the crime from murder to manslaughter;" whether the jury found Freckleton guilty, not of murder, but of manslaughter; whether it is a fact that, in the empannelling of this jury, the representatives of the Crown did not order any jurors to stand aside, while the prisoner challenged 20 jurors, all but four of whom were

Catholics, with the result that all the 12 jurors sworn were Protestant landlords or persons connected with the landlord class; and if these allegations are well founded, whether he intends to take any notice of the action of the Crown officials in this case?

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I understand that the prisoner, Charles Freckleton, was not an emergency man. He was brought over from Scotland to act as a gamekeeper for Mr. Guinness, of zibadden, in the County of Dublin, in whose employment he was as such gamekeeper when the offence was committed. The presiding judge made in effect the observations mentioned in the question, and he left it to the jury to determine whether the prisoner was guilty of murder or manslaughter, and they found a verdict of manslaughter, and he was sentenced to penal servitude for life. It is a fact that the representatives of the Crown did not ask any juror to stand aside while the prisoner challenged 20 jurors; but the religion of those challenged cannot be given. It is not known what was the religion of the 12 jurors sworn to try the prisoner; but their occupations were as follows:—1 retired officer; 1 bookseller; 1 jeweller; 1 carrier; 2 described as gentlemen; 1 manufacturer's agent; 2 bank clerks; 2 commercial clerks; and 1 farmer.

MR. CLANCY: Does the right hon. Gentleman deny that the murdered man was a Catholic, that the murderer was a Protestant, and that the jury was composed exclusively of Protestants.

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am afraid that I have no information on that subject.

MR. CLANCY: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the murdered man has left a widow and three children in destitute condition, and will he consider the propriety—

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, order. That does not arise out of the question on the paper.

MR. CLANCY: I beg to give notice that, on the Estimates, I will call attention to this and other instances of flagrant partizanship in the administration of the Criminal Law in Ireland.

EVICTIIONS IN COUNTY WICKLOW.

MR. BYRNE (Wicklow, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord

Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been drawn to the case of Richard Cullen, a leasehold tenant on the estate of Charles Frizelle, Castlekevin, county of Wicklow, who applied to the Land Commission to fix a fair rent immediately after the passing of "The Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1887," but has never been able to get his case heard; whether he is aware that in September last he was served with an eviction notice; that his rent was £19 14s. 4d. a-year, while the Government valuation of his farm was only £12 10s.; that in 1885 the then agent of the estate accepted, in respect of the last gale of that year, a rent equal to the valuation; and that a newly-appointed agent, named M'Dougall, was offered last October by Cullen one and a-half year's rent, computed at the valuation, but refused the offer; and, if these allegations are well founded, whether the Government are prepared to lend the forces of the Crown for the eviction of Cullen, or whether they intend to propose any legislation to prevent evictions from similar causes in the future?

MR. CHANCE (Kilkenny, S.): Arising out of this, may I ask the Solicitor General for Ireland whether it is not the fact that the procedure for obtaining an instalment order is exceedingly expensive?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (MR. MADDEN, Dublin University): The Land Commissioners inform me that it is the case that Cullen served an originating notice, as stated in the first paragraph. I have not received a reply in regard to the details in the second paragraph. The tenant had full power to apply, under the Act of 1881, to the Court to stay the proceedings in ejectment, and also under the Act of 1887, to likewise stay the proceedings, pending the hearing of his application to have a fair rent fixed, and to have the arrears of rent declared payable by instalments spread over a given period, should the Court consider the circumstances of the case required it.

MR. MADDEN: I think it better notice should be given of this question.

MR. CHANCE: Then I must put the question to the Chief Secretary as it arises out of his answer.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I should point out that quite apart from the Act of 1887

it can be done under the Act of 1881 without expense.

MR. CHANCE: But have not the superior Courts practically refused to exercise any jurisdiction under the Act of 1881?

MR. McCARTAN (Down, S.): On what part of the Act of 1881 does the right hon. Gentleman rely?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have not the Act with me, but if the question is put on the Paper I will answer it.

THE LAND COMMISSION.

MR. CLANCY (Dublin Co., N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland when a Sub-Commission will sit again in the County of Dublin for the purpose of hearing land cases from that district?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The Land Commissioners inform me that a Sub-Commission will commence its sittings for the County of Dubiin towards the end of next month.

POST OFFICE DISCIPLINE.

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camberne): I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether the following facts have been brought under his notice—namely, that on Wednesday night, 3rd April, a man on the midnight duty, named Jenkins, when examining his receipts for letters, found one already stamped with his number stamp, which circumstance he duly reported. He and a sorter named Broome were summoned before the Sub-Controller, Mr. Finch, when the Assistant Controller, Mr. Saunderson, in Mr. Finch's presence, declared his belief that the affair "was a huge joke," perpetrated in order to keep up the excitement respecting a petition which had been submitted for the disuse of the number stamp instrument; whether it is the fact that this instrument has to be used by the *employés* for signing the registered letters in lieu of the ordinary method by writing, and that the person to whom such instrument is entrusted is responsible for whatever use is made of the instrument, even if it should be stolen or otherwise used without his knowledge or consent; whether it is the fact that several cases have occurred of such instrument having been stolen, and that, in consequence of the danger of such theft or other misuse, and the heavy

liability lying upon the *employés* in such case, petitions have been preferred in favour of the abolition of the instrument in question; and whether he will call upon the Assistant Controller to explain his action in the matter?

*MR. RAIKES: I have not as yet completed my inquiry into the circumstances alluded to by the hon. Member, but I may say that if the irregularity, which was undoubtedly committed by some one, was committed from any other motive than thoughtless mischief, the case will certainly assume a more serious aspect.

CIVIL SERVICE WRITERS.

MR. JOHN KELLY (Camberwell, North): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether it is the fact, that in the early part of last year, a number of Civil Service writers serving in the Out-door Department of Her Majesty's Customs were recommended for promotion under the Treasury Minute of December 1886; whether these writers were afterwards transferred to the Statistical Department of Her Majesty's Customs to meet the exigencies of the service; whether, on the completion of the work there, they have been informed that their services are no longer required; and, whether, in consideration of the long services, averaging 13 years, of these men, he will take steps to retain them in the service of Her Majesty's Customs, and give effect to the recommendation made on their behalf by the head of the department?

*MR. JACKSON: The copyists referred to by my hon. Friend were not recommended for promotion to the lower division by the Commissioners of Custom; they were transferred to the Statistical Department as stated in the question. The services of some of them are no longer required in the Statistical Office, and the copyists in question will therefore be returned to the Civil Service Commission for employment in other offices. As other arrangements have been made for carrying on the work in the Out-door Department on which these copyists were formerly employed, there is no necessity for retaining them in the Customs service.

H.M.S. VICTORIA.

MR. JOICEY (Durham, Chester-le-Street) asked the First Lord of the Ad-

miralty if it be true that considerable alterations have been made in the officers' quarters in the ironclad *Victoria* since she was delivered by the contractors; and, if so, what amount has been expended in these alterations, and why they were necessary?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Lord GEO. HAMILTON, Middlesex, Ealing): After it had been determined to employ the *Victoria* as the flagship on the Mediterranean station, and after the admiral who will command that station had been selected, the position of the captain's, commander's, secretary's, and other cabins was rearranged, and some additional cabins were built, it being thought desirable to accommodate the captain and commander on the weather deck. The cost, including all the consequent subordinate changes, will be about £1,100.

THE NAVAL MANŒUVRES.

MR. JOICEY (Durham, Chester-le-Street) asked the First Lord of the Admiralty whether the Naval Manœuvres will take place this year; and, if so, when?

LORD G. HAMILTON: It is intended that the Naval Manœuvres shall take place again this year, but the actual date of their commencement has not yet been fixed.

IRELAND—PROSECUTION OF MR. CONLAN.

MR. W. A. MACDONALD (Queen's County, Ossory): I wish to ask Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland whether he can cite the terms of the notices, for publishing which Mr. Conlan, proprietor of the *Carlow Nationalist*, is now in prison?

MR. MADDEN: It appears from the report of the proceedings in Mr. Conlan's case that the following passages, among others, were relied on on the part of the prosecution:—The Chairman said he would turn to the subject of the coming evictions—

"I ask how many Neill Doogans will there be on the estate; will the tenants barricade their houses? Of course it means six months' imprisonment, but one house defended as Doogan's or O'Donnell's is worth more to the cause than the quiet eviction of 5,000 people. There was a mistake in the policy carried out at the former eviction here, and the people that went out may be open to the taunt that they did nothing themselves. Mr. Moore: They went

as far as they were asked to go. The Chairman: Exactly; though, as I said before, it was a great mistake to go out so quietly."

Again, the Chairman—

"referred to the fact of the children from the square and the locality around associating with the emergency children, and said it was a shame."

The Chairman also referred to the fact of the—

"Campaigners, or a good many of them, dealing in the one shop with the emergency men; it was monstrous that after eight years of agitation and speech-making people would not have spirit enough to act from their own sense of right. If their leaders were cognizant of the fact that Campaigners and emergency men stood shoulder to shoulder in Mrs. Evan's shop they would simply cut off their supplies, and very justly."

MR. W. A. MACDONALD: This is a very grave matter, and I must, Sir, with your permission, press it a little. Does the hon. and learned Gentleman recollect that on Friday week he told the House Mr. Conlan was not imprisoned for publishing the proceedings of an unsuppressed branch of the National League but for publishing an incitement to break the law, and that last Thursday he told the House he was imprisoned for publishing notices, the character of which he did not define. Are we now to understand if the suggestion implied in my original question was correct, and that Mr. Conlan was imprisoned for publishing a speech made by another person at the usual fortnightly meeting of an unsuppressed branch of the League, the report having been published as an ordinary item of news, and with the discharge of Mr. Conlan's duty as a public journalist?

*MR. MADDEN: I stated correctly on a former occasion that Mr. Conlan was ordered to find sureties to keep the peace for certain publications which in the summonses were called notices, and which the Magistrates held amounted to an incitement to break the law.

MR. CLANCY: Did not the hon. and learned Gentleman say Mr. Conlan was imprisoned for publishing, not only the report of the meeting, but also the notices?

*MR. MADDEN: I said that these notices were embodied in the report, but that did not make them legal.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE (Bradford): Was the proceeding under the Statute of Edward III.?

*MR. MADDEN: The summons was apparently founded on the statute referred to; but, as I have already pointed out the Magistrates have jurisdiction in such a case under the Commission of the Peace, and I believe their order was made in virtue of that jurisdiction.

THE MARITIME CONFERENCE.

MR. CHANNING (Northampton, E.) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs what is the present position of the communications with the United States Government as to the proposed International Maritime Conference; and, whether, having regard to the disastrous frequency of maritime collisions in the past year, and to the fact that the Departmental Committee appointed by the Board of Trade have sent in their Report as to alterations in the International Signal Code, Her Majesty's Government will make representations to the United States Government, and, if necessary, to other Governments, with a view of holding the Maritime Conference at the earliest possible moment?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: We have been informed by the United States *Chargé d' Affaires* that the Maritime Conference will meet on the 16th of October, and that the programme is being drawn up by the United States Delegates. It will, when received, be considered by Her Majesty's Government. It would, therefore, be premature to present Papers to Parliament.

MR. F. A. CHANNING: May I ask whether in the present position of the negotiations, it would be possible for the Government to suggest on the part of this country any further subject for consideration?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: Certainly, Sir. As soon as the programme is received, Her Majesty's Government can offer any suggestions which may seem desirable.

SIGNALLING AT SEA.

MR. CHANNING (Northampton, E.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he will lay upon the Table of the House the Interim Report of the Committee appointed in 1887 to consider the question of Signalling at sea?

*SIR MICHAEL HICKS BEACH: Yes, Sir.

THE JUBILEE REVIEW.

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether the expenditure of £1,361 for illuminating the Fleet at the Jubilee Review was incurred by the Admiralty without authority; whether the Admiralty subsequently applied to the Treasury to approve the expenditure; and whether the Treasury declined to assume any responsibility for it?

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: The facts are as represented in the question of the hon. Member. Full particulars will be found in the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General on the Navy Appropriation Account for the year 1887-88. As the official correspondence on the subject has come in the ordinary course under the review of the Public Accounts Committee, any explanation now of the circumstances which led the Admiralty to incur this expenditure would be out of place.

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether Lord Knutsford has expressed his approval of a proposed Customs Union between the Cape, Natal, and the Orange Free State, under which it is provided that Natal sugar shall be charged in the other two States with a duty of 6s. 3d. per cwt., while all other sugar imported into the Union shall be charged 12s. 6d. per cwt.; whether this arrangement is inconsistent with Article 4 of the Sugar Convention, which provides that "Her Britannic Majesty's Government agree not to impose differential duties on cane or beet sugar imported from countries, provinces beyond the seas, Colonies, or foreign possessions taking part in the Convention"; and, does the Colonial Office intend to take any steps to reconcile the Sugar Convention with the Customs Union?

*BARON H. DE WORMS: The proposed South African Customs Union is between the Cape Colony and the Orange Free State only, Natal, as we now understand, having refused to join it; and the provision in the Bill establishing the Customs Union—whereby Natal sugar would have received differential treatment in the manner stated in the question—is to be omitted. It is not

necessary, therefore, to consider whether the Customs Union, in its earlier form, would have been inconsistent with Article 4 of the Sugar Convention, or to take any steps to reconcile two arrangements which do not conflict.

ADMIRALTY—EXPENDITURE.

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether his attention has been drawn to the strictures passed by the Comptroller and Auditor General upon the unauthorized expenditure in the year ended 31st March, 1888, of over £140,000 on Naval stores, and particularly to the statements that this expenditure appears to be, "in point of law, an act of misappropriation," and that the action of the Admiralty has been "mainly, if not wholly, determined by the desire to expend surpluses rather than surrender them to the Exchequer;" whether the House will have an opportunity of expressing its opinion upon this expenditure; and whether he will give to the House an assurance that similar "acts of misappropriation" shall not occur in future?

LORD G. HAMILTON: The Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General on the expenditure on Naval stores in 1888 of over £140,000 is now being considered by the Public Accounts Committee, which will no doubt report to the House on the subject. Stores were purchased prior to the 31st of March, 1888, in excess of the value authorized by the Estimates, and paid for out of savings obtained on other Votes. These purchases were reported to the Treasury, as is customary, before the close of the financial year; but as the Treasury did not express their concurrence with the action of the Admiralty before the 31st of March, as required under the terms of the Appropriation Act, the payments so made were questioned by the Comptroller and Auditor General. No doubt the House will have an opportunity of considering the Report of the Public Accounts Committee on the matter. Arrangements will be made to insure the necessary communications as to excess payments being sent at an earlier date in the financial year to the Treasury for their consideration and sanction.

MR. BARRAN (York, W.R., Otley): At what date did the Admiralty com-

municate with the Treasury as regards spending this money?

LORD G. HAMILTON: About the usual time, the 28th of March.

MR. PICKERSGILL: Did not the Treasury complain that the Admiralty had not made this application until they had actually incurred the expenditure?

LORD G. HAMILTON: I do not understand that such is the case. The complaint of the Treasury was that the request from the Admiralty was not put forward in sufficient time.

INDIA—REPORT ON BOMBAY FACTORIES.

MR. CAINE (Barrow-in-Furness): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for India if the Report of Mr. Drew on the working of the Bombay Factories has been yet received at the India Office; and, if so, will it be printed and circulated to Members of the House?

SIR J. GORST: If the hon. Member will move for the Report by Mr. Drew and the other Reports obtained by the Government of India, in reply to the inquiries of the Secretary of State, respecting the Indian Factory Act, they will be given as an unopposed Return.

MR. J. M. MACLEAN (Oldham): Will the hon. Gentleman publish the despatch of the Governor General of India on this subject?

SIR J. GORST: I will if I can, but until the Secretary of State has determined what to do in the matter I cannot promise.

THE CRAWFORD COMMISSION.

MR. CAINE (Barrow-in-Furness): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for India if it is true that some of the judicial officers who have confessed to corrupt practices in connection with the Crawford Commission, while suspended from the exercise of some of their judicial functions, are still maintained in their appointments, and continue to exercise judicial power in civil suits; and, if convenient, will he state to the House what is the exact position of these corrupt officers with regard to the exercise of their public duties?

SIR J. GORST: On February 7th, the Secretary of State telegraphed to the Government of Bombay as follows:—

"I await full information as to facts before expressing any opinion myself, but I presume incriminated magistrates are suspended from

exercising judicial functions pending consideration of case."

To this he received the following reply:—

"Magistrates who have acknowledged having purchased their offices suspended from exercising judicial functions during consideration of report."

On the 9th of April, after considering the papers which he had received from the Government of Bombay in reference to the incriminated magistrates, the Secretary of State telegraphed as follows:—

"As to incriminated magistrates, general rule must be that those who have given bribes must be deprived of magisterial functions, and must leave it to you to discriminate between cases; but I appreciate importance of pledges given by Government, and also leave it to you to provide such compensation for individuals as you may think necessary. Prompt action is essential. You are at liberty to make known my views if you think advisable. Have all who confessed corruption been suspended? See my telegram 7th February."

POSTCARDS.

MR. TOWNSEND (Warwickshire, Stratford-on-Avon): I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether he will be in a position to promise shortly to reduce the cost of inland post cards to one halfpenny each, with power to purchase a single card for that sum, as a boon to the poor man; also to use for the purpose thicker cardboard, as the very thin quality now sold at 7d. per dozen renders such postcards a most unsafe means of correspondence?

*MR. RAIKES: I would refer the hon. Member to the Report of the Select Committee on Revenue Estimates, which sat in 1888, in which he will find it stated that there is a loss on all halfpenny business of the Post Office; and in view of the feeling evinced by that Committee I do not think it would be right or reasonable to increase that loss by adopting the first suggestion of my hon. Friend. The question of the quality of the card is now under consideration.

OIL LAMPS IN THE HOUSE.

MR. WILLIAM M'ARTHUR (Cornwall, St. Austell): I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works whether he will state the number of oil lamps provided for in the Estimate of £2,000 lately passed by the House; how many of them are hired; from whom are they

hired; and what sum is paid for their use?

*THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (MR. D. R. PLUNKET, Dublin University): The number of lamps in use in the building is between 600 and 700. Of these only 24 are the property of the Government, and the remainder belong to the contractors. The contractors are Messrs. Patrick & Co., of 10, Millbank Street, who keep, in order to meet exigencies, a large stock within the building. For instance, 46 additional lamps had to be suddenly supplied for the use of Committees during the fog of yesterday. The charges made by the contractors cover the hiring of the lamps, the supply of oil, and the cost of lighting and trimming the lamps, including the pay of the staff of attendants who constantly inspect the lamps. The charges for such lighting are as follows:—Argand lamps, 11d. each lighting; moderators, 8d. each lighting; smaller lamps at rates varying down to 3d. each lighting. A record is carefully kept each day of the number of lightings. The total number of lightings last year was 60,443.

MR. M. KENNY (Tyrone): May I ask whether the oil used costs 7s. a gallon?

*MR. PLUNKET: I am not prepared to say off hand whether it does.

MR. W. M'ARTHUR: What I am anxious to get at is whether the same charge is made for lamps that are used for a short time as for lamps that are used the whole evening.

MR. WINTERBOTHAM (Gloucester, Cirencester): How often is this contract put out to public competition?

*MR. PLUNKET: I believe the gentlemen who supply us have been supplying us for a great number of years. The question of this contract was carefully gone into last year with the view of seeing whether any reduction could be made. Some reduction, although not a large one, was obtained. I trust that in the future there will be no need for such contracts, owing to the introduction of the electric light.

THE WARING STREET POST OFFICE, BELFAST.

MR. SEXTON: I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether he is aware that no telegraphic connection has yet

been made with the Post Office, Waring Street, Belfast; and whether he will state when the office will be open for the despatch of telegrams?

MR. JACKSON (in the temporary absence of Mr. RAIKES): In reply to the right hon. Gentleman, I have to say that after answering the question which he put to me on the 11th ultimo, I gave instructions for an extension of the Telegraph to the Post Office in Waring Street to be carried out early in the present financial year. The office, however, cannot be opened for the despatch of telegrams until the necessary wire and fittings have been provided.

THE LOSS OF THE *SULTAN*.

SIR FREDERICK MAPPIN (York, W.R., Hallamshire): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether, inasmuch as the charge of default has been partly proved against Captain Ernest Rice that he committed an error of judgment in running the *Sultan* so close to the five fathom line on an uneven and rocky bottom, and the same Officer was tried by court-martial for stranding H.M.S. *Iris*, under his command, on the Avola shore, off Cape Augusta, on the 17th February, 1882, he would state to the House what steps the Government intend to take to secure the safe navigation of Her Majesty's ships in the future?

LORD G. HAMILTON: Every precaution to ensure the safe navigation of Her Majesty's ships is, and always has been, taken, and any further security against accident that experience can suggest is from time to time adopted. The few casualties which have occurred among Her Majesty's ships while employed on every conceivable service in all parts of the world speak well for the precautions observed and the navigating skill of their captain and officers. The British Navy is the only naval service which, as a rule, dispenses with the services of pilots in local waters. I regret, therefore, that, under cover of a Parliamentary question, the hon. Baronet should have made so unfair a reflection upon the capacity and skill of a distinguished service, which is all the more ill-timed as, during the last few days, the display of those very qualities which the right hon. Member insinuates the Navy do not possess saved Her Majesty's ship

Caliope from a catastrophe which befell all the warships of other nations with whom she was in company.

SIR F. MAPPIN: May I ask whether, in consequence of these defaults, the Admiralty will consider the desirableness of dismissing Captain Ernest Rice from Her Majesty's service?

No answer was given.

CIVIL ESTABLISHMENTS.

MR. KELLY (Camberwell, North): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he is now in a position to name the date at which the Bill and Treasury Minute relating to the Reports of the Royal Commission on Civil Establishments, which were promised on the 7th of last month to be laid upon the Table shortly, will be submitted to the House for consideration?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I regret I am not yet in a position to name the exact date at which the Bill and Treasury Minute relating to the reports of the Civil Establishments Commission will be submitted to the House for consideration. The questions raised in the Reports are so important as to require much time for consideration; but no unnecessary delay shall take place in dealing with them.

THE TRADE AND LAW STANDING COMMITTEES.

MR. HENRY H. FOWLER: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether the Standing Committees on Trade and Law are to be asked to undertake the consideration of any Bills other than those introduced by the Government?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I am not aware that in 1882, when Standing Committees were first created, or in 1888, when the question was again discussed, any pledge was given that Private Members' Bills should not be referred to these Committees. I think it would be inadvisable to lay down any specific ruling on the question, as it is often the case that a private Bill so nearly approaches the object sought to be obtained by a Government Bill that time is saved by referring them both to the same Committee. At the same time, I do not think that Private Bills should, as a rule, go to the Standing Committees.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

*MR. HENRY H. FOWLER: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he is aware that on the 3rd April, 1882, the Leader of the House stated that the Government would "continue to do their best to carry out what is an understanding, namely, that on Friday night the Government shall do its best to keep a House"; and whether any modification of this understanding has been subsequently made with the consent of the House?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I am not aware of the opinion expressed by the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian in 1882. I should hesitate very greatly indeed to depart from any tradition which belongs to the House, or from any Rule laid down by a Minister who held the office of First Lord of the Treasury. But the circumstances to which the right hon. Gentleman refers were explained in answer to a question which he put the other night. I do not think that I could depart from the answer then given, which was to the effect that the circumstances in which the Count was moved on Friday last, and on the previous Friday, were such as not to appear to me to make it imperative on the part of the Government to endeavour to keep a House against what was apparently the wish of the great majority of hon. Members.

MR. H. H. FOWLER: I should like to know whether the right hon. Gentleman has referred to what Lord Palmerston said when he obtained from the House the concession of Friday nights in lieu of the former procedure of moving the Adjournment of the House on Friday night, and for which the Government were bound to keep a House in order that the Motion might be carried?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I have not referred to what Lord Palmerston said. I have sought, as far as I could, to consult the convenience of the House, remembering always its traditions and its usages; and I am not aware that it is imperative on the part of the Government to keep a House for the discussion of Motions against the apparent wish of the great majority of the House.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE (Edinburgh, Mid Lothian): Will the right hon. Gentleman have the goodness to

refer to the declaration of Lord Palmerston, and then consider how far, on reflection, that declaration bears on the case? I would by no means undertake to set aside what the right hon. Gentleman has just said with respect to a case which I take to be quite exceptional—namely, when there is a general desire on the part of the House that it should not continue to sit. But apart from that case, I must say that there is no matter connected with the usages of the House, the unwritten rules of the House, more clear than the general obligation of the Government, inconvenient as I know it is to them, to keep a House on Friday night.

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I will certainly refer to the statement of Lord Palmerston, and recur to the subject at a future time.

THE CASE OF JANE NICHOLLS.

MR. LAWSON (St. Pancras, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department with reference to the case of Jane Nicholls, who in May, 1886, was tried at Taunton for the murder of her infant child, and, being convicted of manslaughter only, was sentenced to 20 years' penal servitude, whether, in June, 1887, a petition was presented to him asking for remission of the sentence, and whether Mr. Justice Day, who tried the case, recommended the immediate release of the convict; and, if so, if he could explain to the House why he declined, in his answer to the petition, to interfere with the sentence; whether, in January, 1888, he received a second petition, to which he made the same answer without referring to the learned Judge; and if, under the circumstances, he will reconsider his decision?

MR. MATTHEWS: The communications between Judges and the Home Office in criminal cases are confidential, and I do not feel at liberty to state the character and effect of Mr. Justice Day's observations on the case of Jane Nicholls. It was a case in which the jury took a merciful view of the offence in finding a verdict of manslaughter only. I received two petitions in favour of the prisoner at the dates named. It would have been contrary to all precedent to discharge the prisoner so soon after a sentence of 20 years' penal servitude had

been passed; and the facts proved at the trial were not such as, in my judgment, could justify such a course. The time has not yet come when I shall feel able to advise any remission of the sentence.

TELEGRAPHIC RATES.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury): I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether, although the telegraphic rate in Great Britain, and between Great Britain and Ireland, is $\frac{1}{2}$ d. per word, and in France rather less than $\frac{1}{2}$ d. per word, it is intended that the Anglo-French rates shall be lowered from $2\frac{1}{2}$ d. per word to 2d. only, being four times the rate at which a profit might be made; if so, what opportunity he proposes to give the House of discussing these rates, and the "Declaration between the Governments of Great Britain and France respecting telegraphic correspondence exchanged between the two Countries?"

MR. RAIKES: In reply to the hon. Member, I have to state that the charge per word for telegrams to France has been reduced by 20 per cent, from $2\frac{1}{2}$ d. to 2d. I am not prepared to admit that this is four times the rate at which a profit can be made. On the contrary, I am advised that in the case of many messages it will barely cover the cost of transmission. An opportunity was afforded to discuss the arrangements connected with the acquisition of the property of the Submarine Telegraph Company when the additional Estimate was passed by the House on the 28th ult., and the House has been in possession of full information as to the rates to be charged for telegrams to France as well as to Germany, Holland, and Belgium since the 4th ult., when I answered a question that was put to me on the subject by the hon. Baronet the Member for the City of London (Sir R. Fowler). A further opportunity for discussion will be afforded when the Estimate for the sum required for the purchase of the Submarine Company's property is presented.

IMMORAL FRENCH BOOKS.

MR. SAMUEL SMITH (Flintshire): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been drawn to a recent case of the seizure of immoral French books exposed for sale in Dublin;

Mr. Matthews

whether, after a remand and much consideration of the case, the presiding Justice was compelled to decide that he was powerless unless the publications were in English, and added "that the Act was made to prevent the defilement of the young, and he did not see how books in another language could do so"; whether he is aware that it is customary for certain publishers in France to send advertisements of vile books and pictures into English schools, where pupils understand French, through the Post Office, offering to send them in return for payment; whether he is prepared to effect such changes in the law as will render it penal to sell or distribute immoral books or papers in foreign languages; and whether the Post Office could be authorized, as in America, to open letters or parcels when suspected, and to destroy obscene papers found therein?

MR. MATTHEWS: The Irish Government have furnished me with a report of the case referred to, and the facts are as stated in the question, except that the magistrates did not go further than to express a doubt whether the case came within the Act. Without pledging himself to that view, he abstained from convicting, and cautioned the defendant that if he was summoned again for the same thing he (the magistrate) might possibly come to a different conclusion. I am informed by the Post Office authorities that they are not aware of any law of the United States which authorizes the Post Office of that country to open suspected letters or parcels. Obscene matter is by the law of this country, and also in America, declared inadmissible by the post, and persons offending in this respect are liable to prosecution under the Post Office Protection Act 1884. It is the practice of the Post Office to stop any postal packet received from France which, *prima facie*, falls within the description of the Statute, and which is sent in open covers or circulars, and recently that Department has renewed instructions for that purpose. If such advertisements or packets have found their way into English schools (as to which I have no information) they have probably been sent as letters, in which case the Post Office has no knowledge of the contents, or power to interfere with their delivery. The suggestion of the learned

magistrate that exposing for sale obscene books written in a foreign language is not prohibited by law was expressed by him with diffidence, and I am not prepared to concur with it, at all events, until it has been confirmed by a Superior Court, or to undertake legislation on the assumption that is well founded.

GOVERNMENT DOCKYARDS—DIS-
CHARGE OF WORKMEN.

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Cam-
borne): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether it is the fact that, exclusive of the 400 men recently discharged from the Devonport Dock-
yard, some 25 fitters were on the 16th March last noticed to leave; whether shortly previous to their being paid off, they received orders to go to the chief engineer's office, and were then in-
formed that if they would remain at lower wages the said notices would be cancelled; whether the reduction in each case amounted to 2s. per week; how many men in all were asked to remain at such lower wages, and how many accepted the same; whether the same or a similar offer was made to the boiler assistants, and whether it was accepted, and by how many; whether in the above cases the men, or some of them, had been working for periods from 2 to 14 years, and when discharged received certificates of good conduct, stating that they had been discharged in consequence of reduction of hands; whether about six weeks ago, some 1½ fitters were entered at 5s. or thereabouts per week; how many of these are still retained, and at what wages; whether his attention has been called to a letter in the *Western Daily Mercury* of the 6th instant, stating, amongst other things, that—

“Some of the men entered and retained in the joiner's shop knew so little of joiner's work that they failed to pass the usual test of making a sash or a drawer, neither did they possess any joiner's tools, but they received joiner's pay, 27s. per week, and are there now, while I and others were discharged after nine years' service with a certificate marked a very good character and a very good workman.”

Whether, in view of these and similar statements, he will cause an inquiry to be made into the justice of these complaints; and whether, if he is unable to grant such inquiry, he will consent to receive and consider any such cases on their merits?

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: In reply to the 10 questions put by the hon. Member, my answer is:—No. 1. Yes, but the number is 15 not 25. No. 2. Yes, as far as concerns 3 out of the 15. No. 3. Yes. Nos. 4 to 5. Seven asked, three accepted; two of these were assistant boiler makers. No. 6. Yes. No. 7. Yes; seven of these are retained as their ability is superior to those discharged. Nos. 8, 9, 10, I decline to pay any serious attention to *ex parte* and anonymous statements, such as have appeared in the paper referred to, and which are utilized for political purposes, in order to stop dockyard officials from performing their duty in reforming and improving the establishments under them.

MR. CONYBEARE: I beg to pay my tribute of thanks to the noble Lord for his answer, but to give the Government Notice that I shall, on an early day, be prepared to produce letters signed by individuals.

GENERAL POST OFFICE—
VENTILATION.

DR. CLARK (Caithness): I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether complaints have reached him that in the registered letter rooms, and especially in the north room, there is a want of proper ventilation; that the air is contaminated by fumes of burning wax, dust from the bags, as well as the products of combustion of the gas, and of respiration; that the amount of air is not sufficient for the regular staff, and that the regular staff is almost constantly augmented by scores of auxiliary hands; and whether the postal authorities have any defined rules as to the cubic feet of air for each individual?

*MR. RAIKES: Attention has for some time past been directed to the ventilation of the registered letter room at the General Post Office—to which I presume the question refers—where during the period of the evening duty the atmosphere, in spite of the precautions taken, is at times hot and oppressive, partly, no doubt, owing to the causes which the hon. Member suggests. These rooms together, measure about 200 feet by 32 feet, and contain 16 large windows, all fitted with nightingale boards, two of them having louver ventilators as well; there are also 14 tobac pipes for the admission of fresh air. More louver

ventilators are about to be provided; but I expect the greatest improvement from the introduction of the electric light throughout the building, which will take place as soon as the necessary arrangements can be made. Every effort is made to secure the best possible ventilation. There may be particular times when the number of officers on duty exceeds the ordinary staff, but no pains are spared to preserve the health of the officers engaged.

CENTRAL TELEGRAPH OFFICE— SALARIES.

MR. CONYBEARE: I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether the overpayment in the salaries of clerks in the Central Telegraph Office, prior to April 1888, was due to an error for which the Treasury was responsible, and not to fortnightly payments; whether in the 1,475 officers are included a considerable number of probationers who do receive fortnightly payments, and administrative officers who never have been included in a petition from the main body; whether the maximum salary at present received by nearly two-thirds of the staff is £80, which is the maximum salary of most of the officers in other branches, who are paid monthly; and how many signatures would be necessary to obtain the desired alteration?

*MR. RAIKES: In reply to hon. the Member, I have to state that the overpayment to which his question refers was not due to an error for which the Treasury was responsible. Amongst the 1,475 officers mentioned in my reply to the hon. Member's question of the 25th ultimo, there are included 160 junior telegraphists and probationers who have not yet reached the point where an annual rate of payment begins, but no administration officers are included. 965 telegraphists out of 1,475 are on a scale of salary the maximum of which is £100 a year, and not £80 a year. The proposal to revert to the fortnightly payment of yearly salaries could not, I regret to say, be entertained, even though the whole of the officers concerned made a request to that effect.

RAILWAY RATES.

MR. CAINE (Barrow-in-Furness) asked the President of the Board of

Trade if the Railway Companies of the United Kingdom have all furnished the information required by a rule of the Board of Trade—namely, that they should "state as far as practicable the existing terminal charges in respect of the several classes of traffic, showing in each case the authority for making the charge;" and, if they have done so, where is the information to be found?

SIR MICHAEL HICKS BEACH: The statements of the Railway Companies as to terminal charges are with the statements as to existing maximum rates. These statements are not in every instance combined with the proposed classification and schedule of maximum rates, but are contained in separate documents, which the Railway Companies, did not in the first instance, supply to persons applying. A circular, however, as I have already explained, was sent to the Companies, and they have now undertaken to supply the supplementary statement.

THE ALASKA FUR COMPANY.

MR. GOURLEY (Sunderland): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether it is correct that the United States Government has passed an Act declaring the Behring Sea to be a closed sea to all save the Alaska Fur Company, and whether this prohibition has been acquiesced in by Her Majesty's Government and other Foreign Powers; and whether it is correct that the Canadian Government intends next fishing season to enforce its interpretation of the Treaty of 1818 relative to the Atlantic Fisheries; and, if so, what measures Her Majesty's Government intend to adopt for the purpose of procuring the ratification of the recent Treaty of Washington?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: The Act recently passed by the Congress of the United States does not make any declaration of the nature stated in the question, but simply states that its provisions include and apply to all the dominions of the United States in the waters of Behring Sea. It is the intention of the Canadian Government during the next fishing season to issue fishing licences to United States fishermen, in accordance with the *modus vivendi* established in the Protocol annexed to the Treaty of Washington. The ratification of any Treaty into which the United

States have entered depends on the decision of the Senate.

EMIGRATION TO THE ARGENTINE REPUBLIC.

MR. BRADLAUGH: Can the right hon. Baronet the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs give the House any information concerning the emigrants to the Argentine Republic?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: We have heard from Buenos Ayres that about 1,000 Irish emigrants arrived there in February, all of whom have settled; 700 English arrived on the 3rd inst; all except seven families are employed. Eight hundred English are expected to arrive to-morrow. Arrangements to obtain employment for them are being made. In consequence of the large number of persons emigrating to the Argentine Republic, arrangements have been made by which their departure will be known, so that her Majesty's Minister may give them any assistance on their arrival of which they may stand in need.

IRELAND—THE LORD LIEUTENANT—IMPRISONMENT OF MR. O'BRIEN.

MR. SEXTON: I have to ask the Chief Secretary whether it is true that the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Lord Londonderry, and the Lieutenant Governor of West Munster, Colonel Turner, have intimated their desire to resign; whether he can confirm the statement that the County Court Judge of Kerry has practically cancelled the sentence which the Removable Magistrates have inflicted on Mr. W. O'Brien; and whether he has done this in consequence of the Trustees of the Kenmare estates having refused to refer their disputes with the tenants to arbitration?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have not yet received a full report of what has occurred, but, as far as I am informed, the right hon. Gentleman is under a mistake. Judge Curran has distinctly stated that the Resident Magistrates have only done their duty in the course they have taken with regard to Mr. O'Brien. I believe I was right in saying on the previous day that the verdict of the learned Judge had no reference to the action taken by the Trustees of the Kenmare estate. I believe there is no foundation for the rumour with regard to Colonel Turner. As to the

Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, he originally took the office for two years, and under pressure from the Government he consented, at great personal inconvenience, to extend his term of office. We have no right to suppose that he will continue to do that, but he has not sent in his resignation.

MR. SEXTON: With reference to Judge Curran, may I ask whether the upshot of the matter was not that the Judge inflicted no sentence with regard to the appeal before him?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not believe that is a correct statement. The County Court Judge reduced the sentence by two months, and left the remainder of the sentence untouched.

THE CONDITION OF DONEGAL—MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE.

MR. MAC NEILL (Donegal, S.): I rise, Sir, to ask the leave of the House to move the Adjournment of the House, for the purpose of discussing a definite matter of urgent public importance—namely, the perilous aggravation of the destitution of the people of the county of Donegal, and the danger to the public peace arising from the combined action of the Government and the landlords.

Leave was given, and

MR. MAC NEILL (Donegal, S.): The matter upon which I move the Adjournment is indeed of urgent public importance. No minor political issues would have induced me to take such a step. It is because I believe that the effect of the Motion will be to direct public attention to the condition of Donegal, and many hundreds, perhaps thousands, of lives may be involved. In the county of Donegal the people, even in their best times—even in what are prosperous times for Ireland generally—are never tolerably well off. The Chief Secretary to-day answered my question, with the little official information supplied him, that the inhabitants of Donegal had commenced to live on Indian meal somewhat earlier in the present year than usual. I hope the right hon. Gentleman and hon. Members do not know the physical and mental discomforts of a low dietary of this kind. At the best of times the people of Donegal are under-

fed. In prosperous seasons, with fine harvests, they manage to eke out their existence by little additions to their usual famine diet; but in times of famine and distress, if ever there was a land that could be said to be under the shadow of death, it is Donegal as it is to-day. Very briefly I will lay before the House some few facts described in letters I have received, to show the actual state of destitution in the country, and then I will show the special circumstances that aggravate that destitution. We must remember Donegal is in a remote corner of Ireland, shut out from means of intercommunication with other counties, with no railways, except on the outskirts of the county. It is wild, moor-like, and barren, and the potato crop is the sole means of subsistence for the inhabitants, and when the potato crop fails the people are at famine's door. Many will recollect, and most of us will have read of, the social condition of Ireland at the time of the great potato disease of 1845. Donegal is at this instant in the same physical condition as were the people of Ireland then, threatened with the self-same danger. I will not ask the House to simply accept my statement. I appeal to evidence. We must all respect that of the Irish priesthood. The Irish priesthood—I say it with not the less feeling of admiration because I worship at a different altar—have ever maintained a conspicuous part in Irish history, but in Donegal the Irish priest bears a still more conspicuous part; he is the sole defence of the people, their sole guardian, their sole protector. Low down in the scale of social position, ignorant—for no education has reached them—under-fed always from various physical and landlord reasons—the only educated person the Donegal peasant has in whom to place confidence and find sympathy is the Irish parish priest. It is the priest who advises the people in difficulties, who reconciles their disputes, who protects them in danger, who consoles them in sickness and adversity, who is a tower of strength to all. The Bishop of Raphoe—a great part of whose diocese consists of the county of Donegal, and includes my constituency—Dr. O'Donnell, wrote to me a letter inclosing one sent to himself in the confidence that exists between the parish priest and his Diocesan, by the Rev.

Mr. Mac Neill

Patrick Logue, of Kilcar, in the Northern Division of Donegal. I will read the House a few extracts from this letter, which is dated from Kilcar, March 11—

“Relative to your Lordship's inquiries, I can safely say that the condition of the people in this parish—Kilcar, a large extensive mountainous parish—is much the same as in 1880. The potato crop has been as bad a failure in the last autumn as in the autumn of 1879. Some are buying Indian meal since Christmas in order to preserve the seed. Others are coming to me for the last fortnight asking for a trifle to buy meal, saying they are eating the seeds. They will get nothing on credit, as their shopkeepers here are struggling themselves and cannot afford to give. I firmly believe that not more than half the people of this parish will have sufficient seed.”

And now I turn to another passage—it illustrates so thoroughly what the parish priest is to these poor people, how he is guardian and comforter, and seeks to prevent aggravation of the distress. Father Logue goes on—

“I may, perhaps, mention that for the last few days Mr. Musgrave's (landlord's) process server is going through the parish accompanied by two of the Royal Irish serving ejectment processes. Looking at all these things, I am afraid, my Lord, that the situation of the poor people will be a sad one.”

Now, if the House will allow me, I will read an extract from a letter in which the foregoing letter was inclosed to me by the Bishop. It is dated Letterkenny, 12th March. After referring to the letter from Father Logue, describing the condition of Kilcar, Dr. O'Donnell says—

“Glencolumbkille, the neighbouring parish, is still worse off. In West Donegal, Gweedore”—

Father M'Fadden's parish, it will be remembered—

“the Two Rosses parishes, and several other districts are in the same plight.”

He goes on to say—

“It would be useful to find out whether the inhabitants of these parishes are not without seed for the coming spring, and in many instances without the prospect of food. In any case I thought it right to make the true state of affairs known to you, as representing South Donegal—

and then comes the first faint indication from the Bishop of the organization making the distress worse, bad as it is in itself—

“Gweedore,” says the Bishop of Raphoe, “is still treated as if the natives were savages.”

[An hon. MEMBER: "Hottentots!"] Now, I come to another letter from a gentleman who was sentenced in my presence—or, rather, I witnessed the mock trial. The sentence was pronounced next day, although we all knew what it was to be as well as the Castle. I refer to the Rev. Father Stephens, one of the most devoted men I ever came across in the course of my life. I say of Father Stephens, without hesitation, that I believe, if he could advance the good of these poor, poverty-stricken, half-starved, thinly-clad creatures, he would cheerfully lay down his life for them. He regards his own life and comfort as nothing compared with their social and spiritual needs, and this man has got six months' imprisonment, for, of course, the sentence will be enforced by the County Court. Father Stephens wrote to me on the 21st March, and he says in his letter—

"One very strong point in connection with the state of the district is this: that at the trial of Mr. John Kelly, for conspiracy with Father McFadden at Bunbeg—"

This was the first occasion on which Father McFadden was prosecuted, when he got two months' imprisonment, and immediately afterwards went through the length of England, receiving everywhere honours of which any Cabinet Minister might have been proud.

"At the trial of Father McFadden in connection with the Olphert Estate struggle, Sergt. Kenny, of Falcarragh, one of the Crown witnesses, swore in cross-examination that he had been stationed in this district of Falcarragh for the last 14 years, and that he never knew the potato crop during all that time to be as bad as this year."

Father Stephens tells me—

"This statement is to be found in the depositions in Mr. Kelly's trial."

Then he gives a deplorable account of the struggle of the people, especially in the two townlands where events are proceeding, which I made the subject of questions to-day. In the neighbourhood of Falcarragh, says the rev. gentleman—

"There are two townlands where, as the Chief Secretary admitted to-day, the inhabitants have been living on Indian meal for the last two months; they are the townlands most affected by the potato disease this year, and they are now afraid to plough their land, being in daily expectation of eviction."

And now they have fallen victims to the proceedings of the crowbar

brigade. I have here another letter from Father Logue, the gentleman who wrote to his Bishop in confidence, and whose letter I would not have repeated without leave if it had not been referred to in the more extended report of the state of his parish he makes to me. The House will bear with these details on account of the gravity of the circumstances. It is far better to hear the words of these people than any amount of declamation from me. This is the further letter from the Rev. Patrick Logue, dated March 22—

"I have seen your question to the Chief Secretary relative to the Messrs. Musgrave's process server, and I have read the answers of Mr. Madden."

It was the Solicitor General who answered my question—

"This process server (Byrne) may have come into the parish on a car, but during the days of his duties in Kilcar no car was employed by him or the Royal Irish. I have seen Byrne more than once walk through the parish with a policeman at each side of him."

Here comes a remonstrance from the parish priest anxious that a slur should not be cast on the reputation of his parish.—

"I am in a position to say that if Byrne were serving processes in this parish for a hundred years not a hair of his head would be touched, not an angry word would be said to him, and well he knows this. I may tell you the poor people are quite mad, disgusted with the proceedings, as they say it will bring a bad name on the parish, at all times so peaceful under sufficient provocation."

Then comes his statement as to the distress existing—

"I have been through the parish for the past fortnight, and found out more fully the circumstances of the people, and I can say with a safe conscience that the reports I have sent to the Bishop are underrated. Many of the people are eating the potato seed, and some are coming to me for a little money to buy Indian meal, that they may save, at least, a little seed. I did not imagine that they were in such circumstances until I had gone amongst them and found out the sad realities. I repeat it, this year is just as bad as 79-80. They have no credit. I cannot see how they will be able to struggle through until August without aid from some quarter, and from the Government quarter we need not, I suppose, expect much."

No; except, perhaps, a battering ram. Then I have another report from another parish priest. These devoted men have in their hands, I say—distinctly speaking, from my own knowledge—the lives and destinies of these poor people—they are their only protection against the iron

hand of arbitrary power. This gentleman writes from another parish in the district. It is from the Rev. Peter Kelly, the parish priest of Dunphanagy. He writes on March 22, and says:—

“I have before me in the *Freeman* of March 27 your question *re* failure of potato crop in Gweedore. I wish this question could be put in such a way as would compel the Chief Secretary to give his authority for denying that the potato crop of last year has not been so great a failure in Donegal as it was in 1879.”

I ask attention to these statements in contrast to the official information which lightly passes over this horrible distress, but which comes to us who know the reality, who have seen the scenes of misery in former days, with terrible emphasis. “The fact is,” continues my correspondent—

“It is universally admitted to have been worse. This applies to the entire coast line and the mountains. In a former question several parishes were named as suffering peculiarly this year from failure of potatoes last season. Many parishes not named are quite as badly off in this respect as the ones named—for instance, Clondahmky or Dunfannaghy parish. I have been engaged for several weeks back at the half-yearly visitation of this parish, and I find that quite a large number of the peasant occupiers have little or no seed potatoes or oats; and, speaking generally, the quality of potatoes saved up under great difficulties for seed are of a very inferior quality. This holds for all the parishes around the seaboard.”

The Chief Secretary has never been to Donegal, but let him look and see what “all the parishes around the seaboard” means—

“I think it is to be greatly regretted that this matter has not been urged more than it has been on the attention of the Government. But with us locally in these parts,”

and here comes in the aggravation—here comes in the action of the Government, who, instead of playing the part of Good Samaritans, rub salt and vinegar into the wounds and help the landlords to take advantage of this distress—

“with us locally in these parts other things forced themselves on us too much”—

he refers to the prosecutions of Father McFadden and Father Stephens—

“to admit of fuller attention to this one. It is now too late to do anything in the way of having seed provided for the poor people, and the consequences, I must believe, will be very serious. Mr. Balfour could have been answered on the former occasion when the failure of the potato crop was brought up, and when he denied it, by referring him to the sworn testimony of Sergeant Kenny, R.I.C. Fal-

carragh, at Mr. John Kelly's trial a Bunbeg.”—

This evidence I have given in my reference to the letter from Father Stephens. This man swore against his own interest, for it is the interest of the Government to put the best face possible on these matters, and there is not a man of the Constabulary, from the Sub-Constable up to the Inspector General who does not give evidence with his eye on the Treasury Bench. Respect for truth compelled him to make a statement which the Government will not, however, accept. Further, Father Kelly writes:—

“Shane O'Donnell, of Falcarragh, who is poor rate collector in his own and Gweedore parishes, holds that there has not been so complete a failure of potatoes since 1847.”

And now comes another contradiction to the statement which a gay Castle official who does not care, put into the mouth of the Chief Secretary—

“Ordinary seed potatoes are now being sold for 6d. a stone. Usually they do not fetch more than 3d. or 2½d. or 2d.”

Sixpence is then a famine price, and be it observed that the people do not usually buy seed potatoes at all, so that to pay even 2d. means severe sacrifice to them.

“If the people were able to buy seed potatoes in sufficient quantities for their lands, there would be nearly enough to be had in all these parishes at any money. I never knew the people in any parish I have been in—and I have been over the greater part of the country—so far run down at they are here at present. Their shop debts would be equal to a year's produce of their holdings all round, and the same may be said of all the parishes in the poorer parts of the country.”

In fact, these wretched holdings, which create horror in the minds of people who see them for the first time, are precisely of that class of holdings that come under those which Sir James Caird said at the best of times could pay no rent at all. They would pay no rent at all, or far less rent, but that it is collected by the Castle officials. The Chief Secretary gives the answers supplied to him by persons who are irresponsible to us but he might ask—the thought might occur to him—parish priests to give him information upon which he might rely. It is no pleasure to the Irish Party—for this question is raised by the Party; I would not make this

Motion on my own responsibility—to parade the misfortunes of our people; it is a most humiliating thing, and we would not do it except as a last resource. On the near approach of the famine of 1845 we had Government denials just as we have them now. The Chief Secretary, I dare say, sometimes reads the *Dublin Evening Mail*. In 1845 it had the same political views as now, and on Nov. 3 the *Dublin Evening Mail* made a statement that the Chief Secretary might have repeated to-day—"The potato crop far exceeds the average, and apprehensions are unfounded." At that time too, we, had Mr. Stanley—he was called Scorpion Stanley, and became famous afterwards as Lord Derby—declaring that apprehensions of potato famine were baseless. There was likewise a man of genius hovering round the skirts of the Conservative Party, but giving them a prod now and then, though their friend on an emergency—Lord George Bentinck. He said the famine was a gross delusion. This was the view of the Press and Government of that day, but the gross delusion cost Ireland in deaths alone the loss of a million souls. Landlords exercised their harsh rights then, and people who were not destroyed outright were shipped off in thousands to America and elsewhere. Public opinion is too strong for that now, and it is to public opinion we appeal from the Government, with an unvarnished statement of facts. When a deputation from Achill in the days of 1845 waited upon Sir R. Rouse at Dublin Castle, and urged their claims for assistance, the gaunt looks of the members of the deputation supporting the appeal, they were met with a refusal on the grounds of political economy, and with a reference to the writings of Edmund Burke. Would a Parliament in Dublin, even though composed of landlords, have allowed the people to starve? And now I have to refer to the aggravating circumstances of this destitution I have described in the words of parish priests. The poverty now prevailing in Donegal is aggravated by the Government striking down the natural leaders of the people, terrorizing the peasantry, and lending the forces of the Crown to carry out unjust evictions. Gweedore is probably the most destitute parish in Ireland, and it has been subjected to

needless trouble and cruelty by the circumstances attending the arrest of Father M'Fadden. I believe the right hon. Member for the Bridgeton Division would admit that during the two years he held the office of Irish Secretary not a single difficulty occurred in the whole county of Donegal, while he carried out a coercion régime under Lord Spencer. It was a crimeless county. What is it now? Dragooned by police, military, and resident magistrates. I do not regard these last as judicial, but as executive functionaries. All this has arisen from circumstances in connection with the arrest of Father M'Fadden. First let us consider what Father M'Fadden was arrested for. They have arrested him now on a charge of murder, and they are going to keep him in gaol until July next, that they can have a free hand to exterminate his parishioners. That is the real reason why he has been remanded. But what was his arrest for? It was for giving counsel, in his capacity of a parish priest, such as any Christian and just man ought to have given—namely, that the poor people ought to continue to retain their houses—or rather their wretched miserable hovels—for they are places which the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary (Mr. A. J. Balfour) would be very sorry to put his dog in, if he has one. The rev. gentleman had been arrested before. He was too good a man to escape arrest, and he regards his imprisonment as a high honour. And so did the English people among whom he went after his last imprisonment, and who received him with joy and acclamation. Father M'Fadden was arrested on the last occasion on a Sunday, in the very midst of his congregation, and wearing his priestly vestments. The congregation consisted of some 500 persons, and yet only six policemen were sent to arrest the priest. I am extremely sorry for Martin's death, and we all regret it most deeply, but as this is a case involving the lives of the people, I am constrained to say that Martin was known to be an excitable man. The arrest was made under circumstances which were described to me by Father M'Fadden himself whilst I was sitting beside him in Court. Father M'Fadden laughed at and ridiculed the idea of his being charged with murder. He said he was quite expecting arrest, but not on

that day. Mr. Martin, however, when the rev. gentleman came out of the chapel, went up to him and said, "I arrest you." Father M'Fadden asked where was the warrant, and a sergeant brought it up two or three minutes afterwards. Martin caught the rev. gentleman by the collar of his coat in a very savage manner, and at the same time drew his sword and brandished it over his head. A woman, seeing this violence, rushed in between the two. Father M'Fadden did his best to quieten her. Martin was still brandishing the sword. Another woman then called out, "They are murdering the priest." Then a *melée* took place, and Father M'Fadden and his sister were both hit. The priest turned back, at the risk of his life, to put a stop to the disturbance; but it was of no use. Well, I say that the Government are directly responsible for that occurrence. Father M'Fadden was put in prison, and then came the reign of terror. In all my experience I never recollect 46 persons being placed in the dock on a charge of murder. The police had a free hand. They went through the country and treated the people, as the Bishop of the diocese has stated, as if they were savages. The incidents of the arrest were something too shocking. They were characterized by both cruelty and cowardice. I have said that 46 persons were placed in the dock. Of the persons who were arrested and let off after being terrorized by the police there are no statistics. The whole district was like a country under siege. Men were actually known to hide in the caves of the earth and in the mountains for three weeks, to avoid the police. One man's mind was affected by the terror. They are very simple and primitive people, the only parallel to the completely patriarchal life in Donegal that I ever heard of being that to be found in the history of the Jesuits in Brazil. The *Derry Journal* of March 1889, states that a man named James M'Caffery attempted to commit suicide, thinking that the police were going to arrest him in connection with the murder. Another man, who was not at Derrybeg at all, went away and hid himself for three weeks. The Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Madden), when I asked him a question recently, admitted that two shots were fired, but

said they were fired for the purpose of signalling. I have often heard magnificent suggestions and explanations proceeding from Dublin Castle; but I never heard such an explanation as that before. It must have been received with a burst of laughter by Head Constable Mahoney, who was one of the heroes of that incident, and who has been promoted from the rank of sergeant on account of it. I find the case to be this. A man named Anthony Gallagher was walking in the district of Gweedore three weeks after the murder when Sergeant Mahoney called on him to stop. The man ran away and four constables followed him, three shots were fired at him, and, finally, when the police got up to him, Mahoney rushed up to him and, putting his revolver to his breast, asked where the other men were. There was absolutely no evidence against Gallagher and he was subsequently released from custody. A man named Cafferty also ran from two policemen, one of whom was Varrally, who gave evidence in favour of Father M'Fadden, and a shot was fired at him. Now I come to the cowardice, and you will always perceive that cruelty and cowardice go hand in hand. The cruelty that has been perpetrated is of so odious and vile a character that it would not, I believe, be tolerated on a slave-ship manned by Arabs. Her Majesty's Ship *Banterer* arrived at noon on one day and landed policemen on the islands surrounding Gweedore. Twenty men were arrested and handcuffed. The inspector put the keys of the handcuffs in his pocket, and put the prisoners in a boat, remaining on shore himself. The prisoners were tossing about handcuffed in a cockle-shell boat on a rough and dangerous sea during a severe storm from 1 p.m. till 4 p.m. When the *Banterer* again appeared the naval officers told the constables that they could not take the prisoners on board handcuffed, but they were eventually taken into the vessel, where they lay huddled together, handcuffed, and with their wrists bleeding, until the morning. When they reached Gweedore barracks they were discharged by a constable on his own responsibility. And what was the reason for this treatment? The police wanted to strike terror and dismay into the breasts of the people, so that when the battering-

rams came, and the country was to be cleared, the Chief Secretary might be able to say, in his gayest tones, that the evictions had been effectual. One man was arrested four times, and at 4 a.m. on March 6th, the Rifles, the Scots Greys, and all the police, took possession of all the roads and began to march through a district sixteen miles in circumference. They moved slowly down to the shore searching every house and barn, and smashing in the doors. They arrived on the shore at about 6 a.m., having made no arrests. The fact is, they did not care to make any arrests. What they wanted to do was, to strike terror into the hearts of the people, and so carry out the Government policy. The police and soldiers suffered severely, it is said, from cold and hunger, and I think their rulers ought to have suffered severely from the pangs of conscience, if they have any consciences. Raids also took place on two other occasions, and doors were broken open. Well, I believe, on my honour, that Father M'Fadden is kept in prison to-day on this got-up charge of murder simply to keep him from protecting the tenants. I will show the House conclusively that the removable Court, before which he has been appearing, is as much a part of the Castle machinery as Head Constable Mahoney himself. Father M'Fadden was arrested on the 3rd of February, and the Assizes took place on the 4th or 5th of March. Between the two dates Father M'Fadden was remanded three or four times. No evidence whatever was adduced against him until after the Assizes had closed, and then came the police evidence, which was all in Father M'Fadden's favour. He was not brought up at the Assizes, but was kept in prison, and is to be kept there until July, in order that the work of eviction may go on. On Monday, March 4th, I saw Father M'Fadden in the court, and, though I have seen poverty in all its forms, I never saw a more pitiable spectacle than I witnessed in the streets of Derry that day. There were a number of poor and miserable creatures, with despair on their faces, walking two and two, with handcuffs actually dug into their flesh. It was snowing at the time. The men were lugged like so many pigs into a third class carriage. After them, in a cab, came two women,

with no hats on, with very thin shawls, and wretched gowns. One of them had a child in her arms, and the cold wind seemed to be almost freezing the marrow in the poor creature's bones. I saw Captain Hamilton, in court, act a remarkable part. It was the third or fourth remand, and Captain Hamilton stated to Mr. Ros, the Crown Counsel, that he could not understand the remands being so frequent. However, although this reprimand was given to the Crown Counsel, they were not remanded finally until the 30th of March. And why was that? If they had been remanded finally on March 4th or March 8th, Father M'Fadden would have been sent to the Assizes. After the 4th of March there were no less than ten remands. The fact proves that the men on the Bench were as completely the servants of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary (Mr. A. J. Balfour) as a figure in Punch and Judy is the creature of the man who pulls the strings. The Solicitor General for Ireland (Sergeant Madden), in reply to a question put by some hon. Gentleman from England who takes an interest in these matters, stated that nothing unusual occurred in the remanding of Father M'Fadden on the charge of wilful murder. We can scarcely get Englishmen to believe the methods which are used in Ireland. I have stated that the Government are cruel, and that their Administration is cruel in these matters, and I now turn to the question of evictions, which are going on at this day, and which are necessarily fresh in our minds. I would ask this question—Why is not the Sheriff employed at these evictions, and why are emergency men, full of loyalty and mischief, employed—men of straw against whom no action can be brought and who have no responsibility. I should have been treating the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary unfairly if, in the spirit of Party, I had overstated the case. The right hon. Gentleman has admirers in Dublin, but I charge him with having raised a spirit of sectarian hatred in the country. At a meeting of the Donegal Temperance Loyal Orange Lodge, No. 832, the Worshipful Master in the chair, a resolution was passed condemning the cold-blooded murder of the late District Inspector Martin while in the peaceful discharge of his legal duty to his Queen, Country,

and Constitution, under the eye of his parish priest, and expressing their unwavering confidence in "our superior, excellent, and redoubtable champion, Mr. Balfour, Chief Secretary." There is a pinnacle of fame for the right hon. Gentleman. May that superior, excellent and redoubtable champion of the Orange party long be spared to them, and I may say that we on this side of the House would be sorry not to have him, as we consider him a great friend of ours although he does not appear to know it. In conclusion I must express my gratitude to the House for the patience with which it has heard me. I have only to add that I have instituted this action under the advice of my hon. Friends. I believe that in Donegal the whole procedure of the Courts of Justice is prostituted to political ends, and if no protest were made against this there would be a repetition of the scenes of 1846, and thousands of lives might be lost. For my part I have no apprehension of the result, for sooner or later there must be an end to this *régime*. I move the Adjournment of the House.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."—
(*Mr. Mac Neill*.)

*MR. STUART (Hoxton): In seconding the Motion, I desire to say that the speech just addressed to the House has been full of earnestness and of telling and solid facts, and in seconding the Motion made by the hon. Gentleman I shall detain the House but a very short time. I have risen to perform this duty because of my own connection with Father M'Fadden, and because of what I have myself observed in relation to the district during the past few years. The last speaker has drawn a vivid picture of the misery of the peasants of Gweedore. That misery is a chronic misery. I think one of the most painful records of this House is the Blue Book containing the proceedings of the Committee which inquired into the condition of the peasantry of Gweedore a considerable number of years ago. The narrative of those proceedings shows that the people of Gweedore are an ignorant people, but they have a great deal of natural nobility of character, are a very virtuous people, and very free from crime and drunkenness. But there are, of all things in the world,

three things which characterize them. First of all they have great veneration for their priests—a veneration which is worthily placed by them in those men. In the second place, they display a love for their homes and an extreme terror of those homes being torn down or destroyed; and, in the third place, they have a continual and an enduring belief that the landlords and the Government are one and the same thing. Now, Sir, the Government have attacked these peasants of Donegal on all these three points. They have placed their beloved priest under arrest on a charge of murder upon a class of evidence which, I will venture to say, no one can enter into without feeling its unworthiness. They have closed his mouth as a witness in respect of what occurred. They have been sending battering rams and other means of destroying the houses of the poor peasantry, and I think enough has already been said to show that they have been identifying landlordism with the Government. Now, Sir, why do the Government do nothing on the other side? It may be that they are sadly necessitated to connect this priest with the murder—I will make that admission if they wish it. It may be, also, they are under the sad necessity of tearing down and destroying the houses in which this miserable people might, by seeking refuge there, render themselves criminals; and it may be the sad and unfortunate necessity of the Government to bring to bear the forces of the law in support of a system of landlordism which is essentially unjust. But, if this be so, surely it is their duty to try and hold as even a hand as they can, and surely, when there is so much good evidence of the immense sufferings and poverty, starvation and famine, in Donegal, it is their duty to make the most minute inquiries, and even to go further than those inquiries. I think that a good case is made out, if for nothing else, for their interference in some way, to shelter from famine those poor people of Donegal, whose natural shelter they have removed—for the shelter of the Donegal people has been their good priests, such as Father M'Fadden, men who have withstood the iron hail which the landlords have showered against them, and have remained the friends, and just friends of the people. The settlement Father

M'Fadden made a full year ago on the Gweedore estate was made with the full concurrence of the Crown Solicitor, and the Resident Magistrate, Mr. Bourke, took an active part in assisting to bring about the settlement. Father M'Fadden's share in it was this—that when he saw a settlement made that was admitted by the Crown Solicitor to be just, he undertook the collection of the rents, and in eleven days he collected £1,500, the whole sum he had undertaken to collect, and which not the whole of the armed forces of the Crown could have got without him. Perhaps I ought to say he did not collect it all; for, finding he was £150 short, he paid that sum out of his own pocket. Well, what happened? It was when he was promoting this settlement on the estate of one who is nearly allied to the head of the Government in Ireland, that the Government came down on him and he was cast into prison. The result was that terror and agitation reigned in Gweedore. I hold in my hand a letter in reply to one which I myself wrote for the purpose of ascertaining the state of things there; the curate said the excitement was so great that it took him all his time to keep the people quiet, and he added that what had been the great difficulty there was to collect such a sum of money from the poor people, “but the sum needed was collected and paid over to the Crown Solicitor to be given to the landlord—the same Solicitor who is now prosecuting Father M'Fadden.” If the excitement was so great when he was arrested on a charge of conspiracy, cannot the House understand the feelings of the people when Father M'Fadden was arrested on a charge of murder? The tenants of Gweedore had been living on the charity of the world—or rather, not the tenants but the landlords. I have a letter from Father M'Fadden himself, in which he describes the way in which he collected the rent. He tells of how eagerly the people make the effort to pay, and mentions the case of Hanna Sweeney, whose payment was £1 8s. 9d.—a fact showing how small the tenancies are, there being 940 tenants from whom the £1,500 was obtained. Father M'Fadden also speaks of money that was sent over from America and the Colonies, and also contributed by girls in service. Well, what was the result of all this? The result

was that the people were kept in their homes, so that you can easily see what grounds there are for the confidence of the people in Father M'Fadden, and their reverence for him, and the danger there is in his wanton removal by an imprisonment of six months. Why, I ask, are the Government passing over the Assizes and keeping his trial back till July? When I was there there were very few tenants in that part of the country who have got a judicial rent, and the reason for this lies in the matter of sub-division. This question of sub-division is an exceedingly difficult one. There are something like 150 or 200 tenants, who got the judicial rents awarded three years ago, and every one of them had their cases put through by Father M'Fadden. He has been their shelter and their rock of defence, but the Government have removed him. If he be guilty, if the Government have reason to think him guilty of murder—why do they not try him? They will have no more evidence in consequence of all this hurrying backwards and forwards, and carrying so many shivering creatures about, not only on the railway, but in cars on the roads over those bleak mountains. The Government will get no evidence they have not already, and all the evidence they have is police evidence. Father M'Fadden has not only been the people's priest and defender against the landlord, but he has also been their medical man and engineer. From top to bottom of the whole system we find the moving influence exercised by such men as Father M'Fadden. I think I have made out that by the arrest of Father M'Fadden the Government have removed a bulwark and a rock of defence which has been a great assistance in the protection of the people of this district. They have sided with the landlords, but I would ask the Chief Secretary what has he done for the poor, and what is to take the place of that which he has removed? What has he done to bring contentment and order into the misery and confusion he has left behind, and if he has done nothing, what does he intend to do?

Motion made, and Question proposed, “That this House do now adjourn.”—
(*Mr. Mac Neill.*)

*THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester,

E.): The debate has wandered over a great variety of topics, some of them large and some of them small, and I might have been able to give hon. Gentlemen who have manifestly come down with prepared speeches fuller information if they had advised me of their intention to bring forward this Motion.

MR. STUART: Allow me to make a personal explanation. I had no knowledge of this Motion until I came down to the House.

MR. MAC NEILL: I certainly knew of the intention to bring this Motion forward, but I purposely omitted to give any intimation because I feared that if I did so some notice would be placed on the Paper which would have prevented the Motion being made.

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not make it a matter of complaint; but I mentioned it in order to state that, if hon. Gentlemen choose to raise such a debate without Notice, they have themselves to blame if they do not get as full and satisfactory an answer as they desire. It is absolutely impossible for the Minister, under such circumstances, to give the same detailed information he would otherwise like to give. I certainly thought the hon. Member who introduced the subject would have been able to make a more satisfactory explanation of the want of notice. With regard to some of the matters which have been mentioned, it is not necessary that I should say a word. Both the Mover and the Seconder, in the exercise of their rights as Members of Parliament, have thought it right to refer to matters which are still pending in a Court of law—namely, those relating to the arrest and trial of Father M'Fadden. It is a very bad precedent, and I shall not endorse it by following it. The Mover has given a long and sensational account of the incidents that attended the arrests in connection with the murder of District Inspector Martin. Those who are acquainted with that transaction know that a large crowd of persons took part in it; and it was consequently inevitable that a large number of arrests should be made. I deny, however, that any unnecessary hardship has been inflicted by the police in making the arrests. The hon. Member has made the usual attack on the Resident Magistrates, and has repeated the old cry that, because their

tenure of office is not a permanent one, they are the mere tools of Dublin Castle. That is an ancient complaint; but all those who are acquainted with the Government of Ireland know that it is a suggestion that has been repudiated in as strong language as any I can use by right hon. Gentlemen who now sit on the Bench opposite, and who have been responsible for the government of Ireland. Hon. Gentlemen who make this charge are really not very wise in their generation, for the same charges of unfairness and of dependence on the Castle are also levelled against the County Court Judges, who are irremovable and absolutely independent of the Executive.

MR. MAC NEILL: I referred to Judge Webb, and I said that I had a great personal regard for him except when he came to adjudicate upon these cases. He is well-known to be a member of the Loyal and Patriotic Rest Society.

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I cannot see what the explanation of the hon. Member has to do with the matter. My remark was simply that the Resident Magistrates are attacked on the ground that they are removable, and, therefore, the creatures of Dublin Castle, and the same charge is levelled against the County Court Judges who hear the appeals from the decisions of the Resident Magistrates, and who are absolutely irremovable. It is easy to estimate the value of such accusations against the tribunals of the country when we find the same charges made against the Resident Magistrates because they are dependent on the Government, and also against the County Court Judges who are not dependent on the Government. Another charge made by the hon. Member against the Government is that a police witness in this case appeared in the witness-box who was not absolutely sober. No doubt that was a serious matter from a disciplinary point of view, but how can it be made a matter of charge against the Government or the Resident Magistrates? I pass from that part of the hon. Gentleman's speech to the remarks he made with regard to certain evictions which are now going on. The hon. Gentleman complained that in the evictions on the Olphert Estate the agent of the landlord has been employing special

bailiffs, and not the officers of the sheriff; but this is left quite optional under the Act of 1887, and before that Act the employment of special bailiffs was in every case the invariable and necessary practice. Mr. Olphert, or his agent, in employing special bailiffs is only doing what he would have been obliged to do two years ago. I cannot see what the grievance is in regard to this point, nor is it one with which the Government, the Resident Magistrates, or the police have anything to do. They cannot decide whether special bailiffs shall be employed or the agents of the sheriff. The hon. Gentleman who spoke last complained that battering-rams have been used by the police to support the landlords' agents and destroy the tenants' houses. As a matter of fact, these battering-rams have been constructed and are solely employed for the protection of the lives and limbs of the police. What has been the course of procedure which has rendered them necessary? The National League sent down an emissary of their own to induce the tenants to combine under the Plan of Campaign.

MR. MAC NEILL: The Land League is dead.

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Then the National League. The people are prevailed upon to pay their money into "the war chest," and they thus are deprived of all opportunity of settling or making an arrangement with their landlord. When an attempt is made to evict them they barricade their houses,

Bridges are broken down and roads destroyed, boiling water is poured on the police, weapons of a most formidable kind are used, and the resistance is often prolonged for hours, during which both the police and the persons offering this resistance are exposed to great danger. Being responsible for the executive government of Ireland, I feel that I should be guilty of a grave dereliction of duty if I did not do all in my power to put an end to such scandalous scenes, and therefore it is that these battering-rams have been constructed for the purpose of affording protection to the police in the discharge of their duty. There cannot be a more innocent, a more harmless, and a more effective method of carrying out that object. The

hon. Member for Hoxton (Mr. Stuart) says that battering-rams are being used to back up an unjust system of landlordism, and I am curious to know what the hon. Gentleman means by landlordism. When a gentleman of culture and education uses the word in that House he must attach a meaning to it. Does he mean property in land? If not, what does he mean? If he does, is it to be understood that he objects to it? Does he adopt the idea of some that there ought to be no property in land? Can he suggest any scheme by which property in land is to be a reality and not a sham, and yet in which at some stage, sooner or later, when the tenant deliberately refuses to fulfil his legal obligations, the law is not to step in and enforce the obligations sanctioned by the law? If that is landlordism, then I say that landlordism ought to be supported. If it is not I wait with great interest to learn what is meant by the expression. I will not lay down so extravagant a proposition as that every landlord is always right, but I emphatically assert that on these estates in Donegal, where the Plan of Campaign has been in operation, the "iron sleet" has not been poured by landlords upon tenants, but it has been poured by those who, unfortunately, had it in their power to influence tenants to adopt the Plan of Campaign. I do not propose to frame an indictment against priests or one of them; but I say that if any priest in Donegal has been instrumental in starting among his flock the Plan of Campaign, it may have served the interests of a political Party, but it has not served the interests of the tenants. We are told that it has been adopted on the Olphert estate. Until a few years ago, and through all the bad years of 1878 and 1881-2, the landlord was in perfect harmony with his tenants; he was a resident landlord, and he was recognized as a good landlord and it was the intervention of irresponsible parties that had brought upon the peasantry the evils of eviction and all the attendant horrors that have been so loudly complained of. The hon. Gentleman spoke with evident feeling—a feeling with which, if he will permit me to say so, I fully sympathize—of the distress which exists in Donegal; and the hon. Gentleman who has just sat down has complained of the Govern-

ment for not making inquiry into the extent and nature of that distress. His complaint is unjust, for an inquiry has been made. I have from time to time taken such means as I could, through such channels as were open to me, to acquaint myself with the condition of things in Donegal, and the information I have more than once received and communicated to the House does not bear out the sensational statements that have been made by the hon. Gentleman.

*MR. MAC NEILL: I do not want to interrupt the right hon. Gentleman, but I may remind him that he was once asked the date of a Report and he did not know it.

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I was probably, as usual, asked without notice. I have made inquiry, and I have just received a telegraphic summary of the results of another inquiry in Donegal.

MR. W. MACDONALD (Queen's County, Ossory): Who made the inquiry?

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. Gentleman who interrupts me knows very well that for such information I can appeal only to magistrates, the police, and the Inspectors of the Local Government Board.

MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): Why not the priests?

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I will leave it to the hon. Gentleman to supply an answer to his own question. The telegraphic summary I have just received states that there is not the slightest ground for believing that there is any distress which the ordinary Poor Law cannot deal with; the potato crop of last year is not up to the average, but the falling off is chiefly in the size of the potato and is not due to disease; and it is believed there is more money in the country than usual. The cause of this is probably the rise in the price of stock. On property on which tenants have been allowed to pay their landlords, they have paid in many cases a portion of their arrears as well as their rents; stock is fetching good prices; pigs sell well; there is a good crop of oats with plenty of straw; tenants are buying meal, but that is usual in these months unless the potato crop has been good; on most farms people are hard at work; and there is no difficulty in getting seed potatoes at 6d. a stone or less. [Several hon. MEMBERS: "Six-

pence?"'] A similar famine cry was raised last year in regard to the Ardmore estate when evictions were pending; but the Plan of Campaign was not adopted on the Ardmore estate; the tenants paid their rent and nothing more was heard of famine. My informant says that he never heard anything of destitution or of famine in connection with this district. I hope the hon. Gentleman will not interpret what I am saying as indicating that there is no poverty in Donegal. I do not deny that there is great poverty, for there has been chronic poverty in parts of Donegal; but no Gentleman opposite has suggested a remedy for the poverty in these congested districts of Ireland. It is admitted it is not to be met by dealing with rents, for the rents range from £2 to £3, or, say, a shilling-a-week. No labourer in England gets a house for a shilling-a-week, and, if the rents are small, still more insignificant and microscopic is the difference between the tenants and the landlords in respect of their amount. It is absolutely futile and absurd to suppose that if the rent was got rid of altogether that of itself would produce a happy and prosperous tenantry. It seems to be supposed that this and other evils are to be cured by the mere establishment of a Parliament in Dublin. I do not dispute the wisdom of the measures which a Parliament in Dublin will pass when such a Parliament is established, and I suppose that the hon. Gentleman expects to be one of the ornaments of that Parliament; yet he does not suggest to this House any way of dealing with this chronic poverty. I accept the fact of that poverty, and I deplore it, but do not let us be led away by the cry that it is altogether due to the action of the landlords. It is due to a cause which has been mentioned by the hon. Member for Hoxton—the subdivision of land against the wish of the landlords. It is not because land is over-rented, but because it is overcrowded, that there is chronic poverty, and until means are suggested by which overcrowding can be diminished, it is in vain to talk of landlordism, to protest against evictions, and to try to make political capital out of the lamentable incidents which attend them. No man can deplore more than I do the necessity for these evictions. The Plan of Campaign is responsible for

them. No man can deplore more than I do the poverty from which some of these poor people suffer, but neither this Government nor any other Government has been responsible for that poverty, and I have not yet heard from any Irish patriot any reasonable solution of the evils.

MR. O'HEA (Donegal, W.): Sir, we are becoming accustomed to the sophistical speeches of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland. Of course the Irish Nationalists and the Plan of Campaign are, in his mind, the causes of the great distress that at present prevails in Donegal. During the course of his speech, he only very faintly touched upon the substantive portion of the Motion put on the Paper by my hon. Friend. The right hon. Gentleman complained at the outset that this Motion was sprung upon the House; but let me remind him that there have been a series of questions on the Paper in this House, day after day, for upwards of a month, and the information at the command of the right hon. Gentleman must have been fully adequate to enable him to make the speech which he has just delivered. He complained that two of my hon. Friends had discussed a case which was *sub judice*; but, Sir, that complaint comes rather badly from one who proceeded at length, and in detail, to discuss a case which is pending, for he discussed the case of Father Stephens, who has to take his trial to-morrow. He referred to the condition of things in the parish of Falcarragh, and he denounced, with all the strength of language and vituperation at his command, the attempts we are making to redress the grievances, and to alleviate the sufferings of the unfortunate people in that district. The right hon. Gentleman asks why we have no nostrum to put forward. He admits there is a great deal of suffering and destitution, and I think an answer to his question is contained in the treatment both of Father Stephens and of Father McFadden. When reasonable offers of settlement are being made, they are met with contumely, and indignantly and contumaciously spurned. The two men who are the victims of a Crimes Act prosecution are, I believe, as beloved as any clergymen in Ireland. I refer to Father McFadden and Father Stephens. Father Stephens

endeavoured to act as mediator in a case in which his own people were under notice of eviction; Father McFadden did the same. As to how the efforts of these gentlemen were received, I propose, with the permission of the House, to quote shortly from a letter received by Father McFadden from Mr. Henry Nixon, the owner of an estate in his district. Father McFadden used every effort that a human being could use for the purpose of bringing about a friendly and just settlement between this landlord and his tenants, and the words of Mr. Nixon which I propose to read will speak more eloquently than any words I could utter. "I may tell you," writes this Gentleman,

"that I would not now accept 99 per cent of all the rent and costs due to me, as I am going to clear the two townlands of Dringlass and Glassachoo. It is my land that I want now; remember they are living on my land so long as I let them. I have ample private means, and will set aside a certain sum yearly in order to clear them out. In doing this I am only following out the scriptural pretext—"

They say a certain sable gentleman always quotes Scripture when it suits his purpose—

"the scriptural pretext that a man may do what he likes with his own. I am so determined on this, that in five, or at least ten years, there will not probably be a single family left there."

That, Sir, is how many landlords have behaved, and it shows how those who are honestly and sincerely working to establish peace and bring about an amicable settlement, are met. I now turn to another property in Father McFadden's district, a property which about 45 years ago produced a rental of from four to five hundred pounds. That rental has now been trebled, and no doubt the holdings are small ones. The Chief Secretary has referred to small holdings, and has instituted a comparison between the occupiers and farmers who live upon these holdings, and English agricultural labourers. But the right hon. Gentleman seems to forget that these unfortunate people have to support themselves with what they can get out of this cold, inhospitable soil. They and their families not only have to labour on these holdings, but for at least three months in the year the men have to go away to work elsewhere, in order to

get money for the support of their families during the winter. I was particularly struck, two years ago, when I visited Gweedore, and in Father McFadden's church saw about thirty men and three or four hundred women worshipping. I asked where all the men were, and was informed that they had left in order to earn money in the harvest fields in the north of England and Scotland. I went with Father McFadden through the district, and I saw a most revolting condition of things, at a place where unfortunate people who had been evicted a short time before were endeavouring to keep body and soul together. They were living under a few boards; they were warming themselves over one or two lumps of peat; women and children were huddled together, and I saw a few potatoes about the size of marbles. My hon. Friend has expressed himself in terms of great alarm lest the scenes of the famine of 1846 and 1847 should again be enacted in this district. Mr. Tuke, in his description of the famine in Donegal, says that nothing could describe the dreadful condition of the people, many of whom were living on a single meal of cabbage a day, and some were even reduced to eating the seaweed. I fear very much that the Government may be brought face to face with a similar condition of things during the coming autumn. I hope we shall not again witness hundreds of people going to the workhouses, and refused admission. I hope that those who are admitted will not be treated and not be subjected to the same sufferings as occurred during the former famine, when there was no bedding in the workhouse; the people were obliged to lay in rows on dirty straw, half-a-dozen, perhaps, under one rug, and not a blanket to be seen. Sir, that is not a pleasant outlook. The right hon. Gentleman has painted in roseate colour what he thinks are the prospects of the coming autumn; but I think the opinions of hon. Members who know a good deal of this district ought to be held in a little higher regard than they now are. The right hon. Gentleman referred to the protection of the police by the Regulars, and the protection of the bailiffs by the police, and said that extraordinary and criminal things had occurred in the

course of these evictions. But, Sir, if a settlement could only be come to, if the landlords of the district would only open their eyes to the reasonable demands of tenants—there would be no necessity for dragooning the district. From my own knowledge of Gweedore and Falcarragh, I believe that if the place were surrounded by a wall of brass, and if the right hon. Gentleman placed in it men who were compelled to subsist on what they could get from the land, in two years there would be a raging famine, and two years later there would be a catacomb of bones spread over the district. The people of the district of Gweedore are cruelly oppressed: it is a landlord-ridden district. We have learned from an hon. Member of this House, who sat on a Sub-Commission, that he recommended a reduction of 25 per cent in the rents on the Olphert estate, but his brother Commissioners refused to accede to his suggestion. Thus, the rents have been kept at an inordinate level, and this will explain why it is that this battering ram and all the other methods of attack have been brought into requisition, and why it is that Father Stephens has been taken away from his people, and will probably be kept in durance for some time. You have taken away from these people their guide, the man who could best advise and help them, and you are so treating him because he has been suggesting a remedy for their troubles. And the same is the case in regard to Father McFadden. My hon. Friend the Member for South Donegal did not, in the smallest degree, exaggerate when he referred to the condition of the unfortunate people who are now waiting their trial. I saw these people, handcuffed together, marched on a snowy day through the streets of Derry; I saw them standing in the dock, and I saw one poor woman with an infant in her arms. The condition of these poor people was as wretched as is possible; yet they all had an appearance of Arcadian simplicity. Father McFadden is now removed from the district, and goodness knows what may occur in consequence of his arrest and prosecution. It suits the policy of the landlords, and possibly the policy of the Government, to do this; but I believe the verdict of public opinion will be entirely

on Father M'Fadden's side. There is no one who deplores more than we do the unfortunate assassination of District Inspector Martin, but the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary has himself made the admission that the deceased officer acted with considerable rashness, and certainly nothing could be more rash than the seizing a clergyman by a portion of his vestment, and brandishing a sword over his head in the sight of his congregation. I do not intend to detain the House any longer; but I am sure all right-thinking men wish to see peace restored to that unhappy district; and the only means to secure that is to put an end to the wretched, abominable system of tyranny which at present prevails.

*Mr. FLYNN (Cork, N.): The adjournment of the House has been moved on many important subjects, but I know of none of greater importance than the Motion brought forward by my hon. Friend to-night. We are now accustomed on these Benches to the philosophical superiority of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary, and questions of the utmost gravity, and affecting the interests of the very poorest of the poor in Ireland are lightly answered by the right hon. Gentleman. He does not deny that in this district extreme poverty exists; all he says is, that for two or three years he has listened to speeches from hon. Members below the Gangway on this side of the House, and he has never yet heard a suggestion as to how the poverty and the congestion of the district of Gweedore is to be dealt with. Sir, it has passed into an axiom of political life, that the Opposition are not bound to put forward legislative proposals, so long as there is a Government in power. At any rate, the way to relieve the poverty of these districts is, not by placing the services of the Crown at the disposal of the landlords, in order to clear out these unfortunate people. Neither is it by authorizing the use of new and improved appliances for the demolition of their dwellings. Mr. Deputy Speaker, there are times when I am tempted to think that Members of the Tory Unionist Party speak on Irish questions with a levity approaching criminality, and I apply an observation that character to their conduct in

regard to a letter written three years ago by Sir James Caird on a memorable occasion. A letter written by an eminent authority such as he is, and endorsed in sum and substance by a leading article in the *Times* newspaper, is received as a valuable contribution to the political question of the day. It was also received by hon. Gentlemen opposite as deserving the most serious consideration. The statement was to the effect that, on two-thirds of the holdings of Ireland, owing to the fall in agricultural values, all economic rent had disappeared. Surely, it cannot be denied, if there is any part of Ireland to which this observation of Sir James Caird can be addressed, it is to the unfortunate district of Gweedore, and other parts of Donegal. And yet, in this district, in which, according to this high authority, no economic rent ought to be paid at all, the taxpayers are now being called upon to furnish large bodies of soldiers, armed constabulary, officials of the Crown, and all the paraphernalia of authority, in order to drive these unfortunate people from the homes which they have made, because they cannot pay rents largely in excess of the economic rent. Do the Government attach no importance to-day to that statement of Sir James Caird? If they do, how can they reconcile it with their duty as a Government to eagerly assist, as they are doing, the landlords in their cruel, wanton, provocative, and unnecessary evictions? Every one knows that even if these people are cleared away with the help of the new appliances, the miserable land will be of no value to the landlords or to the country. I do not suppose for a single moment that the hon. Member for South Tyrone would attempt to colonize Gweedore with his Ulster peasantry, but if he does, I am sure he will burn his fingers. What, then, will the Government or the landlords have gained by these proceedings? The debate to-night is a very strange commentary on the Bill we brought in yesterday. I know I should not be in order in referring to that Bill, but allow me to illustrate my position by one observation. We referred to the question of the arrears of rent in that Bill, and we also referred to the fact that tenants were rented upon their own improvements. Now, here are these unfortunate people in these

holdings, whereon the landlords have never expended one penny, and where if there is any margin of rent over prairie land, it is due to the tenants' improvements. When they went before the Commission, we are told on authority, that although one of the Commissioners suggested a reduction of 25 per cent he was overruled, and the result was that these unfortunate people got no reduction in their rents, and now they are plunged in debt; heavy arrears have accumulated, and they find it impossible to pay them. I see that the champion of the landlords class in this House is eager for the fray, and he is anxious to prove how dishonest these unfortunate tenants are. It is the same old story with regard to these people; they are always in the wrong. If they are unable to pay their rents, they are deprived of their holdings, and charges of dishonesty are lavished upon them. I have no doubt that these Gweedore tenants have the sympathy of the whole of their fellow-countrymen, and I think that my hon. Friend was fully justified in moving the Adjournment of the House in order to call attention to this state of things. Neither the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. A. J. Balfour) nor the Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Sergeant Madden) has been able to explain away the extraordinary business of these passes along the roads of Donegal. It has been proved in this House that policemen issued permits and passes to Her Majesty's subjects to travel along the highway in the unfortunate, police-ridden county of Donegal. And this was done, not only in the immediate neighbourhood where the murder took place, but in a large tract of country miles around it. Are we living in the 19th century, or are we not? No Member of the Government has tried to explain away this very ugly transaction. The hon. and learned Solicitor (Mr. Sergeant Madden), who is fast acquiring the ingenuity of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary (Mr. A. J. Balfour), has made several attempts to explain it—but, endeavour as he may, he cannot explain away the fact that men, going about their ordinary avocations, have been obliged to furnish themselves with passes signed by policemen, as if they were travelling in an enemy's country in time of war. If

such a state of things existed in any other country but Ireland, the whole Press of England would have teemed with denunciations of it. Well, you have these people, on the unimpeachable authority of the priests and other public men, on the verge of the borderland of famine. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. A. J. Balfour) acknowledges that one of the reports says the potatoes are below an average crop. That is only a euphonious way of saying that they have almost altogether failed. In my own constituency, where the character of the country is much the same as in the Gweedore district, there is not half a crop of potatoes, and in some parts of the county of Cork they have nearly altogether failed. I am not going to take the right hon. Gentleman as an authority on a matter of which he is utterly ignorant, and with which we are thoroughly acquainted. The House has been told that the stock of Indian meal in many parts of the country is very nearly exhausted, and that the people are on the very verge of famine. Is this a time, then, that these prosecutions are to be launched against them; is this a time to remove Father McFadden from his parish by the present series of extremely suspicious judicial proceedings; is this a time to bring forward and use against the people the newest appliances in the art of eviction? I think the Government, if they realize as they ought the importance of the present crisis in Donegal, will make some effort to meet it by promoting an inquiry into the condition of these poor people.

*MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, South): This question of distress in Donegal is not a thing of yesterday or to-day. A precisely similar state of things was the subject of inquiry by a Select Committee in 1858. Then 10 priests signed an appeal, which stated that in the wilds of Donegal thousands of human beings were perishing, amidst squalid misery, for want of food and clothing; but a Committee appointed to inquire into the truth of the statement reported that destitution such as was complained of in the appeal did not exist. I went to Gweedore in January last, and that is my reason for taking part in the discussion. That the people are poor goes without saying, but the question is whether there is at this moment excep-

tional poverty. The hon. Member for Donegal (Mr. Mac Neill) had a Notice on the Paper on Friday to inquire into the subject, but he and his Party allowed it to be counted out. The people of whom they have been speaking are not tenant farmers in the ordinary sense of the word at all. They are English labourers with Irish allotments. I may say that while I was amongst them I heard not a single complaint against Mr. Olphert personally. It has been said that the great majority of the tenants are not judicial tenants, but I examined the rent-roll of the Olphert estate, and found that an overwhelming majority were judicial tenants. There was not a single tenant among those evicted in January who had not had a judicial rent fixed, and who was not offered an additional decrease of 10 per cent. A further reduction was offered of 25 per cent upon rents that were not judicial, and I say from what I know personally, that not only was Mr. Olphert anxious for a settlement then, but he is anxious for a settlement now. Mr. Olphert, however, is not willing to hand over the management of his property to the managers of the Plan of Campaign. He is willing that the Land Court set up by this House should fix his rents, but he is not willing that the Land League should fix them. Surely that is a perfectly tenable and perfectly reasonable position for even a landowner in Ireland to occupy. If Members below the Gangway believe that extreme destitution and poverty exist in Donegal—and I am not prepared to challenge the statement that it does exist—I cannot understand why they allowed a Motion for inquiry to be counted out, and now come forward with a simple Motion to adjourn the House, which they know cannot be accepted. When I find that course taken, and the responsible Minister of the Government saying, on the authority of an official Report—which I take to be the Report of the Local Government Board—that exceptional destitution does not exist, I cannot believe that it does. I should not have risen but that I visited the district in January last, and found that the equities were all in favour of Mr. Olphert and against the tenants. If the tenants are suffering, it is not because of any act of Mr. Olphert, but because

of the advice they have been foolish enough to take from the managers of the Plan of Campaign.

*MR. H. J. WILSON (York, W.R., Holmfirth): I wish, Sir, to make a few remarks respecting what has come under my own notice in the Gweedore district, and illustrating what I believe to be the real truth with regard to the destitution, and how the police are practically mixed up with the cause of the landlords. I am convinced there is very great destitution in the district of Gweedore. I have seen a number of families there, and I heard from some of them that they had had no potatoes since November. One man told me, with reference to a number of houses, that he did not believe there had been for weeks past a potato among them, and another man told me that there was scarcely any potato seed left except his own, and he was breaking into his stock and taking it away to eat because he was expecting eviction. Some land was pointed out to me where the crops were so bad that it was not worth while to turn over the soil and get out the wretched abortions of potatoes. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary argues that because there were false alarms some years ago, and people did not actually die of starvation, the House is to take no notice of their state of destitution and misery now. Why, the people are living on Indian meal, and even that they are getting partly on credit, and partly by charity, and if a charitable fund which has been established for their relief be not largely increased, many of them will die or will have to go to the workhouse. These people go away to work in Scotland, and come back with a few pounds, which serves, not to buy meal, but to pay for meal that has already been eaten. They are now living on Indian meal obtained on credit. They will go again to Scotland in the summer, and when they return with a few pounds it will go to pay the debt. They have also a practice of sending their children of fourteen, eleven, ten, and even nine years of age to be hired out in the Lagan and other more prosperous districts, and when the children come back the £2 or £1 saved from their wages is applied in payment of the debt for the food of the family. There are two men of the name of O'Brien on the Olphert estate, and

one of them, Paddy, is an old and asthmatic man, who has not been able to work for many years. He lives in a most wretched hovel, to which there is no proper door, and from such a dwelling the man is to be turned out. The other, Dennis O'Brien, is 85 years of age, his wife is over 80, and he has an invalid son 30 or 40 years of age, who has been bedridden for five years. They also are to be turned out. In all directions there is evidence of the way in which the administration of the police is mixed up with the acts of the landlords. At the police barracks I saw posted up Captain Hill's notice to collect his rents. When the final warrants were issued for the eviction of 43 unfortunate people, the landlord, Mr. Olphert, was on the Bench at Falcagh, though he took no part in the proceedings, and there was a row of stalwart policemen keeping the people back, so that they could hardly see or hear what was going on. If, after eviction, any of these poor people should have to go to the workhouse at Dunfarraghy, they come into the hands of Mr. Olphert once more, for he is the Chairman of the Guardians, and they are very much at his mercy in the workhouse. And I could not help noticing, and being disgusted with, the different way in which witnesses were treated. When Mr. Olphert's bailiff was giving his evidence he sat with his hands in his pockets, lounging back in a chair; but a man who came forward to give evidence on behalf of the tenants, was told to stand straight up. The bailiff could do exactly what he liked, but witnesses for the poor tenants were treated with the utmost strictness, as if they were going through some kind of drill before their superiors. There was, too, an expression of disgust and impatience on the part not only of the solicitor for the landlord, but on the part of the Bench itself, because some people who came forward claimed to give their evidence in Irish. The day before the proceedings at the Court-house the police were scouring the district, with no object, as far as I could see, except to prevent these poor people from taking counsel together or receiving advice from others. Is it only a curious coincidence that these things happened and the battering ram of the police was needed just at the moment when the poor tenants were deprived of the assistance and

advice of Father Stephens? Captain Hill, besides being the owner of large property at Gweedore, is practically the landlord of the hotel, which is resorted to in the summer time by tourists and sportsmen, but is usually empty in the winter. It is now filled with police officers and soldiers, so that if Captain Hill does not get his rents he gets an equivalent for them in the increased receipts of the hotel. One would suppose that the district must be full of crime and disorder, but, as a matter of fact, these officers were going about alone at all hours of the day and night, with not the slightest apprehension, and, as illustrating the peacefulness of the locality, I may mention that an English resident was in the habit of hanging his letter bag on a tree at a considerable distance from his house, and that the postman took away the letters left there, and put into the bag the letters he brought. My firm conviction is that there is very deep distress in the district, and that the administration of the law is all in favour of the landlord.

Mr. William Henry Smith rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

Question put, "That the Question be now put."

The House divided:—Ayes 137; Noes 88. (Div. List, No. 72.)

Question put accordingly, "That this House do now adjourn."

The House divided:—Ayes 89; Noes 137. (Div. List, No. 73.)

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY—CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES

SUPPLY—Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

CLASS I.

(1.) £9,726, to complete the sum for Lighthouses Abroad.

MR. MOLLOY (King's Co., Birr.): A new system of telephoning has been introduced for the purpose of warning ships in time of fog. I suppose the hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Jackson) has read of it in the papers, and I should like to know if he can give the result of any experiments that have been tried.

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (MR. JACKSON, Leeds, N.): I am afraid I cannot give the hon. Member any information with regard to the interesting matter referred to. The administrative authority in this case is the Board of Trade, and I am not in a position to enter upon it.

Vote agreed to.

(2.) £25,040, to complete the sum for Peterhead Harbour.

(3.) £4,000, to complete the sum for the Caledonian Canal.

(4.) £148,353, the sums for rates on Government property.

(5.) £7,500, to complete the sum for the Metropolitan Fire Brigade.

(6.) Motion made, and question proposed—

“That a sum, not exceeding £182,559, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1890, for the Erection, Repairs, and Maintenance of several Public Buildings in the Department of the Commissioners of Public Works, Ireland, for the Maintenance of certain Parks, Harbours, and Navigations, and for Repayments to Baronies under ‘The Tramways and Public Companies (Ireland) Act, 1883,’ and for the Drainage Works on the River Shannon.”

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): I propose, as an Amendment, to reduce this Vote by £1,192, the amount devoted to the Chief Secretary’s Lodge and Garden. I find there is a considerable amount of expenditure under the Vote not only on the Chief Secretary’s Lodge, but on the Vice-Regal Lodge, the Under Secretary’s House, and the Private Secretary’s house, and that there are items for fuel, lighting, furniture, and and so on. I believe there is a good deal of abuse in this system. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade (Sir Michael Hicks Beach), who was Chief Secretary for Ireland, and whom I see in his place, will be able to give us some information on this subject, in all probability. I believe that when a gentleman is appointed to the office of Chief Secretary, he has to pay £1,200, or something like it—

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Sir M. HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): That was formerly the practice, but it has been abolished.

MR. LABOUCHERE: I am glad to hear that; but that is an additional reason for my moving the Amendment. I did not know the practice was abolished, and thought that in some way or other the amount paid by the Chief Secretary was a set off against the item in the Vote of which I am complaining. It seems that since the Conservative Government came into office—for, I believe, the Liberal Chief Secretary paid the money—the practice of charging the incoming official £1,200 has been abolished; and I believe that during the greater part of the tenure of office of the present Chief Secretary he has lent his lodge to somebody else. This is not, as I understand it, the object for which houses are granted for public officials. If the Chief Secretary uses it well and good, but surely he should not be allowed to lend it to somebody else. Lending and letting are very much the same thing so far as the public are concerned. The gentleman in occupation is using up the carpets and burning the fuel, and I think we ought to make a strong protest against the system. Perhaps my hon. Friend behind me (Mr. Molloy) intends to move a reduction in regard to the expenditure on the Deputy Secretary’s house, the Private Secretary’s house and the other residences. I do not raise those matters, but I do object to this sum being spent on a house for the Chief Secretary when the Chief Secretary lends the house to a friend. I beg to move the reduction that stands in my name.

Motion made and question proposed: “That a sum not exceeding £181,367 be granted for the said service.”—(Mr. Labouchere.)

MR. MOLLOY: Mr. Courtney, the prospect which my hon. Friend has held out of my proposing a reduction is a little too alarming for me, for it would be the first time I had taken part in anything like obstruction, and of course I would not consent to that. Taking the whole of this Vote, I may say at once that I have no objection to the necessary expenditure upon the Lord Lieutenant’s house and the Chief Secretary’s residence in the Park. In fact, the very presence of the Lord Lieutenant and the Chief Secretary in Ireland is one of the reasons in favour of the great question in which we are engaged. While, no

doubt, a certain amount of expenditure is necessary, if you look at the figures you will be somewhat astonished. Dublin Castle, the residence of the Lord Lieutenant, and the Chief Secretary's house are already built; they are not in the course of erection; yet the amount spent under the different headings on these buildings is £6,300 a-year. I think it is almost absurd to suppose that these buildings require an annual expenditure of between £6,000 and £7,000. These contracts, given in Dublin by the Castle, are to some extent in the nature of a bribe. These contracts are being given to Dublin tradesmen and contractors, and they want not to disappoint them; they want to keep up the good feeling which is supposed to exist between a small class in Dublin and the Castle. Therefore, these contracts are not cut down; they are not supervized. In no other way could you explain the fact of between £6,000 and £7,000 being spent on these buildings.

MR. JACKSON: I think the hon. Member is wrong about the amount.

MR. MOLLOY: I am taking the Dublin Castle residences and the Under Secretary's residence; I am taking the batch. I find for furniture, fittings, and utensils the amount of £3,000 spent annually. Surely everyone must feel that that is no more than an extravagance; it really amounts to a fraud upon the taxpayers of this country. The two residences are really only occupied a part of the time, because the Lord Lieutenant, who is a sporting character, does not miss certain opportunities given him in this country for enjoying sport. The Chief Secretary is here nearly the whole year round. His visits to Ireland are so few and far between that he is practically only a short time there. In the two residences, and in that of the Under Secretary, we have £900 a year spent on fuel alone—making a total amount for this set of residences of £8,000. We have drawn attention to this matter year after year, and, of course, we get the same answer year after year. I feel that if the Secretary to the Treasury could have exercised the same control in Dublin which he has exercised in this country, this amount would have been cut down certainly to half what it is now. I would like to know who it is

that vouches for the accuracy and for the honesty of these figures, because it is quite clear that such an amount as this could not fairly be spent. The right hon. Gentleman (Sir M. H. Beach) who was in Ireland, will not, I think, gainsay what I have put forward in my argument, that this expenditure is not a fair one. I think we ought not to ask the taxpayers of this country to bear it, unless solid reasons for it can be given by the Secretary to the Treasury.

*SIR M. H. BEACH (W. Bristol): As I have had some experience of these houses, and lived in one of them 4 or 5 years, I will trouble the Committee with a few words on the subject, feeling as I do in a perfectly independent position, because I know nothing of the details of this Vote. But this I can tell the Committee, that there is reason for a very considerable expenditure. The Lord Lieutenant's is a very large house, the Chief Secretary's is a good-sized one, both are old, and both need constant repair. The Under Secretary's house is of very fair size. Then there is the Castle, the Under Secretary's lodge, the Under Secretary's house in Dublin, and the Private Secretary's lodge—together, half-a-dozen residences included in this Vote. To the Viceregal lodge and the Chief Secretary's lodge very large and expensive gardens are attached. There is an enormous range of hot-houses, infinitely larger than there is any real necessity for. But at the same time they exist, and when these things exist it is very difficult to abolish them, and the cost of maintenance is very great. Of course, on the other hand, the Board of Works make a profit by selling the produce of the gardens, the Lord Lieutenant or the Chief Secretary purchasing such of the produce as they require. That arrangement was first made when the right hon. Gentleman opposite was Chief Secretary. I can only say that, knowing the circumstances of the case as I do, there is need for a very large expenditure; and I believe that there is no extravagance on the part of the Board of Works, because it is necessary on account of the size of the buildings.

MR. CAINE (Barrow): As I understand, the money has to be laid out because the buildings are somewhat dilapidated. But if you take the money spent on the Viceregal lodge and

gardens, you have nearly £3,000, which is the interest on £100,000 of capital. It would be very much better to erect a new building, if that is necessary, at a cost of £100,000 than to have this heavy annual expenditure. With regard to the greenhouses and hothouse of which we have heard, I think there would be no difficulty in doing away with them, and thus saving the gardeners' wages and other expenses.

MR. LABOUCHERE: Nothing could prove more clearly how desirable it is to grant Home Rule to Ireland than the observations which have fallen from the President of the Board of Trade. He fairly stated to the House what he knew. What did he know? He said himself, "I know nothing of the details."

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: The hon. Member has misunderstood me. I said I know nothing of the details of the Vote, but I do know something of the circumstances of the buildings.

MR. LABOUCHERE: It does seem a haphazard—a happy haphazard circumstance—to have the right hon. Gentleman here, and I shall ask him some questions. I do not say it in any carping spirit, but I am sure the Secretary to the Treasury knows nothing about this matter. In fact, the business is not in his hands; it is in the hands of some official in Ireland. Therefore, my remark holds good as regards Home Rule, although it happens that the right hon. Gentleman does not agree with me in that view. The right hon. Gentleman referred to the large size of these residences. What do I find? I find for the maintenance and supplies and furniture and fittings of the poor Under Secretary's house the sum of £533, whereas the Chief Secretary's lodge is £781 and £286 for precisely the same items. As my hon. Friend behind me says, it is well-known that this expenditure is thoroughly corrupt; it is incurred for the benefit of the Castle; it is the patronage of the Castle. Occasionally, we have seen, Mr. Courtney, eminent Gentlemen who do not agree with us on this side of the House, going over to Ireland and coming back and boasting that they had been received and banquetted by the tradesmen of Ireland. Why, they did all that because of this expenditure. This is the sort of bribe that is given to certain tradesmen who

are paraded as the wisdom, and the commerce, and the wealth—[An hon. MEMBER: And the culture]—and the culture of the country, and they grow well under it. What a hothouse business is this! The President of the Board of Trade tells us that there is an enormous number of hothouses, and they require a large number of gardeners, and so forth. Where does the produce go to? The Chief Secretary for Ireland is very seldom in Ireland, so that it is doubly absurd that we should be called upon to spend thousands of pounds per annum in order to provide him with fruit out of certain hothouses in Dublin. I think the House will be convinced, not so much by the reasons which I have given, as by the reasons which the President of the Board of Trade has given, that it is most desirable that a lesson should be taught to these Gentlemen, and in reducing the Vote by the amount I propose, I am perfectly certain no one in this world will suffer, except some hungry, greedy Unionist tradesmen in Ireland.

MR. MOLLOY: The account is for new furniture, &c., and this year the amount is £3,000. Furniture is not a thing which breaks down every year; nor is that which is placed in these residences of other than a solid character. It is not made to look well for a year, and then go to pieces. I put it seriously to the Secretary to the Treasury whether this sum of £3,000 for furniture is not in itself absurd?

*MR. JACKSON: I am afraid I cannot give very much information as to the details, but I do not admit the statement of the hon. Member for Northampton that I know nothing about the matter.

MR. LABOUCHERE: Is it necessary?

*MR. JACKSON: I went through the whole of the items of this expenditure, and although the amount may seem to be considerable, it does include a great deal besides what is ordinarily called furniture. It includes the repairs of the fixtures in all these buildings, which contain a great number of apartments, and the whole of the internal repairs are provided under what is called "furniture and fittings." Well then, there are the repairs and renewals of carpets and mattings, &c.

MR. MOLLOY: Annually?

*MR. JACKSON: I mean such repairs and renewals as may be necessary. Then there is the question of gas fittings.

MR. MOLLOY: They last for years.

*MR. JACKSON: I do not know whether the hon. Member looks at his own bills for gas fittings, but if he does, I think he will find that they do not last for years. Then there are all the curtains, and cabinet relics of various kinds—everything connected with a house of that description; and blankets, and bedding, and glass, and china, and washing, and all those items which come under the head of "furniture and fittings." I have gone very carefully over the items of expenditure in previous years, and I would point out that the Estimates compare favourably with those of former years, because there is a decrease of £180 upon the item of the Dublin Castle residences; and there is a decrease upon the Under Secretary's house; there is a decrease upon the Viceregal lodge and gardens; there is a slight increase upon the Private Secretary's lodge, and a considerable increase for some special items connected with the Chief Secretary's lodge in the shape of repairs; there is also an increase on the Under Secretary's lodge. I can assure the Committee the items were most carefully investigated. I had an opportunity when I was in Dublin of going through them with the Board of Works, in addition to which I have had them most carefully examined at the Treasury; and I believe it is the very worst of economy to keep houses at all and not to maintain them in proper repair, because the inevitable result is that you have instead of an annual outlay, a very large expenditure which comes all in one year. Of course it is not my business, that is a question settled before, but if you are to have these residences for these Ministers and officers, then I believe it is really the best economy to maintain them in a condition of efficient external and internal repair.

MR. CAINE: A great portion of this expenditure has been on gardens and hot-houses. I do not know how much is expended on gardeners employed in the Viceregal gardens.

*MR. JACKSON: The salaries do not come under this Vote.

*MR. CHILDERS (Edinburgh): I admit the soundness of the general

view taken by the Secretary to the Treasury, but I do not think he quite appreciates the amount asked. For these Departments in Dublin an expenditure of £10,200 is demanded, and this is an increase upon the previous year.

*MR. CLANCY (Dublin County): It is interesting to find a Liberal Unionist objecting to any part of the policy of the Government. The hon. Member draws the line at hothouses. No wonder, seeing that the Liberal Unionists have a very considerable hothouse in Birmingham just now. I certainly agree with the Secretary to the Treasury that if these houses are to be retained they ought to be maintained in a proper and respectable manner, but they ought to be maintained by the gentlemen who use them, out of their own pockets. The Chief Secretary gets £4,000 a year, and if that is not enough for a single man he is difficult to satisfy. The Chief Secretary has not only a large salary, but he gets a large allowance for coals. I do not know what he wants with this house at all. He has no wife and family; he has no domestic establishment; he wants no home. I have a record of the right hon. Gentleman's appearances in Dublin. When he became Chief Secretary on the 10th March, 1887, he came to Ireland to be formally admitted to his office; he then immediately returned to England. He came again on the 22nd July, and he stayed one day. He came again on the 22nd of August, and stayed two days; on the 15th September, and stayed four days; on the 16th October, and stayed just about a fortnight, and the 18th December, and stayed 10 days; on Friday, 10th August, 1888, and stayed eight days; on Saturday, 22nd October, and stayed a week—that is to say, he was in Ireland three months out of a total of 15 months. [An hon. MEMBER: 47 days.] I make out three months, though I may be overstating the matter. I want to know what the Chief Secretary wants with this house? If I am correctly informed, he did not spend these three months—or 47 days—at the Lodge; he stayed, as I understand, at the Castle. His visits are occasional, like an angel's, though he does not appear very like an angel. If this place was good enough on these

rare and casual visits I do not see why the Castle apartments should not be suitable for him always. If he was doing any good in Ireland, like other officials not connected with the Castle I could understand the necessity for providing him with a residence there. I am not going into any question of policy. I merely want to show that the Chief Secretary could have executed his business just as well in England as by going over to Dublin. On the first occasion it was necessary that he should go to sign proclamations under the Coercion Act. I believe it is not legal to sign such in London, but his second visit was avowedly for the purpose of authorizing the prosecution of the hon. Member for North East Cork and to make inquiries preliminary to the proclamation of the National League, but there was no necessity to visit Dublin for the purpose. This business could have been transacted from the office in London, and the right hon. Gentleman habitually makes inquiries from London on matters far more important than the proclamation of the League. The third visit was in consequence of the Mitchelstown massacre and the subsequent arrest of Mr. O'Brien. On that occasion certainly the right hon. Gentleman must have regretted his visit, for it was then just as he was coming away that he was served with a writ at the suit of the Galway midwife whom he had libelled in this House, and in reference to which action he with characteristic courage pleaded privilege. The next visit was to order the imprisonment of Mr. Blunt, Mr. O'Brien, and Mr. Mandeville, whose subsequent prison treatment caused the prisoner's death. But there was no need to use the Lodge on this occasion, he could have given his orders from London, and indeed he has habitually given such orders. There was no need for him to make the personal acquaintance of officials in Dublin, whom he habitually trusts, whose word he takes implicitly on more important matters; and the Lodge was not needed on this occasion. His last visit was to urge a more vigorous use of the Coercion Act; and it has been observed more than once that when the application of the Coercion Act has somewhat languished, the moment the right hon. Gentleman appears in Dublin there is a recrudescence of official brutality and persecu-

tions recommence wholesale against innocent and guilty alike. I quite agree with the Secretary to the Treasury that, if the house is to be maintained at all, it must be in a decent and respectable manner; but I say, in the first place, that there is no need to maintain it at all, and next, that the Chief Secretary is provided with a salary sufficient to enable him to maintain it out of his own pocket if the discharge of his duty requires his presence in Ireland.

MR. M. KENNY (Tyrone, Mid): There are several items under this Vote that invite investigation, and on which I am sure the Secretary to the Treasury will give us some information. First, I notice that the renewal of the roof of the Royal Hospital at Kilmainham is to cost £4,000, of which £2,000 is set down in the Estimates for the ensuing year. On this I would remark that it seems an extravagant sum for the repair of the roof of the dining hall. In the second place, I note that the Government have made no provision at all for the conversion of the Royal Barracks at Dublin, although there is an item of £300 in relation to another barrack. Of course I am precluded from entering into the subject, as no Vote is down for the Royal Barracks; but in passing I would say that is a disgraceful thing to allow a state of things to continue by which soldiers are dying by scores, and not to attempt a remedy. Then, I observe an item in connection with the Albert Model Farm at Glasnevin. There are two sums to be voted towards this establishment, one of £250 for new works in connection with the water supply, and another vote bringing up the whole to about £800. Now, we have each year a balance-sheet in regard to the farm, showing profit and loss, and this gives rise to an impression that there is a considerable profit made, or a considerable contribution made towards the maintenance of this establishment. But is not this a little misleading in view of the fact that here is a sum of £800 asked for for maintenance and extension of buildings? There are besides two other points in connection with the Vote, first £100 for the works on the Clare slob lands. I noticed some time ago an advertisement in a Belfast paper that there was this land for sale, and I should like to know if the hon. Gentleman can give me any

idea of the total amount of money that has been expended on those lands — they consist of about 12,000, acres I think — and what amount the Board of Works is prepared to accept for the land now. Another important item in the Vote in view of contingent proposals by the Government for the extension of light railways in Ireland, is the Vote for £12,140 as a contribution towards these undertakings. The most expensive one is the Cavan, Leitrim, and Roscommon, with a guarantee of 5 per cent, and £1,800 invested as a contribution from local rates. I would like to understand if there is any probability, near or remote, of these undertakings being able to pay their way. I am sure it would greatly facilitate the progress of legislation by-and-bye if the hon. Gentleman could assure us that there is some probability of these light railway lines being in such a position that the Treasury would be relieved of further contribution towards their maintenance. These are the principal items I wish to refer to, but there is one other I would mention, £485 asked for in connection with buildings for the Royal University. Now the principal portion of these buildings consists of a laboratory for the examination of medical students, some four or five times in the course of the year. For this purpose the expense is about £500 a year. Now there is a vote for the College of Science, and in this there is a much better laboratory and all facilities for the examination of students in chemistry and other branches. If the Royal University Senate, in conjunction with the Government, had a little more sense and a desire for economy, £500 a year might be saved by holding these examinations at the College of Science, and I recommend this for their consideration. It appears to me that an expenditure of £500 for simply examining a few students annually, which examinations could be conducted as well or better at the College of Science, is a gross waste of money. There would be this double advantage in accepting my suggestion, that the College of Science—a first-rate institution—would become better known. The professors would be encouraged, their lectures would be attended, and fees, which are now in many cases prohibitive, would be avoided.

Mr. M. Kenny

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE (Bradford, Central): Before the Secretary to the Treasury answers, I should like to ask him for some explanation as to the Vote for the charges made in respect to payments for the expenses of the residence of the Chief Secretary. I understand the Vote is increased by about £200 this year, the total amount for house and grounds being £1,200. We have always understood that it has been a complaint of successive Chief Secretaries that they were compelled to pay charges for maintaining the grounds attached to the lodge, of something like £500 or £600 a year. Has any part of this charge been transferred to the public Exchequer, or has the increase reference to some other payments? Without entering into the question of the length of time the Chief Secretary occupies the lodge, one cannot but observe that the expense of the gardens is very large, and if a Chief Secretary is not able to spend a long time in Dublin, it does not seem worth while to maintain hothouses and expensive ranges and so on to such an extent.

*MR. JACKSON: I will answer the last question first. I am afraid I cannot quite remember the particulars, but as far as my recollection goes, the charge that was made was in this direction. It used to be the practice that when one Chief Secretary succeeded another, the incoming Chief Secretary took over at a valuation a certain portion of the outside garden implements and property, and this usually involved an expenditure of from £400 to £500, sometimes more and sometimes less. This was felt to be a very inconvenient system, and it was decided that the gardens, plants, and so on, which had been kept up at very considerable expense, were kept up beyond what was necessary. So it was arranged that the Government should take over the charge of the gardens, and that all unnecessary plants should be disposed of, and that the expenses should be very much cut down. Of course, the amounts realized by sales go towards meeting the expenses. As to the Kilmainham roof, the hon. Member is quite right, the estimated total cost is £4,000, half of which is expected to be expended in the coming year. The question was very carefully considered, and it was proved

conclusively, I think, that the condition of the roof was becoming a source of great danger, and repairs will have to proceed as opportunity offers. The amount asked for this year is not more than will be necessary for the work. The hon. Member mentioned the Royal Barracks, but, as he says, there is no Vote asked for on this account, and it is a question for the War Office, not the Board of Works, to deal with. In reference to the Albert Model farm, I confess my own impression is very much that presented by the hon. Member. The statement of accounts presented every year does not appear to me to convey not a real debtor and creditor account of expenditure and income. I made a good deal of inquiry in reference to the expenditure, and I had the accounts investigated, and came to the conclusion that the cost was extremely high. At the same time I am told that the institution has done a very great deal of good, that, although the number of students is small, the instruction given is very valuable, the teachers are very talented, and the only regret is that the number of students is so small. I am assured that the work is so valuable that it is quite impossible to entertain the idea of cutting down the expenditure. Although it is considerable, we must continue to maintain it in the hope that the instruction given to the students will become a benefit to the country generally, and that the number of students will increase. Then I am asked about the Clare slob lands. The hon. Member says he saw an advertisement asking for tenders, and he asks me what has been the total expenditure. The hon. Member is, probably, well acquainted with the district, and the reclamation work carried on there. I visited the place myself in the autumn of last year and spent some time in company with those able to explain to me the work that had been done. It is certainly an enormous work. It has been more or less unfortunate in its history, and the hopes entertained in earlier days of the cost of reclamation have not been realized, but we may hope that we have now got to the end of the expenditure upon the bank which has been built. We hope we may consider it just about completed, though the cost has been more than £150,000, and I am not at

all sanguine that that amount will be realized by the sale of land.

MR. BIGGAR: Hear, hear.

*MR. JACKSON: I know the hon. Member for Cavan takes a great interest in this subject, but I beg him to remember that the decision to build this bank for the reclamation of these lands was settled years ago, and is one for which the Government is in no way responsible. I am only glad to think that the enormous expenditure which has been going on for many years, and which certainly for the last few years, has been an expenditure very grudgingly agreed to by the Government, is now coming to an end. It is only fair that I should say, that although I have seen during my life a good many crops, more or less prolific, I am bound to say that, being there when the harvest was just over, and when the oats were on the ground on adjoining lands, reclaimed lands, and practically I suppose the same character of land as that which has subsequently been reclaimed, I have no hesitation in saying that in the whole course of my experience I never saw so heavy a crop upon any land as I did upon that occasion. There can be no doubt that it is very valuable land. The hon. Member asks me what I expect to realize, but I think he will see that, inasmuch as I am in the position of the seller, I would rather keep that information to myself, and endeavour to find out how much I can get for it. Another question had relation to light railways. Well, I am afraid the charge which is on the Estimates for this year is perhaps only the beginning of what may prove to be a far larger charge in the future; but Parliament has deliberately adopted this principle, and therefore, so far as the Treasury is concerned, we are bound to act in accordance with the Act of Parliament. The hon. Member asks me whether I think any of the lines are likely to pay. I do not quite know what he means, but it will be satisfactory to know that more than one of the Companies' guaranteed stock stands at a considerable premium in the market, and that, at all events, seems to indicate that the security is a good one. Although I do not wish to take too sanguine a view, I do believe that light railways will prove a great advantage to the districts through which they

run, and, so far as I can judge, there is distinctly a tendency to improve, and I believe that at least three of these lines of railway will, before a very considerable lapse of time, be found much nearer a position of paying than they are at the present time. Then I am asked a question about the Royal University. That is a subject upon which the hon. Member knows a great deal more than I do, but I have made a note of his suggestion, and I will cause inquiry to be made.

Question put, and negatived.

Original Question put, and agreed to.

(7.) £17,000, to complete the sum for Science and Art Building, Dublin.

MR. SEXTON : May I ask if this is to be a final vote? Expenditure has now been proceeding for ten years. May we suppose that it will conclude in the coming financial year?

*MR. JACKSON : I have every hope and every expectation that the work connected with the building will be completed in the financial year. In fact, I am assured that the building will be ready for opening in August, but I should not like to say that I entirely accept that statement, but, judging from what I saw when I was in Dublin last, and the representations that have been subsequently made to us, I have every reason to believe that the work will be finished this year.

Question put, and agreed to.

Resolutions to be reported to-morrow. Committee to sit again to-morrow.

MOTION.

SUGAR CONVENTION BILL.

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Baron H. DE WORMS) (Liverpool, East Toxteth) : I have, Sir, to ask leave to introduce a Bill to enable Her Majesty to carry into effect a Convention made on the 30th day of August, 1888, in relation to bounties on the exportation of sugar. The signatories to the treaty are Great Britain, Germany, Russia, Austria, Holland, Belgium, Spain, and Italy. I think it right that at the outset of my remarks I should contradict the statement that Austria and Belgium are not signatories to the Convention. They are signatories ; and the

only reservation they made was that in 1891 they should have the power, if any European bounty-giving Power were not party to the Convention, to reconsider their decision. The Bill which I ask leave to introduce is for the purpose of giving effect to this Convention. It ought to be clearly borne in mind that the penal clause of the Convention cannot be enforced by our own individual action. The principal clause of the Convention, which is due in great measure to the suggestion of Her Majesty's Government, provides that a permanent Commission or bureau shall be established for the purpose of inquiring into the whole bounties question and investigating whether any, and which, Powers give bounties ; that that bureau shall report to Her Majesty's Government ; and that Her Majesty's Government shall then, if they think fit, convene a conference of the Powers, and by the vote of the majority it shall be decided whether the penal clause shall be enforced. This conclusively disposes of the oft-repeated statement that the Convention gives this country the power of boycotting foreign sugar. Those who make this statement appear really to desire to boycott the English sugar industry for the benefit of the foreigner. This boycotting clause, as it has been called, is in reality nothing of the sort. It is simply an agreement arrived at between the bounty-giving Powers themselves and Great Britain for the purpose of putting a stop to a system which imposes on them great financial liabilities, and on us that which is far worse—the destruction of one of our most important Home and Colonial industries. It is indeed absurd to talk of our boycotting foreign sugar in view of the fact that seven out of the eight great bounty-giving Powers are signatories to this Convention. Reference is often made to the case of America. But America scarcely sends us any sugar at all, and does not produce enough for her own consumption. A Bill has indeed been passed by the Senate which enables America to give bounties on production, and that is the clearest proof you can have that she requires bounties to stimulate her production. Bounties given by America have another most prejudicial effect on our sugar industry. At the present moment a large proportion of

Mr. Jackson

our West Indian sugar goes to America. But what would be the result if America were to apply a portion of her vast surplus in bounties? Why she should no longer require sugar from our West Indian Colonies, and if foreign bounties on the export of beet sugar are to continue the trade of those Colonies would cease altogether. It is said that this Convention is a step in the direction of Protection. I deny this absolutely. Clause 7 contains two conditions, the first of which is that any one of the signatory Powers may prohibit the importation of bounty-fed sugar, and the second that any of the signatory Powers may impose countervailing duties. Her Majesty's Government do not propose to exercise the power of imposing countervailing duties; but Great Britain, as the only free-trading Power, could not object to the other protective Powers claiming this right. But whatever prejudice there may now be against countervailing duties, they have in the past been adopted by this country, and adopted by right hon. Gentlemen of the Party opposite. The anti-bounty agitation began in 1862, and it began as the result of the Treaty of Commerce which this country made with Belgium in that year; in the Protocol annexed to that Treaty there is the following clause:—

"In the Protocol of the 23rd of July, 1862, annexed to the Commercial Treaty of the same date between England and Belgium, it is recorded:—'With regard to sugar, the Government of His Majesty the King of the Belgians reserve to themselves to renew their proposition that an agreement should be come to between Great Britain, Belgium, France, the Zollverein, and the Netherlands, for respectively bringing the duties upon raw and refined sugars imported from any one of those countries into the others to an equality with the taxes imposed upon the same production of national origin, and for terminating simultaneously in those five countries the system of bounties on the exportation of sugar.'"

As a result of that clause a Conference was held in Paris in 1863, in which Belgium, France, Holland, and Great Britain were represented, and in 1864 the Convention was signed by those Powers. In that Convention appears the following clause—

"The high contracting Powers reserve to themselves to agree as to the steps to be taken for obtaining the adhesion of the Governments of other countries to the arrangements of the present Convention. In the event of bounties

being granted in the said countries on the exportation of refined sugar, the high contracting parties will be at liberty to come to an understanding as to the surtax to be imposed on the importation of refined sugars of, and from, the said countries."

That clause means nothing else than imposing a countervailing duty. The object of that Convention was to prevent bounties by establishing uniform rates of drawback to be paid by the French, British, Dutch, and Belgian Governments on the exportation of refined sugars. Hon. Gentlemen opposite will admit that that Convention could not have been signed without the Members of the then existing Government knowing and approving of it, and at that time Lord Palmerston was the Prime Minister, Lord Russell Foreign Secretary, and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian Chancellor of the Exchequer. It is, therefore, a fact that cannot be controverted that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian in 1864 approved of a Treaty, the main condition of which—the only condition indeed by which it could be enforced—was a countervailing duty. I only put this before the House to show how unjust it is to carp at Conservatives for introducing a smaller evil and swallow the greater when it comes from the hands of a Liberal Government. That the right hon. Gentleman approved of this Convention there can be no doubt. The right hon. Gentleman, speaking in the House of Commons on the 15th of June, 1866, he then being Chancellor of the Exchequer, said—

"About that time (1862) a communication came from the French Government to that of England representing that, without interfering at all with the liberty of each State to levy from sugar for fiscal purposes whatever amount of tax it might think fit, it was very desirable to remove every artificial inducement by which sugar was led to one country rather than another, and that it would also be most desirable to combine with the system regulating imports a reconsideration of the drawbacks upon exports; so that, with regard to imports from countries where refining had taken place, there would be a perfect freedom of trade in the absence of these peculiar inducements. Her Majesty's Government could not but perceive that that would be a beneficial arrangement, beneficial alike to the importers, the refiners, and the consumers. They therefore entered very freely and cheerfully into the views of the French Government. A Conference was accordingly assembled, comprising representatives of England, France, Belgium, and Holland, and, after investigating the whole subject, came to the conclusion that certain things ought to be

done at once with respect to a modification either of duty or drawback. The provisional arrangements then suggested were all of a character tending to equal trade. Her Majesty's Government, therefore, cheerfully concurred in them, and proposed to Parliament measures which were necessary to give effect to the views of these international representatives at that stage. . . . There could be no doubt, he apprehended, that Her Majesty's Government were right in entering into the joint conference, because to destroy the barriers which now interposed between different countries in this way was a matter of great importance."

Well, Sir, I think I am justified in saying that the Convention of 1864, which was for the purpose of abolishing sugar bounties, and contained a clause in favour of countervailing duties for that purpose, met with the unqualified approval of the then Chancellor of the Exchequer. Subsequently various Conferences were called in many of the years following that. None of them arrived at any practical result, not from any want on the part of this country of a desire to carry out the abolition of bounties, but because foreign nations, for some reason or another, did not agree to carry the various Conventions into effect. The result of that has been that up to the present time the bounty system has continued. I have often heard in the course of this controversy hon. Gentlemen say that bounties are bad things and ought to be abolished. I suppose they hold that opinion still. At all events, those who appear to be their mouth pieces on the platform and in the Press have repeated that statement *ad nauseam*. What does that statement mean? Is it merely an expression of opinion of about as much value as a copybook text, such as—"Evil communications corrupt good manners," or "assiduously endeavour to improve;" or has it any real practical significance? Some hon. Gentlemen who seem never tired of repeating that bounties are bad things and ought to be abolished also appear to say that if we abolish them the inevitable result would be to raise the price of sugar. Which of those two statements do they elect to stand by? [Mr. HANDEL COSSHAM (Bristol): Both.] The hon. Member for Bristol says "both." On the one hand he thinks bounties ought to be abolished because they are bad things, and on the other hand he thinks they ought to be retained because they give us cheap sugar. I much

regret that the hon. Member is not in a position to introduce legislation that would have that double effect. Perhaps in course of time, when sitting on the Front Bench, the hon. Member will favour the House of Commons with a paradox of that sort. But, dealing with the matter on the basis of ordinary common sense, it is impossible to reconcile these two things. Either bounties are bad, in which case they ought to be abolished, or they are good, in which case every effort ought to be made to maintain them. Will right hon. and hon. Gentlemen opposite say they will do everything to maintain bounties? I do not hear a response even from the hon. Member for Bristol. Then they wish to abolish bounties, though they think that by so doing they will make sugar dearer. I do not admit anything of the sort. I do not admit that the abolition of bounties would make sugar dearer, although I think their abolition is necessary, and that they are essentially bad things. It is because the Government have that opinion, because they feel that those bounties press most unfairly on our industry, because they feel that the first duty of an English Ministry is to promote the trade of their own country, that they are endeavouring, notwithstanding the laughter of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton, to use every effort in their power to abolish them. I think that the Government have reason to congratulate themselves on one fact—namely, that for the first time the great majority of the bounty-giving Powers of the world have been assembled in London, and by a general consensus of opinion have agreed to the abolition of bounties. Sir, I do not suppose that anybody in this House, or out of it imagines that we convened the International Conference for the purpose of teaching what hon. Gentlemen opposite consider to be the doctrines of Free Trade to foreign nations, or that we were animated by a philanthropic desire to remove from them heavy financial burdens. We never said anything of the sort. We told them that we thought bounties were an unfair form of competition, and that our interpretation of free trade was fair and unfettered competition; and that, for that reason, Her Majesty's Government would do all in their power to

prevent the continuance of a system so detrimental to their industrial interests. We might, if we had wished, have simply introduced legislation for that object. We did not. And why? Because we considered that a question of this sort is essentially an international question, and that it is by the voice of the Powers themselves who are most interested that it ought to be decided. For that purpose the Conference met in London. Its proceedings have been distributed to Parliament; the Convention has been in the hands of hon. Members for a long time, and the Bill which I now ask leave to introduce is to enable Her Majesty's Government to give effect to its decisions. The Bill itself is an extremely short and simple measure. It consists only of four clauses, and the whole gist is contained in the first clause. The first clause is simply to enable Her Majesty to give effect by an Order in Council to the decision of the majority of the Powers under the Sugar Convention, prohibiting the importation of bounty-fed sugar, except in transit. But that can only be done after the fact that bounties have been given is established by the decision of the majority of the signatory Powers. While prohibition is in force, sugar coming from any country dealt with in the Order will come under the Customs Act like false coin, pirated books, spuriously marked goods, and other articles of the same sort. The clause further provides for a certificate of origin. Clause 2 simply gives Her Majesty power to make any further Orders in Council for the purposes of the Act, or to revoke or vary them. Clause 3 is one of definition, and Clause 4 is the title of the Bill. The measure is therefore an extremely simple one, and I am bound to say that the Prohibitory Clause is based on a clause in the Merchandize Marks Act, which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Sheffield was foremost in supporting. Much of the credit of that clause is due to the right hon. Gentleman, and the clause in the present Bill is nearly a copy of it. I suppose hon. Gentlemen opposite think that although they agreed to prohibit falsely marked goods sold as English goods to the detriment of our English employers and employed, we are

not justified in any way by parity of reasoning in prohibiting sugar which, coming into this country with an illegitimate, spurious profit, competes so unfairly with our own trade that it has the same effect on our trade as the introduction of goods spuriously marked contrary to the Merchandize Marks Act. If there is a distinction in principle between the two cases, I am at a loss to see it. The Merchandize Marks Act was passed for the purpose of protecting native industry against unfair attack, and the unfair competition of foreign industry.

MR. WINTERBOTHAM (Gloucester, Cirencester): It was passed to protect the public against fraud.

*BARON H. DE WORMS: Yes; but it was also for the protection of the public, and, at the same time, for the protection of our manufacturers and our workmen. If a firm at Solingen can send over to Sheffield a large consignment of scissors and knives marked with the name of an English maker in this country, and can sell them at considerably lower price than they could be manufactured for in Sheffield, by what sort of logic can it be said that the purchaser alone is the person who suffers from that practice? The first persons to suffer by it are the manufacturers and the workmen. I should like the right hon. Member for Sheffield to go down to that town and deny this. Another case in point is in regard to watches sent to this country and sold in cases bearing the English hall mark, which led people to believe that they were of English manufacture. Those watches were sold at a lower price than English watches. But they are now prohibited under the Merchandize Marks Act; and the result is that our manufacturers, as well as the purchasers, are not now defrauded, our workmen engaged in the watch trade have recovered their employment, and an English industry which was nearly extinct has now revived to an enormous extent. We are, therefore, to be congratulated on the good working of the Merchandize Marks Act, which can never be enforced except by prohibitory clauses. That is not only my view, but the view of the great mass of the trade unions of this country. I hold in my hand a resolution from a large number

of trade unions, representing 423,883 working men, which runs as follows:—

“That this meeting expresses its gratification that the delegates assembled at the International Conference on Sugar Bounties have unanimously signed the Protocol excluding from their respective markets all bounty-fed sugar; and this meeting, remembering that total prohibition has been found effective in the Merchandize Marks Act, hereby urges the Government to retain the prohibitive clause in such Convention.”

That is an expression of opinion of those who represent the working classes of this country and are far more able to judge of their wants than even the right hon. Member for Sheffield. I think that, at all events, I have shown in this clause, which I have summarized to the House, that the Government have merely followed the example of another measure, which has been found to work particularly well. But the whole bounty system is fraught with such terrible evil to our trade that I am amazed that those who have the interests of our working classes at heart do not realize the danger in which the country is placed. The bounty system, so far from diminishing, is increasing; creeping up insidiously like a dangerous parasite, it bids fair to sap the vitals of our commerce. The question is one which ought to be treated dispassionately and without Party spirit, and I think the facts I shall give to the House will prove that I am not understating the case when I say that the bounty system is a source of very great danger to our trade. Bounties are at the present moment largely given on shipping, as well as on sugar. In France bounties are given on the construction of vessels varying from 10*l.* to 60*l.* per ton gross. In Italy similar shipping bounties are given varying from 15*l.* to 60*l.* Boiler and machine allowances are also given. France grants at present 1*l.* 15*s.* per ton in respect of iron vessels per 1,000 miles, and wooden vessels 1*l.* per ton per 1,000 miles. Italy grants bounties on navigation at the rate of 65*s.* per net ton per 1,000 miles. But this is not all. Hon. Members are perhaps not aware that the differences which have arisen and which still exist between this country and France with respect to the Newfoundland fisheries are caused mainly by the bounty system. The following bounties are given. Bounties are given on equipment of fishing boats;

50*l.* per man engaged in fishing and curing fish; 30*l.* per man engaged in fishing without curing, given once each fishing season. Bounties on the catch are given of 12*l.* to 20*l.* per 100 kilos. on exportation of fish to French Colonies or other countries. The total bounty is estimated to equal 50 per cent of the catch of the Newfoundland fleet. Under such a system it is impossible for the poor Newfoundland fishermen to compete who have, unaided, to earn their living. And what is true of bounties on fish is equally true of bounties on sugar. These bounties are creeping up, and I venture to predict—I hope I may be wrong, but I am afraid I shall not be—that the time will come when bounties will be given for far other and different things than raw material. The enormous surplus which America now possesses might, if they chose to use it in that way, be given to bounties on manufactures. Her machinery is equal to ours, and she might give bounties on the manufacture of her own cotton goods with the advantage that she also produces the raw material. If besides imposing protective duties America were to subsidize the industries which compete with ours, the trade of Manchester and others of our Lancashire manufacturing towns might be absolutely destroyed. It is all very well for hon. Members to treat this question of bounties lightly. I should like to know what they would say if to-morrow the bounties which are given on sugar were given on textile manufactures, on woollen goods and hosiery? I should like to know what would be the action of hon. Members who sit for Lancashire constituencies, and for places like Nottingham and Leicester where textile goods are made, if we were to learn that bounties were to be given on these goods? Would they get up and say, “By these bounties you cheapen goods and enable British workmen to buy them cheaper?” No, you would have destroyed the British industry and the British working man would not have the money to buy the goods with. He would have no occupation, and we should have conceded to the advantage of the foreigners that which brought ruin to our own countrymen. The argument which has been used against the abolition of these bounties appears to be a

very taking one, but it is specious, and only requires to be examined in the strong light of common sense for the fallacy to appear. It is said that if we do away with bounties we shall raise the price of sugar, and that all the old women of the country will be unable to obtain it cheaply for use in their tea and coffee. That may do very well for a hustings statement, but it will not bear the test of investigation. Who, knowing anything of the principles of Free Trade, will venture to assert that the opening out of an enormous field of production renders the article produced dearer? Yet that is the principle which hon. Members are supporting. A field of production infinitely larger than that of the Continent is being opened in our Colonies. Australia alone could produce far more sugar than the Continent is now sending, and yet it is said that by opening up that vast field of production we shall enhance the price of sugar. I never heard a more ridiculous argument than that. The people are told that the bounties given by Foreign Powers find their way into the pockets of the consumers—that the £9,000,000 of bounties given on sugar go into the pockets of the British consumer. A more absurd statement was never made. The whole value of the sugar imported into this country is only £18,000,000, and does anyone imagine that we receive half of that amount? The whole thing is preposterous. Those who will take the trouble to investigate will find that nine millions do not represent the export bounty, but include the loss to the Revenue of the bounty-giving country, the result of the difference between the actual and the legal yield of the beet on which the Excise duty is payable. The bounties are given for the promotion of the sugar industry, and are, therefore, equivalent to a protective duty in a new country. The reason why our producers cannot compete is not on account of the low price to which an article is necessarily reduced, but because they know that a portion of a 20 or 30 per cent bounty may when their trade is again prosperous and competing be sacrificed by the foreigner to undersell and ruin them. It is like the case of a trader competing with a rival who has unlimited capital

behind him. There is a legitimate profit on sugar which our sugar refiners can always obtain, if not unfairly handicapped, and the abolition of these bounties will have the effect of making the foreign refiners sacrifice their illegitimate profits. But it is said that when bounties are abolished sugar will rise in price. Why should it? Does anybody imagine that the sugar growing countries will cease to send sugar to this country, or discontinue its manufacture? Is it probable or possible that seven of the great sugar-producing bounty-giving countries would sign a Convention which meant the death knell of their business? The fact is, that the great sugar refiners of the Continent will have to sacrifice a spurious profit, and content themselves with the legitimate profit of their business. If the same quantity of sugar were still imported into England as now, I fail to see by what process of reasoning hon. Gentlemen can imagine that sugar would become dearer. I venture to think that when the Convention comes into force sugar will be cheaper instead of dearer. [*Opposition ironical cheers.*] Hon. Gentlemen opposite cheer ironically, but I will ask them one question. Have they noticed that at this moment the price of sugar is immensely higher than it has been for many years? If, then, we have not cheap sugar when the bounty system is in force, why should we have dearer sugar when it is not in force? The European beet sugar crop for 1888-89, amounting according to the most recent advices to 2,725,000 tons, was the largest on record with the exception of the crop of 1886-87, when it amounted to 2,733,946 tons. Notwithstanding this enormous crop, the price of raw beet sugar was to-day 18s. 1½d. per cwt., whereas on the 1st of February it was quoted only 13s. 6d. per cwt., showing a rise of 4s. 7½d. per cwt., or £4 12s. 6d. per ton, in nine weeks. There is a probability of a further rise in the price. [*Ironical cheers.*] I suppose hon. Gentlemen opposite mean that cheer in anticipation of the Convention which is to come into force in three years. Well, during the summer months there will be an actual scarcity of sugar, and what are known as famine prices may have to be paid. The imme-

diate cause for this great rise in the price of sugar is attributable to the great falling off in the imports of cane sugar, which for the first three months of 1889, compared with the first three months of 1888, showed the remarkable diminution of 98,835 tons into the United Kingdom alone. [An hon. MEMBER: Who is your authority?] My authority is one of the first brokers in sugar in the City of London, and the statistics which I give I shall be able to verify. I wish hon. Members to consider this fact—that the sugar which is grown on the Continent is grown all within the same climatic zone, and is therefore amenable to the same climatic influence, so that if the beetroot crop fails, as it has failed before now, the price of sugar must be enormously enhanced. But there is another reason. I remember a short time ago my right hon. Friend the Leader of the House was asked whether the Government would do all in their power to prevent what was termed the illegal combination of syndicates. I want to know whether, if you give a monopoly to a certain number of foreign countries, you do not establish the very worst form of syndicate possible? You give them the power to “corner” sugar to any extent, and I have little reason to doubt that a great deal in connection with the high price of sugar at this moment is due to the fact that higher prices are anticipated by speculators. Does it never occur to hon. Gentlemen that it is within the range of possibility that some day or other there may be a European war, and that when that war occurs, by the process of conscription the cultivation of these vast beetroot fields will cease, the ploughshare will again be converted into the sword, and the manufacture of sugar and the import of it into this country may cease, or be immensely diminished, and if we close by our own action or neglect to open our own fields and to develop our own industry and that of our Colonies we shall be wilfully exposing ourselves to a dangerous rise in sugar, which cannot arise if those fields are open? Now, beetroot, which gained at the expense of cane sugar, in the imports into the United Kingdom, gained rather more in proportion than cane sugar in the five years end-

ing 1882-83, and has gained still more largely in the subsequent five years. The imports of raw cane sugar from British Possessions has diminished in the ten years from nearly $5\frac{1}{2}$ million hundredweight to about $3\frac{1}{2}$ million hundredweight, or a diminution of $2\frac{1}{2}$ million hundredweight, the greater part in the last five years. Sugar from beet countries, on the other hand, has more than doubled in amount in the ten years, the increase being from 6,450,000 cwt. raw and refined together in 1877-78 to 13,455,000 cwt. in 1886-88. There is a notable difference, moreover, in the apportionment of this increase in the two quinquennial periods. Between 1878 and 1882 the increase of the imports from beet countries was of raw sugar, the imports of refined rather diminishing. Since 1882 the increase of the imports has only been to a small extent in raw sugar, and the increase of refined in the same period has been over 4,000,000 cwt., or as much as the total imports of refined from beet countries five years ago. In the last five years the imports from British Possessions have greatly diminished, from nearly 5,000,000 cwt. in 1882 to just over 3,000,000 cwt.; and the proportion, which has steadily fallen from 65 per cent. in 1853-55 to 23 per cent in 1880-82, has since further fallen to 13·7 per cent only. I think these figures show pretty conclusively what the effect of the bounties has been upon our sugar cane industry. I trust that when this question comes to be considered calmly, without any party spirit, those who now oppose it will come to the conclusion that the abolition of bounties, advocated for more than a quarter of a century, shall at last be carried out. This is not a new policy; it is a continuous policy, and I will remind hon. Gentlemen that this market will always remain the great sugar market, for the reason that we have no fiscal duties upon sugar. Those duties were abolished by a Conservative Government in 1874. What I ask the House to do is to re-open the old sources of supply, to develop new ones of our own, bringing wealth and prosperity to our own shores. Let us give work to the industrious and find work for the unemployed. It is extremely difficult to find work for

the unemployed, and, therefore, we should be all the more chary of destroying an industry which employs 51,000 men. The figures were given in a Blue Book 10 years ago, and they have never been refuted. [*Cries of "Oh!"*] Hon. Gentlemen say "Oh!" but I ask them to say by whom and when they have been refuted? [An Hon. Member: The Board of Trade.] The Board of Trade simply stated that the number immediately employed in the sugar industry amounted to 4,000 or 5,000 persons. [*Ironical cheers.*] Hon. Members who cheer show they are utterly ignorant on the subject. It is not alone the sugar refiners. There are those who make the machinery, those who make the boilers, the men employed at the docks, those who make the bags, the casks, and thousands of others. With the sugar industry is intertwined a vast network of industry, and if one portion be destroyed the whole fabric falls. I believe the working men themselves and their Representatives have come to the conclusion that the sugar bounties are disastrous to British industry, and that the great voice of the country will support the Government in an honest and proper endeavour to put a stop to a system which is detrimental to our industry, destructive of the progress of our Colonies, and which is against the best principles alike of political economy, Free Trade, and common sense. I beg to move for leave to bring in the Bill.

*MR. PICTON (Liceester): The right hon. Gentleman has well said in the course of his speech that this is a subject that ought not to be treated lightly, and he has given very good reasons, indeed, why it should not be treated lightly. He has told us that the system of bounties which he has been considering is not confined to the production of sugar, but that there exist bounties on shipping, machinery, and even on fish. What does this imply? If the Government are obliged to use such violent means as are now proposed in order to put down bounties on sugar, the House will next be invited to put down bounties on shipping, machinery, and fish by the same system; and, therefore, the prospect of a commercial war is opened up, which even the right hon. Gentleman

will surely acknowledge is wholly opposed to, and absolutely inconsistent with, the great principles of Free Trade laid down by Mr. Cobden. If the right hon. Gentleman wished to make out his case, or to convince the House, he should have proved, what certainly he has not proved, that our industries have been injured by these bounties. Let me allude to the last few sentences of his speech. He says 50,000 persons have been thrown out of employment in connection with the sugar refineries in consequence of bounties. In 1884 there were 5,200 persons engaged in the sugar industry, and this number has since fallen to between 4,000 and 5,000. But it is said that the House ought not to consider those persons only, but the sack-makers, the machinery workers, and also, I suppose, those who made their boots and shoes, their jackets and hats, tables and chairs, and those who brewed their beer as well. There is an obvious fallacy in an argument of this kind, because if machinery is not made for one purpose it is made for another. It is well known to anybody who studies the Board of Trade monthly Returns that our machinery exports are larger than ever they have been before. Then as to the cooper industry. The Return of last year shows that the practice of packing sugar in barrels is dying out, and that sacks are being substituted. The whole of that argument, therefore, falls to the ground. But even if it did not, if we admit the claims of those engaged in the sugar industry, there is something else to be said. In the correspondence of Mr. George Mathieson, of Hackney Wick Works, it is shown how the confectionery industry, which had been enormously stimulated by the cheapness of sugar, employs at least 75,000 persons in this country. They are employed because the confectionery industry has been largely driven to our shores by the great amount of cheap sugar to be obtained here; and yet, in face of facts like these, the right hon. Gentleman opposite speaks of boycotting British industry. But he says I do not want to make sugar dear—I want to cheapen it, by enlarging the field of supply. But how does he mean to accomplish this? By cutting off the largest and richest fields

whence we get sugar. The six Powers who have, to a certain extent, agreed with him, have only done so on conditions. France has not joined him. Austria has joined conditionally, and so has Belgium; the only Powers who have joined unconditionally are Russia and Germany.

*BARON H. DE WORMS: I beg the hon. Gentleman's pardon—the Powers who have signed the Convention unconditionally are Russia, Germany, Italy, Spain, and Holland. As regards Belgium and Austria, the single and only condition is that, if in 1891 all the Powers have not joined, they claim the right to reconsider their position.

*MR. PICTON: They join on condition. I was wrong in limiting the Powers to two. If you exclude, as you must, Brazil, and France, as you may have to do, and the United States, some of the largest and richest fields for the production of sugar in the world will be cut off. It is absolutely impossible by any law to compel mankind to use a particular kind of sugar against their wishes, and beet sugar is competing with cane sugar in all the markets of the world. The sugar industry in the British Colonies is not being ruined thereby; there is more sugar than ever produced in them, although it goes in increasing quantities to America. The West Indies and British Guiana produced in 1872 166,000 tons, and in 1886 226,000 tons; other Possessions produced in 1872 33,000 tons, and in 1886 210,000 tons. The hon. Gentleman has given no more basis in facts relating to the Colonies than in facts relating to our Home labour for his demand to deprive our own people of cheap sugar. By narrowing the field of our supply we might double or treble the price of sugar. The £9,000,000 of bounties were given to enable the sugar makers to spread their sugar abroad as widely as possible by selling it at as low a price as possible; and this large amount must have gone into the pockets of the consumers. The House is asked to ignore one of the most important principles of Free Trade, which is that the consumer is the first who ought to be considered, because the consumers exceed the producers a thousand times. It is this that has given us cheap bread and comparatively cheap tea and coffee;

Mr. Picton

and I should like the principle to be carried very much farther in regard to articles of consumption. It is this which has enabled our poor people to have house comforts which were utterly unknown to their fathers. But it is not true that the benefit of the principle stays with consumers, for, on the contrary, all the consumers are buyers, and the better they are off, and the more they save in one direction, the more they have to spend in others. Therefore, the nation that first considers the interests of the consumer will always have the largest number of buyers, and will always, by the healthiest process, stimulate all its honest industries. But this is a case in which we are on a wildgoose chase after an impossibility—for it is an impossibility to fight against the obvious tendency of events. I cannot but most profoundly regret that we are invited to enter on a mischievous course of this kind. Of course, I do not rise now to deal with the subject at all exhaustively or at any length, but only to make an earnest protest on behalf of the toiling millions of this country who are consumers, and whose interests, as consumers, ought first to be considered. The most sensible amongst these are on our side; and I know that all these resolutions quoted have been produced by a mode of agitation which is familiar to some capitalists, and to some officials who have either the interests of a particular trade or the interests of a party to serve. I should like to know very much where the money has come from which has been so lavishly spent in stimulating this agitation? I know that Trades Unions honourably pay the expenses of their delegates to Meetings, Convocations, Congresses, or whatever it may be, and they are justified in refusing to have delegates attending these Congresses whose expenses are not paid by the bodies sending them. But it is known that, as to many of these reported meetings, the Trade Unions have not been called together, and, in one case, a delegate, whose expenses were duly paid by his own committee, came back with half-a-sovereign, which had been paid him at the meeting from some unknown source, and the return of which by him was duly entered in the cash account of the Union. I want to know

where the money has come from in this case? The money has been spent to enlarge the profits of a few, and this has been done at the expense of the industrial classes of this country. On these grounds I earnestly protest against the introduction of this Bill, and will do what I can to oppose it at every stage.

*MR. BURT (Morpeth): I am an avowed Party man, but I hope there may be questions that can be discussed without an appeal to party passion, and I am rather sorry that no small amount of Party feeling has been already infused into this discussion. Well, I hope, Sir, that we shall avoid imputing motives and making attacks upon those—whether they are Trades Unionists or others—who may have been associated with this movement. On this side of the House and in this quarter of the House we have had a great many inquiries as to where the money has come from in connection with another agitation, and the production of a balance sheet has often been demanded. Now, I do not intend to go into the matters which my hon. Friend the Member for Leicester referred to in the concluding part of his speech. I desire, however, to express my opinion that a *prima facie* case has been made out for the introduction of this Bill. I intend to support the First Reading, at any rate, reserving to myself the liberty of voting for any modification of the measure after having heard all the arguments. On the present occasion I should not have risen at all had it not been for the references which have been made to the Trade Unionists. I do not arrogate to myself the right to speak for them—I never have done so in this House; I stand forward now, as I have always done, on my responsibility as a Member of this House, and advocate views which I believe to be sound. But the Trades Unions for a great number of years past have passed resolutions against these bounties. So far back as the Trades Union Congress of 1881 a resolution was passed condemnatory of the bounties, and at the last Trades Union Congress, after the Congress itself concluded, nearly the whole of the delegates remained in the same room and passed a resolution condemning bounties. There have also been

conferences in London on the subject, and an explicit and definite declaration has, as the Under Secretary for the Colonies has pointed out, emanated from Trades Unions consisting of no fewer than 423,883 members, in favour of the prohibitory clause in the International Sugar Convention. Surely these men would be the last to disregard or to betray the interests of the working classes of the country. They ought to know, and I believe they do know what are the views of the working men. Well, I do not adduce this as an argument to prove, nor do I at all wish to imply, that these men are infallible. They may be mistaken. We are all liable to mistakes, but I should be very sorry if it should be supposed for a moment that they have been influenced in the course that they have taken by the unworthy motives that have already, I am sorry to say, been suggested.

*MR. PICTON: I suppose that my hon. Friend refers to me. Certainly, I did not impute any dishonourable motives whatever to the members of the Trade Unions. I asked where the money came from, and if any dishonourable motives were imputed they were imputed to very different people.

*MR. BURT: I, of course, at once accept the disavowal of my hon. Friend. I believe he would be the last man to be consciously unfair, or to attribute to anybody motives of that kind. It is with great regret I find myself temporarily dissociated from those Members with whom I usually act, especially those who are regarded as labour representatives. We do not all take the same view on this question. My hon. Friend the Member for the Wansbeck Division (Mr. Fenwick) is called away by a family bereavement, but he was prepared to vote and speak in support of this proposal. My hon. Friend the Member for Rhondda (Mr. Abraham) agrees with us. Others take the opposite view. The hon. Member for Leicester has described the Bill as an assault upon Free Trade. I am a convinced Free Trader myself, believing in monopoly or special privileges for no one. But, according to my ideas, Free Trade means that there should be no advantage given to, or any disadvantage imposed upon, one producer rather than another.

If that is a fair definition of Free Trade, then bounties are quite as much in opposition to it as tariffs, and are more objectionable, inasmuch as they constitute aggressive Protection, while tariffs are defensive Protection. A country imposes tariffs for the sake of giving employment to its own workmen in regard to articles consumed within its own borders. Bounties are imposed to injure the trade, or by unfair means to obtain the trade, of another country. What did Cobden regard as the primary aim of Free Trade? He said—

“We do not ask for free trade in corn primarily for the purpose of purchasing it at a cheap money rate; we require it at the natural rate of the world's market. Whether it becomes dearer or cheaper it matters not to us, provided that the people of this country have it at its natural price.”

We want sugar at a natural price, and because bounties create an unnatural price we wish to abolish them. The hon. Baronet the Member for Cockermouth introduces me in his jocose way to his friends as the man who wants dear sugar. I do not at all want dear sugar, but I do want honest sugar. It has been argued that the abolition of the bounties would increase the price of sugar; but Sir T. Farrer, an authority on the subject, has declared more than once that he has doubts as to whether bounties cheapen sugar, or whether their abolition would increase the price. I am opposed to the bounties because I believe them to be unjust. I cannot myself dissociate trade from morality; and it is because this dissociation so often takes place that so many of our industrial and commercial evils from “shoddy” to sweating arise. The question is asked, What will come next? Where will this action stop? That is a Tory rather than a Radical question, and one that was often asked in connection with proposals to extend the franchise. The true Radical doctrine is to deal with every question as it arises; to examine it on its merits without fear of what may follow; and not to be afraid to do what we believe to be right to-day, because we may be asked to do what is wrong to-morrow.

*SIR G. BADEN-POWELL (Liverpool, Kirkdale): I rise to make an appeal to the House. We have had most interesting speeches, but the time at our disposal is brief—only 20 minutes before

discussion closes. This is a question of great importance. We are all, without exception, Free Traders. [“No, no!”] Well, all, with one exception, but no one is a Free Trader without exceptions. The subject before us will require to be discussed very fully, but what is most necessary is time. The right time to discuss the Bill is on the Second Reading; and, therefore, I hope the House will at once pass the First Reading.

MR. ILLINGWORTH (Bradford, W.): The hon. Gentleman who has just sat down takes a good deal for granted. It seems to me the question of Free Trade is scarcely understood in some quarters of the House. For my own part, I do not think it possible to allow the First Reading of this Bill to pass unopposed, seeing that it is an upsetting of the policy which has prevailed in this country for the last 40 years. The right hon. Gentleman says bounties are a resultant of the principle of Free Trade. I agree with him, and it is because the right hon. Gentleman has made that admission that I see the immense danger that lurks under this proposal. This proposal is as much a violation of the principle of Free Trade as the Protective system. If the small number of persons engaged in the sugar trade are to be protected, why are all our other industries, which are at least as much affected by the violation of Free Trade principles, to be left without protection? In the woollen trade of Lancashire and Yorkshire are 150,000 to 200,000 persons affected by the Protective system in all parts of the Continent. Bounties are not the form of Protection from which we suffer most, and there is an enormous compensation in the artificial cheapening of sugar. The right hon. Gentleman is bound to found his case on facts and figures, but he indulged in generalities. He referred to Resolutions passed in the House, and it was only towards the close of his case, and then only in the loosest way, that he quoted figures.

*BARON H. DE WORMS: The figures I gave were those of the Board of Trade.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: The right hon. Gentleman should have informed the House how much of the £9,000,000 was paid on exported sugar, and how much of that exported sugar came to

England. In reality, the principal share of the £9,000,000—nearly the whole of it—was given to make sugar consumed in this country artificially cheap. We certainly can tolerate the bounty system much longer than the countries which give the bounties; they are impoverishing themselves, and we may be sure the people of the Continent will not tolerate it much longer. I want to see the bounty system and all other protective systems abandoned; but I do not want to deal with this system and leave the others alone. I shall appeal to the working classes and tradesmen—certainly to those of them in my own constituency—with absolute confidence upon this question. If I knew I should forfeit the confidence of the Trades Unionists and lose my seat in the House in consequence, no vote of mine should ever be given in favour of retaliation, knowing as I do the great advantages we derive from Free Trade.

*SIR L. PLAYFAIR (Leeds, South): I will not imitate the example of the right hon. Gentleman who introduced the Bill by making a Second Reading speech. I am, however, very grateful to the right hon. Gentleman for making that speech, for he has thrown down the gauntlet in the most complete way; he told the House that the Government are going to enter on a large policy of general prohibition.

*BARON H. DE WORMS: I never said anything of the sort, and there is not a single phrase in my speech which can convey that idea.

*SIR L. PLAYFAIR: The right hon. Gentleman said that this is not a question confined to sugar, and he quoted figures to show that France gives bounties on shipping, as well as fisheries, and said it is impossible that foreign countries can be allowed to injure the working classes of this country in this way. Surely, that is equivalent to saying that the Government are going to enter on a large policy of general prohibition. I see the Chancellor of the Exchequer shakes his head; but that is the logic of the speech. However, I am only going to say that as the right hon. Gentleman has given no facts to show that the restriction on importation and the abolition of bounties are not likely to render dearer an article which is now second only to the bread

of the people, it will be necessary to traverse the whole policy of the Convention on the Second Reading of that Bill. I hope the Government will give ample time and notice before the Second Reading comes on. The Bill is exciting great interest both in the House and outside, and I shall, therefore, put on the Paper at once, so that its form may be known, the Resolution I intend to move on the Second Reading.

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I have only to say, in answer to the right hon. Gentleman, that ample notice will be given. The Government fully recognize the claim of hon. Gentlemen who oppose the Bill, which is an important Bill, to have ample time for its consideration; but I trust the right hon. Gentleman will accept my assurance that this Bill has no reference to, and does not involve the consideration of, any other question whatever, but deals solely and simply with the question of sugar bounties. I trust, therefore, that the Bill will now be allowed to be introduced. The Second Reading will be fixed for May 16, by way of intimation that sufficient time will be allowed, and before that date the Government will fix a day on which they will propose to proceed with the Second Reading.

Question put, and agreed to.

SUGAR CONVENTION BILL.

On Motion of Baron Henry de Worms Bill to enable Her Majesty to carry into effect a Convention made the thirtieth day of August one thousand eight hundred and eighty-eight in relation to Bounties on the exportation of sugar, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Sir James Fergusson, and Baron Henry de Worms.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 194.]

SUPPLY [8TH APRIL] REPORT.

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [9th April], "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the First Resolution." (See p. 65).

Question put, and agreed to.

Subsequent Resolutions agreed to.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES ACT (1855) AMENDMENT BILL. (No. 82).

Order for Committee read.

Ordered, That it be an Instruction to the Committee that they have power to

insert provision in the Bill to amend the Public Libraries (England) Acts, 1855 to 1887.—(*Mr. Herbert Gardner.*)

Bill considered in Committee, and reported; as amended, to be considered upon Monday next.

PURCHASE OF LAND (IRELAND) ACTS
AMENDMENT BILL. (No. 163).

Considered in Committee; Committee report Progress; to sit again upon Monday next.

REMOVAL OF WRECKS ACT (1877)
AMENDMENT BILL. (No. 3).

Considered in Committee, and reported; as amended, to be considered upon Monday next.

CRADOCK WELLS CHARITY.

**MR. JESSE COLLINGS* (Bordesley, Birmingham): Sir, I beg to move—

"That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, praying Her Majesty to withhold her consent to the Scheme for the Management of Cradock Wells Charity in Cardiff, now lying upon the Table of the House."

In pursuance of my custom or policy, which I shall not cease to follow so long as I have a seat in this House, I take this action uninfluenced one way or other by the locality which any scheme may affect. Before I gave notice of this opposition I had no communication, direct or indirect, with any opponent of the scheme. I oppose the scheme on principle and on its merits. I have always opposed similar schemes, no matter what locality or what endowment they might affect, because I object to the policy of the Charity Commissioners, a policy which has been described in this House as a robbery of the poor. I have adopted that description because I believe it correctly describes the course which the Charity Commissioners have adopted during the past twenty years, by which the rights and privileges of the poor have been taken away. I am quite sure that were similar demands to be made in regard to the possessions of other classes of the community, those demands would fail; and it is because the class affected are the most helpless in the community that the system of spoliation has been carried on so successfully for years past. A Session or two ago I brought forward a case which

is typical of a large number of cases of schemes of the Charity Commissioners, including the present one. That was the parish of Sutton, which has had £32,000 taken away from the possession of the poor in order that the middle classes and the well-to-do classes might enjoy higher education at half cost. To me it seems a proceeding that cannot be defended either on the ground of justice or morality. But, bad as the cases have been which have been brought before the House on previous occasions, I hold that the present scheme dealing with the Cradock Wells Charity is more flagrant than almost any I have examined. I will in the fewest possible words explain to the House the nature of the Charity, and then proceed to show what the scheme of the Charity Commissioners is. Alderman Cradock held certain properties composed of lands and houses for the education and "bringing up"—a very expressive phrase of "so many poor boys and girls as shall be named yearly, and from time to time by the trustees, the trustees being certain members of the Corporation of the borough, and meaning that as many poor children should be dealt with in this manner as the funds would permit. These poor children were to be instructed to read, write, and cypher, and I would ask the House to notice here that the excuse which the Charity Commissioners as a rule give for taking away these endowments is that the Grammar Schools of old were intended for all classes of the community, and not for the poor. But in this case they had not that excuse, for there is no question of any Grammar School at all. It is a question of paying the school fees of certain poor children, and giving these children other advantages. They were to be clothed in a distinctive dress, no doubt, and there would be objections to that dress; but I am not here to oppose any reform of any kind, and if it is necessary to alter the trust well and good. We have foundations in our time, nevertheless, where those who enjoy the benefits of the foundations are dressed in rather a grotesque fashion. From 1792 the Charity was neglected; the rents were partially misapplied, and in some cases were not collected at all. In 1819 a Petition was presented to the Master of the Rolls praying for the

matter to be seen into, and the mal-administration of the Charity to be corrected, and that the Master of the Rolls issue a scheme for the encouragement of the Charity. ["Divide!"] The hon. Member behind me would, perhaps, do well if he would bear in mind that we are dealing with the privileges of the poorest class in one of our large towns, and if it is of no importance to him, I can assure him that it is of very great importance to some hundreds and some thousands in the borough of Cardiff, whose lives was not too sweet, and who have not got too much of this world's goods to warrant what they have got being taken away from them. The Master of the Rolls listened to the Petition and issued a scheme in 1821. It was not for education only. It is stated that there should be a sum not exceeding a moiety for teaching reading, writing, and arithmetic to poor boys and girls; and here I would remark that, different from most schemes and most bequests, the word "poor" goes through the will and extends through the order of the Master of the Rolls. It is always "poor girls" and "poor boys." There is no sum set aside for building schools; it is for simply paying fees to the National and other schools which existed at that time. A part of the remainder was to be spent on clothing and the purchase of books and other necessary articles. And then there was another portion, such portion as was thought fit to be applied to the second step in life—either to apprenticeship, purchase of clothing, or otherwise, for "such of the said poor children as may be selected." That means simply that the poor boys and girls of Cardiff, as far as funds will admit, were to be assisted in getting on in life by education, clothing, and apprenticeship, and other means generally for their benefit. I have here the original bequest, and in 1821 there was what I call a solemn re-dedication of that property for certain well-defined purposes. And I think that should be regarded by this House as a sacred trust, because it was entrusted to the local authority to carry out—a body in whose hands we have always thought the privileges and benefits of the people were secure. But now, what is proposed to be done? I have shown shortly

what it was left for. What is going to be done with this property under the scheme of the Charity Commissioners? First of all there is a sum of £800, or one half of the net income, to be applied to the general purposes of the college at Cardiff. It is quite true that that is subject to certain conditions given in the Schedule, those conditions being that there should be a number of scholarships of £20 each, to be paid by the college, and that lecture fees, &c., should be free. These scholarships are to be won by children of not more than 18 years of age in one year, not more than 19 in the next, and not more than 20 in another year, and they are confined to children who, while under the age of 18 years, have been not less than two years in some public elementary school. Now, that is the compensation which the poor children of Cardiff are to get for being deprived of this property, which gives them free education and other advantages. I will now point out to hon. Members how visionary this is. I, as Governor of one of our largest Foundations in the country, know very well by whom and by what class those scholarships are carried off. They are rarely carried off by the poorest children—such children as Craddock Wells and the Master of the Rolls would consider as poor. I am glad to find that the public elementary schools of this country are being used more and more by the middle classes; and it stands to reason that the poorest class will have no chance of winning a scholarship by competition and examination against those who have the advantages such as the middle class and lower middle class possess. Well, that is not all. There is another provision, a further endowment, to be provided for. After having taken this £800 a year, one-half of the net income, the remainder of the income is to be set aside and to accumulate until there can be a new school founded in Cardiff for the purpose of higher education. That is under the 28th Clause; so that you see the poor children of Cardiff have the whole endowment, without any exception, taken away from them in order partly to endow the College of South Wales, for the general purposes of the College, subject to these scholarships, and the remainder of the net income is

to be accumulated until a high school can be established in the town. Under the 27th Clause it says that only a high-class school shall be established. There is a sum of £200 to be spent in scholarships in schools already existing. Now, Sir, I have nothing to say as to the merits of these scholarships. All I know is that if they are to be provided they should be provided from some other source, and not carved out of the inheritance of the poor. The fact is that these scholarships are simply put into the scheme as a gloss to give an air of decency to what is a scheme of spoliation. By the 29th Clause of the Act of 1869, under which the scheme is framed, the Charity Commissioners have power to continue the endowment in its present form, modifying it as they choose as regards administration; but by the 30th Clause, under which the Charity Commissioners have confiscated hundreds of thousand of pounds of the property of the poorer classes, it is provided that apprenticeship fees and moneys for advancement in life shall come under the head of education, and that in any scheme relating to such endowments due regard shall be had to the educational interests of the persons of the same class of life or resident in the particular area as those who, at the commencement of the Act, are benefited thereby. I maintain that this clause has been violated by the scheme. The clause was intended to secure the benefit of the endowment to the poorer classes, to whom the original bequest was made, but under the scheme there is scarcely a single child who will be benefited of the class that the Master of the Rolls would designate as a poor child of Cardiff. Hon. Members who cry "Divide" are impatient. They are in the habit of bringing forward Resolutions asking the House to consider the condition of the poorer classes in large towns, and I want those who are always so willing to support Academic Resolutions in favour of the poorer classes—I want to ask them when it comes to a practical application of their own views, to say whether they are ready to Vote away £1,600 per annum, which is money that was left for the benefit of the poor children of the borough of Cardiff. I want to see what difference there is between profes-

sion and practice. Here is a case in which the poverty of a large town might, at any rate, be somewhat alleviated. In one of their Reports the Charity Commissioners say their sole object is to promote the interests of the founders of charities, and they refer to the purely remedial and protective character of the jurisdiction of the State. That paragraph seems a fine piece of irony when read in connection with this scheme. That the governors of the College themselves are aware that the money is to be paid for the general support of the College is shown in the printed statement of their case, in which they state that one of the reasons why the money was voted was that there is an honourable understanding between the Town Council and the authorities of the College. But I maintain that no trustee has a right to vote away the money belonging to the poorer classes. And as a proof that they look to this money for the maintenance of higher education, they say that if these obligations are not fulfilled a diminution of efficiency or an increase of fees must be experienced, because with such a small endowment it is impossible to provide higher education at a rate of payment that will bring it within the reach of the poorer classes. Now, I believe that the honour of Cardiff is involved, and I believe that it will be a blot upon its great educational institution if it is supported by funds taken from such a source. I need not say I am in favour of higher education of every kind, and have been all my life; but I object to its being supported out of the inheritance of the poor. I have here a letter from a gentleman at Cardiff, in which he says—

"I am sorry that this, the taking the funds of the poor, has been more easy of accomplishment because those who on ordinary occasions are the mouthpieces of the poor have been tempted to remain quiescent or in fact to support a Scheme for the benefit of the class in which they move, and they, therefore, allow their better nature to be lured into perpetrating as monstrous a robbery as was ever perpetrated by the most notorious highwayman."

In 1887 the mayor presided over two town's meetings, when resolutions were carried against the scheme. There have been petitions within the last few days signed by 10,000 adults against it, and there is a general feeling existing in the town in opposition to it. I can

not help thinking that if the Welsh Members had not had their views rather obscured by the establishment of the College they would see that there is something unfair in the scheme. If it becomes operative the poorer classes will have to go through the ordeal of having their fees remitted practically as paupers, or they will be summoned for their fees, or they will have to make great sacrifices to raise the money, while at the same time they will see in Cardiff a great educational institution maintained partly by funds belonging to them, and which, if they had the enjoyment of them, would have saved them from their difficulties. I trust that the Government will be neutral with regard to the scheme, which is that of the Charity Commissioners—a body which is subject to no jurisdiction but that of a Vote of this House. Last year the Government allowed the Dauntsey scheme to be defeated, and the result is that the benefit under the new scheme will be largely increased. I hope to-night that the example will be followed or the scheme withdrawn. My right hon. Friend, (Mr. Mundella) has more than once taken me to task for the part I have taken in dealing with these endowments. I remember once he described me as an old Tory. I am no stickler for terms, and if Radicalism consists of advocating academic resolutions in favour of the poor, and voting against practical relief for the poor, I shall not stick for terms. I shall vote for measures not men. I shall continue to oppose every one of these nefarious schemes, the victims of which are the helpless and the poverty-stricken. During the last 150 years the poor have been deprived of their lands, and we have gone a long way towards depriving them of their endowments. By passing the scheme before the House we shall be depriving the poor of Cardiff of what is really their property, as much as the property of any other class is theirs.

*SIR WILLIAM HART DYKE (Kent, Dartford): I have found that the hon. Member who has just sat down has always consistently opposed those schemes. He has dressed up the present scheme in such a garb that if its parents met it in the street they would fail to recognize it. This discussion is

a most important one, and I may go so far as to say that if the House is to reject this scheme, it would be far better and far more practical for it to consider the advisability of repealing these Acts altogether, because, if ever there was a scheme which came exactly within the scope and intention of the Acts, the present scheme does so. [The Acts to which I refer are founded on the Report of the School Inquiry Commission, in which they say the main object of the founders of endowed schools is, in the judgment of the Commission, not so much to benefit particular classes or localities as education. There was a Committee which sat on the question of charitable trusts, and reported that the evidence before them tended to show that such dissatisfaction as then existed towards the action of the Charity Commissioners was in respect of their declining to give funds for the promotion of primary schools. A Committee of this House was appointed in consequence of that very report, and specially dealt with that question of "robbing the poor," and that Committee reported that the object of the Charity Commissioners was the provision of educational advantages to the poor of a character not accessible to them under the ordinary law; that scholarships and exhibitions were founded; and, in the opinion of the Committee, the main design of the founder was thus reasonably attained. That Report is only two years old. The policy of the scheme is that which was approved by this Select Committee. Let me give the origin of the endowment. It began in the year 1714, and was of the annual value of £20. In 1801, when the first census was taken, Cardiff had a population of 1,800. Now it has a population of between 120,000 and 130,000. The annual value of the endowment now is £1,600. The scheme deals with only £1,000 per annum. The rest of the money is to be allowed to accumulate for the foundation of an intermediate or secondary school. Of the £1,000 a sum of £200 is to be devoted to scholarships of from £3 to £10 for the education of poor children who have been not less than two years in an elementary school where the fees have not been over 6d. a week. The other £800 a year is that paid to the University College at Cardiff, and is to be ap-

plied to fifteen exhibitions of £20, with an exemption from payment of lecture fees, which meant another £10 a year; thus a sum of £450 a year is to go to the endowment of the College for the direct benefit of the poor children of Cardiff who have been not less than two years in an elementary school. Therefore, it will be seen that the huge edifice which had been raised about the robbery of the poor of Cardiff is not founded upon facts. There will be a balance of £350, and this will be devoted towards the maintenance of the University College at Cardiff, which will give education which cannot be obtained at less than £30 a year in the London University College, and, therefore, this sum for maintenance is to be defended. I venture to assert that it is utterly impossible, when the scheme is looked at, to say that it robs the poor. This House should either at once repeal these Acts and say they are destructive of the cause of education and an injury to the poor, or unanimously support such a scheme as this. The opposition which has been evoked by the scheme the most tortuous and curious I ever knew. I agree it is a mistake to force on any locality a scheme which is not looked upon with favour by the persons residing there. This scheme was published in the autumn of 1887 and sanctioned by myself on the 16th of December, 1888. When the scheme was first published the Ratepayers' Association sent up a series of resolutions to the Charity Commissioners as to how the charity should be dealt with. They suggested that apprenticeships, exhibitions, and scholarships should be established by this endowment, tenable at the South Wales College. And that is the very proposal embodied in this scheme. If it was good for the ratepayers in 1887, why is it not good for them in 1889? The scheme is founded on the lines provided by the Act, and I deny that it is a scheme of robbery. On the contrary, it is one of enormous benefit to the future education of the poor of Cardiff. I sanctioned it on my own responsibility and I asked hon. Members to consider it on its merits. In my judgment a better scheme under the Act has never been framed, and if the House reject it, not only will they deal a deadly blow to the Acts of Parliament under which it is framed, but

to the future welfare of the poorest of the poor among the working men of Cardiff.

*MR. J. M. MACLEAN (Oldham): I deplore the circumstances under which this matter has to be discussed. These schemes of the Charity Commissioners are placed on the Table at a late hour of the night, and instead of being discussed in different stages, like other business of the House, we have to settle once and for all whether the scheme is to be approved, and that before Members have really had the opportunity of making themselves acquainted with its merits. I am willing to bear witness to the patience shown by the Vice-President of the Council in listening to objections against the scheme, and I know that he refrained from giving his consent to it last autumn until he saw whether there was opposition to it from the town of Cardiff. I think, however, the right hon. Gentleman has underrated the strength of the local feeling now developed against this measure. There have been petitions presented, one of them bearing the signatures of nearly 10,000 adult persons; there has been a Resolution from the Board of Guardians, and a Petition from the managers of all the voluntary schools and the Roman Catholic and Church of England schools. The Catholic priests and the Church of England clergymen have denounced the measure as antagonistic to the interests of the poorer classes of the community, and in other ways there has been a great demonstration of opposition to the measure in the borough of Cardiff. It should be borne in mind by hon. Members that this is a bequest left for the benefit of the poorer people of Cardiff. I can understand that the Members representing Wales as a whole wish to see the scheme carried out, because their constituents will participate in the benefit of the endowment. It has been said that a bargain was made at the time the University College of South Wales was founded that so much of this money should be given for the use of the college. But who had authority to make a bargain of that kind? If it was done by the Members of the Town Council, who were the trustees for the Cradock Wells Charity, then the con-

tract they made is an immoral one, and ought not to be sanctioned by Parliament. These are the main points which I wish to urge in support of the Motion brought forward by the hon. Member for the Bordesley Division. It is perfectly clear that the Vice-President seems to have misunderstood the matter. He spoke of this college as though it were for the purposes of Cardiff alone. But it is a national college for all Wales, and we are going to admit all the population of Wales to the benefit of charity which was left for the poor of Cardiff. That is an appropriation which ought not to be sanctioned by this House. One of the most shameful pages in our history has been the spoliation of the poor by the upper classes. I think after what has been said by the Vice-President of the Council, that the Government wish to put no constraint upon the votes of Members—that hon. Members may fairly consider this question on its merits, and, not through any generous feeling, but from a sense of justice, declare that the endowment which was left for the benefit of the poor of Cardiff, and for their benefit alone, should not be taken away from them and appropriated to other purposes.

SIR E. J. REED (Cardiff): I should be very, very sorry, Sir, if this House were to infer from the speech we have just listened to that there is any widespread opposition in Cardiff to this scheme. The constituted authorities, the Corporation of Cardiff, the School Board, and the governors of the charity themselves are all in favour of the scheme, and the circumstances under which it has been opposed and petitioned against have been of a very remarkable character. I am sorry to say that my hon. Friend who has just spoken is very intimately and closely associated with the most active spirit of the opposition, who happens to be the editor of the local paper, and who, after participating in committing the honour of the town to the proposals embodied in the scheme, has, for some purpose best known to himself, conducted a strong opposition against it,

and when this sort of thing is done, when there are a great many statements made about the poor being robbed, and petitions are being presented at the corners of streets, and every means resorted to for securing signatures, I think the House will be able to appreciate the difference between agitation of this sort and the deliberate opinions pronounced by deliberative bodies in the town in favour of the scheme. I should be slow to express any objection to the general line of action taken by the hon. Member for Bordesley. I think he has done a great public service in watching every one of these schemes, and taking all the pains he can to prevent any diversion of money left to the poor. But I am at an entire loss to understand how the hon. Gentleman's mind has worked in connection with this case. What is the actual situation? A couple of centuries ago a gentleman left a small amount for the purpose of securing to certain poor children instruction in writing, reading, and ciphering. I challenge hon. Gentlemen to say that there is anything in the will stating that the bequest is for any other purpose. I am afraid that the case has been a little prejudiced by the extreme feeling shown in a certain quarter of the House, and I must say I have listened with regret to some of the expressions used. I hope the question will not be prejudiced by them. Every poor child in Cardiff, as in every other great town, is now provided with instruction in reading, writing, and ciphering. Not free, certainly, but free in a sense, and, if poor, they are freely admitted to the instruction. As the representative of Cardiff, I should be very sorry to stand here in favour of a scheme which deprived the poor of the town of any right. The Vice President of the Council has been good enough to suggest that he does not care for my own status, but I do hope that this case will not be used for the purpose of overthrowing a course of action which has been taken by successive Administrations, and the justice of which I firmly believe in myself.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN (Birmingham, West): I am quite sure the House will thoroughly appreciate the admirable spirit in which the hon. Gentleman who last spoke has couched his remarks, and will pay the attention due to him not only on his own account, but also as representing the borough chiefly concerned in this matter. For my part I am prepared to take, without exception, his statement as to the state of local feeling. But apart from the question of local feeling, we have in considering the merits of this scheme to decide whether the House approves the principle of the Act of 1869 literally carried out in those educational schemes. If the Act of 1869 is to govern all these schemes, why did the Vice President oppose two schemes during the course of his Administration on precisely the same grounds on which we ask for the rejection of this scheme—namely, that they appropriated funds which were intended for the benefit of the poor for the benefit of the higher classes? When the Act of 1869 was passed, it did not seem to enter into the minds of the promoters that by the course they were taking they would be doing an injustice to a large class of the population. Since then attention has been called to the matter, which has been the subject of agitation throughout the country, and I will undertake to say now that if the principle of these Acts were submitted to the country, you would find a total change in public opinion on the subject. My first answer to the right hon. Gentleman is this: I do object to the principle of the Act of 1869, and I object to every scheme which, in accordance with that principle, takes any fund whatsoever from the poor, for whom alone it was intended by the founder of the charity, and applies the money to the education of the upper and middle, and lower middle classes. ["Divide!"] I assure my hon. Friends below the Gangway they will only delay the proceedings by their interruptions. Now I come to the special circumstances

of this case. Supposing we were agreed as to the principle, is the principle I have laid down violated in this particular scheme? The Vice President says it is not. Let me ask the House to consider the figures. Here is a fund of £1,600; £200 goes for scholarships, in connection with the higher elementary schools, £300 goes for 15 scholarships tenable at the college, and £150 goes for the fees of those scholarships. That makes a total of £650; and what becomes of the other £950? In any case the poor are robbed of that; and as for the £650, which nominally is devoted to them, the benefits of that sum are really enjoyed by the children of small shopkeepers and others, who are really above the poor, though attending the elementary schools. A short time ago I had a conversation with a Charity Commissioner on this subject, and I challenged him to point to any scheme recommended to the House by the Charity Commissioners and successive Vice Presidents in which funds have been appropriated to scholarships which were intended to be held by the poor, and to show that in after years it was the poor who benefited by them. He was unable to do so, and I defy anyone to do so now. It is the old fable of the Stork and the Fox. It is no use putting aside scholarships for the poor if you know that hereafter the poor will not be able to earn them. As a matter of fact, these scholarships always fall into the hands of the better educated and richer classes. Turning to the local circumstances in this case, let me say I can understand the interest hon. Members for Wales take in the scheme. They would have us believe they support the scheme upon its merits; but their support of it is due to the bargain the people of Cardiff made some years ago in order to obtain the location of the South Wales College in Cardiff. For that location they undertook to make over this Charity for the benefit of the College. [An HON. MEMBER: With the consent of the Government.] Yes; but it is the Government which have made the scheme necessary. The Welsh Members support the scheme because of their great and legitimate interest in the New College of South Wales, but I ask the House not to let this College, which is going to be of the greatest possible advantage to Wales,

begin with a wrong step. Do not let it be erected on what, after all, is the inheritance of the poor, and what does not belong to the people the majority of whom will be the beneficiaries of the College. I cannot help thinking that the people of Cardiff have sold their inheritance for a mess of pottage. If the interest of Cardiff is to be considered in the matter, if the College is not to be obtained on any other terms, I do not say it would not be worth the while of the people of Cardiff to sacrifice this income, which belongs to the poor, but I maintain the people who gave up this income had no right to give it up. I ask the House to put aside the peculiar local interest which has been represented by the cheering we have had to-night, and to answer the general question. I ask this Parliament whether it is going, by adopting this scheme, to follow the example which, I am sorry to say, has been set by many Parliaments before—once more to give up an endowment which belongs to the poor, and hand it over to people of a better class of life. Would you deal in this way with this endowment if it belonged to any of the professions? Suppose it had been left to the medical profession, would anyone have consented to hand it over to the legal profession? If you would not hand an endowment from one profession to another, why hand an endowment from one class to another, and hand it from a class which, by necessity, is least represented? The continual surrender of these endowments for the purposes of higher education has been bitterly felt by the poorer people throughout the country. I believe it is most unpopular, and I hope that even now, in spite of the strength of the support this scheme has from both Front Benches, the House will determine to reject it.

MR. ARTHUR WILLIAMS rose in his place and claimed to move "That the question be now put"; but Mr. Deputy Speaker withheld his assent, and declined then to put that question.

*MR. MUNDELLA (Sheffield, Brightside Div.): I know the whole history of this scheme, as I was one of the arbitrators selected by the South Wales people to decide on the locality of the

South Wales College. My right hon. Friend the Member for West Birmingham (Mr. Chamberlain) is evidently most imperfectly informed; he is in the same position as the Mover of the Resolution; they are both exceedingly ill-informed as to the scheme and the attendant circumstances. They talk about robbing the poor of Cardiff. My right hon. Friend says Cardiff has sold its inheritance for a message of pottage, and speaks as though the establishment of the University College depended on this scheme, whereas it has been in full working for five years or more. I hope the House will take this matter into its serious consideration. I trust they will not decide the question upon any Party issues, but in the interest of the poor in the interest of the children of the poor, and in no other interest. I am sorry my right hon. Friend the Vice-President did not put the question a little higher than he did, because he knows very well that if this scheme is rejected, we might as well send the Charity Commissioners about their business. ["Hear, hear."] You approve of that, then you ought to dismiss the Vice President of the Council, because this is not the scheme of the Charity Commissioners but of the Government. It is shabby to put the responsibility for the scheme on the Charity Commissioners instead of upon Her Majesty's Government. When I sat on that Bench, I always took the responsibility for these schemes, and they ought to be prepared to take the responsibility for this scheme. I should be sorry if anything my right hon. Friend said injured this scheme, which is calculated to be most beneficial to the people of Cardiff. My right hon. Friend the Member for West Birmingham said he objects to every scheme which applies the property of the poor to the uses of the upper and middle classes, and then he went on to say this did so. First of all, he said that £200 is to go to scholarships for higher education. What is the higher education pro-

posed? It is taking children from the lower elementary schools in Cardiff over 10 years of age to the higher elementary schools. Clause 27 provides for the setting apart yearly of a sum of not more than £200 out of the income to be applied to scholarships to be tenable for such period as the governors think fit at a school in Cardiff known as the Higher Elementary School or any other like public elementary school in Cardiff. Now, my right hon. Friend says that we know very well that the poor will not get these scholarships. Sir, I think he is entirely mistaken, for the brains of the children of the poor are just as good as the brains of the children of the shopkeepers, to which class he seems to fear the benefits of the Charity will go. My right hon. Friend near me, who presided over the Select Committee which inquired into this subject, says the Committee found there were hundreds of poor children who were capable of taking such scholarships as these.

MR. STAVELEY HILL (Staffordshire, Kingswinford): I was a member of that Committee, and I must say that the finding of the Committee was directly in the teeth of that assertion.

*MR. MUNDELLA: I have my information on the authority of the Chairman of the Committee, and the report records the names and addresses of the children. Personally I know that we have higher elementary schools in the town of Sheffield, and I am well aware of the class of children who have won the scholarships in those schools. So also is the right hon. Gentleman the Vice President of the Council as he recently distributed the prizes there. The winners of these scholarships have been poor children, some of them among the poorest of the poor. If to raise the children of the poor to a higher scale of intelligence, if to provide the educational ladder for such of them as are endowed with natural gifts is to be called robbing the poor, I say it is an abuse of language. I call it raising of the poor. And now let me say a word as to the grant of money to be

made to the Cardiff College. That college is not doing merely University work, but it has established an excellent system of night classes, together with the teaching of mechanics, engineering, mining, and subjects applicable to the industries in the immediate neighbourhood; it is for the benefit of the whole people of Cardiff, therefore, that the money should be given to the support of the college. It is true that £600 of the income of the charity is still unappropriated, because, as yet, the fund is not sufficiently large to establish an upper class school; but I am quite sure that when the scheme comes out the Charity Commissioners will do in this case what they have done in others—they will appropriate scholarships in the upper class school to children from the elementary schools of the town. I do trust that the House will approve this scheme. Remember that in 1870 the school of the Charity had fallen into desuetude, the land belonging to the Charity produced nothing, but it has since been looked after, and turned to good account, and the Charity now has an income of £1,500 a year. What is proposed by the scheme is for the best interest of the poor of Cardiff. The school fees of all the poorest children in the town are remitted now. But how much longer are fees going to be paid at all? Fees have been abolished in Scotland, and is it to be supposed that England and Wales are going to be without free education much longer? Looking at the matter from a common sense point of view and apart from any attempt to make cheap popularity out of it, I am quite sure that the House will not reject this scheme.

MR. ARTHUR J. WILLIAMS (G., Glamorgan, S.) rose in his place and claimed to move "That the question be now put."

Question, "That the Question be now put," put and agreed to.

Question put accordingly.

The House divided: Ayes, 43; Noes, 171 (Div. List No. 74).

The House adjourned at 2 o'clock.

HANSARD'S PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES.

No. 4.]

THIRD VOLUME OF SESSION 1889.

[MAY 1.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Friday, 12th April, 1889.

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

— o —

WESTMINSTER ABBEY (MONUMENTAL
CHAPEL) BILL. (*by Order*)

Order for Second Reading read.

MR. HERBERT GARDNER (Essex, Saffron Walden) moved that the Second Reading be deferred until the 3rd of May.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): I hope we shall have an understanding that this Bill be proceeded with on the 3rd of May, or that the Order for the Second Reading will be discharged. This is the fourth time that the Bill has been set down, and although the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) was good enough to give notice that he did not intend to bring it on to-day, I think there should be an understanding that when a private Bill is down on the Paper for Second Reading it should be proceeded with. A considerable number of hon. Members have come down on this and other occasions for the purpose of discussing the Bill.

MR. E. ROBERTSON (Dundee): I am glad that my hon. Friend the Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) has called attention to the inconvenience of the course which is frequently pursued in regard to private Bills. Much inconvenience is occasioned by private Bills—especially a private Bill so much disputed as this is—being repeatedly postponed without adequate notice having

been given to the House. The private Bill legislation of the House is one of the greatest curses we have to contend with, and I think it ought to be made more subservient to the convenience of the House. I am sorry that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford is not present, but I hope that the remarks which have been made on this occasion will be taken notice of not only by him, but by all other Members in charge of public Bills. It is most inconvenient to come down here to discuss a private Bill and then to find that without notice it has been postponed.

Ordered that the Second Reading be deferred until Friday the 3rd of May.

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE
(IRELAND) ACT, 1887 (IMPRISONMENT
OF MR. JOHN FINUCANE, M.P., AND
MR. DAVID SHEEHY, M.P.)

MR. SPEAKER acquainted the House that he had received the following letter relating to the Imprisonment of certain Members of this House:—

Ireland.

Limerick,

11 April 1889.

Sir,

I have the honour to inform you that at a Quarter Sessions for the County of Limerick, held before me on the 8th and 9th of April inst., on the hearing of appeals by the under-mentioned Members of Parliament against convictions under "The Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, 1887," the convictions were affirmed by me, and the appellants were sentenced as follows:—

John Finucane, M.P., to be imprisoned for four calendar months in Limerick Male Gaol.

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posed? It is taking children from the lower elementary schools in Cardiff over 10 years of age to the higher elementary schools. Clause 27 provides for the setting apart yearly of a sum of not more than £200 out of the income to be applied to scholarships to be tenable for such period as the governors think fit at a school in Cardiff known as the Higher Elementary School or any other like public elementary school in Cardiff. Now, my right hon. Friend says that we know very well that the poor will not get these scholarships. Sir, I think he is entirely mistaken, for the brains of the children of the poor are just as good as the brains of the children of the shopkeepers, to which class he seems to fear the benefits of the Charity will go. My right hon. Friend near me, who presided over the Select Committee which inquired into this subject, says the Committee found there were hundreds of poor children who were capable of taking such scholarships as these.

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MR. ARTHUR J. WILLIAMS (G., Glamorgan, S.) rose in his place and claimed to move "That the question be now put."

Question, "That the Question be now put," put and agreed to.

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John Finucane, M.P., to be imprisoned for four calendar months in Limerick Male Gaol.

David Sheehy, M.P., to be imprisoned for five calendar months in the same Gaol.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedt. servant,

T. A. PURCELL,

County Court Judge and Chairman of the County of Limerick.

To the Right Hon.

The Speaker of the House of Commons.

MOTIONS.

METROPOLITAN POLICE PROVISIONAL ORDER BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Stuart-Wortley, Bill to confirm a Provisional Order made by one of Her Majesty's Principal Secretaries of State, under "The Metropolitan Police Act, 1836," relating to lands in the parishes of St. Giles, Camberwell, St. Marylebone, and St. John, Wapping, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Stuart-Wortley and Mr. Secretary Matthews.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 195.]

LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL BILL.

On Motion of Sir John Lubbock, Bill to amend "The Local Government Act, 1838," in relation to the London County Council, ordered to be brought in by Sir John Lubbock, Mr. Beaufoy, Earl Compton, Mr. Firth, Colonel Hughes, Mr. Lawson, and Mr. Howard Vincent.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 196.]

WORKMEN (WOOLWICH ARSENAL).

Select Committee on Workmen (Woolwich Arsenal) nominated of—Mr. Alfred Gathorne-Hardy, Mr. Walter James, Colonel Nolan, and Mr. John Talbot.

EAST INDIA (FINANCIAL STATEMENT).

Address for—

"Copy of the Indian Financial Statement for 1839-90, and of the Proceedings of the Legislative Council of the Governor General thereon."—(Sir George Balfour.)

ECCLESIASTICAL COMMISSIONERS (INCOME AND GRANTS IN WALES).

Return ordered—

"Showing for the year 1888 the net income derived by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners from property in Wales from all sources, and the payments made by them to the Bishops, Chapters, and Archdeacons, &c., in Wales, and the Grants made by the Commissioners in augmentation of benefices in Wales."—(Mr. Thomas Ellis.)

QUESTIONS.

IRELAND—ORANGE DISTURBANCES IN ARMAGH.

Mr. BLANE (Armagh, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if it was true that Mr. Thomas Carter, of Derryall, Portadown, county Armagh, recently repaired a cottier house and let it to a Catholic tenant named John M'Veigh; whether a band of Orangemen assembled and attacked the house on the night of 25th March, and smashed the windows and wrecked the house; if any report was made by the County Inspector of Constabulary, and if any efforts were made to bring the wreckers to justice; if recently the house of Mr. Hosey and many other Catholics in the Portadown district were wrecked, and if the police took any steps in the matter; if the Rev. Patrick M'Conville, C.C., of Derrymacash, was recently assailed with stones by a mob of Orangemen close by a police barrack; what steps were taken by the County Inspector in the matter; and if any report was made to him on the subject?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): The Constabulary Authorities report that Mr. Thomas Carter, of Derryhall, Portadown, county Armagh, did recently let a house to a Catholic tenant. It is not the case that a band of Orangemen attacked the house, smashed the windows and otherwise wrecked it, nor does Mr. Carter, the landlord, who is himself a Protestant, allege that any malicious injury was done to the house. On the night of the 18th of March, on which date St. Patrick's Day was this year celebrated, an Orange drumming band played through the town of Portadown. Some stones appear to have been thrown from among the crowd accompanying the band, which broke one or two panes of glass, and, in one case, three panes in the houses of Mr. Hosey and 11 other Roman Catholics, as well as in the houses of two Protestants, but not one of the houses was wrecked. The police immediately made every effort to trace the persons who broke the windows, but the night was dark, and they have so far failed in identifying any of those concerned. No complaint has been received from the

Rev. Patrick M'Conville, the Catholic curate, as to his having been recently assailed, nor do the police believe that such has been the case. Having seen the rev. gentleman riding home through the town on the night of the 18th, the police called on him the following morning to ascertain whether he had been interfered with, when he told them that some boys in the street had made a kind of shout or cheer as he passed, which caused his pony to go off at a sharp pace, and that he did not know of anything further having occurred on the occasion.

TELEGRAPH CLERKS.

BARON DE ROTHSCHILD (Bucks, Aylesbury) asked the Postmaster General whether he is aware that the prolonged universal agitation in 1880-81 amongst the Telegraph Clerks, was stated by the Postmaster General, Mr. Fawcett, to be chiefly caused by inadequacy of pay and stagnation of promotion; whether the Fawcett Scheme was intended to remedy this grievance; whether, in the Central Office, there are senior clerks at the maximum of their class, £190 per annum, who continuously perform the same responsible duties as assistant superintendents, without partaking of the latter's superior pay and privileges, or any extra remuneration; whether this deprives them, and consequently first-class officers, and others, of legitimate promotion; whether it is true, that the maximum pay of assistant superintendents which was raised in 1881 from £210 to £270 per annum, was again raised in 1887 to £300 per annum, whereas the ordinary promotion from the first-class to the senior, which has gone on uninterruptedly at intervals of from 6 to 18 months since 1881, is denied to the clerks at present waiting at the maximum of the former class; and, whether, having regard to the long and faithful service, and the fact that they are fully qualified to perform the duties of the class above them, he will consider the claim of these officers to rise above £140 per annum, and thus carry out the spirit of settlement of 1881?

*THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES, University of Cambridge): Mr. Fawcett said that the agitation amongst the Telegraph Clerks was due, among other causes, to "inadequacy of pay,

arising to some extent from stagnation in promotion"; but in speaking of stagnation in promotion, there is little doubt that Mr. Fawcett had principally in view the telegraphist of the lowest class, who, at that time, could only attain the maximum pay of 27s. a week in the large provincial offices and £65 a year in London. Under the scheme proposed by Mr. Fawcett this class was amalgamated with the next higher class, and thus the grievance of stagnation at the point of 27s. and £65 was removed, the telegraphists being enabled to rise without interruption to a maximum of 38s. a week in the large provincial offices and of £100 a year in London. It is not the case that there are Senior Clerks in the Central Telegraph Offices who continuously perform the same responsible duties as Assistant Superintendents. Some of them do perform supervising duties of a less important character, and all of them are liable to be called upon to take the places of the Assistant Superintendents temporarily, during the absence of those officers. It is only in this way that they can prove their fitness for promotion to the class of Assistant Superintendents, and the practice does not deprive them, or any other officers, of legitimate promotion; on the contrary, it helps them to obtain promotion. The maximum pay of the Assistant Superintendents was raised to £270 a year in connection with Mr. Fawcett's scheme, at the same time that the maximum pay of the Senior Telegraphists was raised from £160 to £190. It was again raised to £300 a year in 1887, because, owing to the general extension of business, the responsibilities and duties of the Assistant Superintendents had become more onerous, whilst no similar change had taken place in the duties of the general body of telegraphists. Both the letter and the spirit of the settlement in 1881 have, as far as I can ascertain, been carried out; and it is not in my power to promote officers to a higher class until vacancies occur in that class.

IRELAND—LAND COMMISSION—NEWRY.

MR. BLANE asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he could say when the Land Commission intends hearing cases listed in the

Newry Union since November, 1887, for the fixing of fair rents?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The Land Commissioners inform me that a Sub-Commission will commence its sitting for that portion of the Newry Poor Law Union which is in the County of Down towards the end of the present or early next month. The list of cases will be issued in a few days. The date has not yet been fixed for a sitting for that portion of the Union which is in the county of Armagh.

GUN WHARF BARRACKS, PORTSMOUTH.

COLONEL COTTON (Cheshire, Wirral) asked the Secretary of State for War whether his attention had been called to a case of typhoid fever amongst the officers now quartered in the Gun Wharf Barracks, Portsmouth; whether these barracks had been for some years condemned as unfit for officers and soldiers to be quartered in; and whether he would investigate the case and take steps to have the sanitary arrangements amended?

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. E. STANHOPE, (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): Unfortunately it is not true that Lieutenant Desborough, R.A., has been removed from the Gun Wharf Barracks at Portsmouth suffering from typhoid fever. These barracks have never been condemned, but they are not in such a state of sanitary repair as modern ideas demand. We will do what is immediately possible to remedy it. Some other barracks in the United Kingdom are in an equally bad condition, and the whole question of barracks has, for some time past, been receiving my most serious consideration. As I have already stated, I hope to make proposals to the House this Session dealing with the whole question.

CRIEFF EPISCOPAL SCHOOL.

MR. HALDANE (Haddington) asked the Lord Advocate whether the Scottish Education Department have finally determined to make an annual grant to the Crieff Episcopal School?

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. P. B. ROBERTSON, Buteshire): The Scotch Education Department have placed the Crieff Episcopal School upon the list of schools to which annual grants may be made, having been advised that the

provisions of the Education Act did not warrant them in refusing recognition to that School.

SHERIFF CLERKS.

MR. CUNINGHAME GRAHAM (Lanarkshire, N.W.) asked the Lord Advocate if he could lay upon the Table a Return of the emoluments of the Sheriff Clerk Deputes of Lanarkshire, also the salary of the Sheriff Clerk and of the clerks employed by the Sheriff Clerk?

*MR. J. P. B. ROBERTSON: I shall be glad to furnish the hon. Gentleman with the information he desires, but I do not think there is any need of a Return.

TRAVELLING TAX.

MR. JAMES (Gateshead) asked the Secretary to the Treasury if a letter had been addressed by the Solicitor of the Inland Revenue to the Secretary of the Travelling Tax Abolition Committee, in which he said—

“The difference of opinion between the Government and the Travelling Tax Abolition Committee is as to the meaning of the word ‘railway,’ as employed in 5 and 6 Vic. c. 79, and that it has never been asserted or even suggested that that meaning was limited by any subsequent Act or judicial decision;”

and if he would explain in what manner the word railway in the above mentioned Act is limited, so as to exclude street railways, called tramways, laid down on public land, while railways made on private property are taxed?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON, Leeds, N.): I understand that a letter of the Solicitor of the Inland Revenue, written in January of last year, contained the sentence quoted by the hon. Member, but it also contains the following paragraph:—

“I beg, however, to refer you to the opinion given in September, 1880, by Mr. Watkin Williams, Q.C., and Mr. William Wills upon a case submitted to them, as I believe, by the Travelling Tax Abolition Committee, in which they state that tramways in general, as described in the case, are not liable to the railway passenger duty imposed by the Act.

I am advised that the grounds upon which the opinion is based are that the Act confines the charge to receipts for passengers on a railway which is the property of some company or person, and does not cover the case of a tramway

laid down on land which is the property, not of some company or person, but of the public.

SCHOOL BOARD AT TILBURY DOCKS.

MAJOR RASCH (Essex, S.E.) asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education whether the Education Department has any other reason for compelling the formation of a School Board at Tilbury Docks other than the fact that the existing buildings are not of brick or stone; whether the Department is aware that as Tilbury is below the level of the Thames, it is impossible to build with brick foundations; and, whether, as the schools are self-supporting, and no complaint has been made with regard to education or finance, the Department will cancel their Order?

*THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL ON EDUCATION (Sir W. HART DYKE, Kent, Dartford): A final notice requiring additional accommodation for 130 children was published in March, 1888. The Department has never accepted an iron building as permanently satisfying the requirements of a notice, and no representations were made as to the difficulty of building in brick or stone at Tilbury; it is, moreover, understood that the Roman Catholic school lately built there is a substantial brick building, and that there are other brick buildings in the neighbourhood, among them a large block of lofty model dwellings for workmen. The order for the election of a School Board cannot be cancelled.

MAJOR RASCH: I beg to give notice, in consequence of the answer of the right hon. Gentleman, that I will call attention to the matter on the Estimates, and move the reduction of the Vote in Class 4.

POST OFFICE ARRANGEMENTS AT SCHULL.

MR. GILHOOLY (Cork, W.) asked the Postmaster General whether, in view of the growing importance of Schull as a fishing station, he would have arrangements made to keep the Telegraph Office there open from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. during the fishing season?

*MR. RAIKES: In reply to the hon. Member, I have to say that inquiries are now being made on the subject to which he refers, and as soon as I receive the

necessary Report, I shall be glad to consider whether some extension of the hours of attendance at the Telegraph Office can be conceded.

IRELAND—TRIAL OF MR. FINACUNE, MR. SHEEHY, AND MR. MORAN.

MR. ROWNTREE (Scarborough) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the report of the trial of Mr. Finacune, M.P., Mr. Sheehy, M.P., and Mr. Moran, at Limerick, on Monday, from which it appears that, although Judge Purcell stated that Mr. Sheehy, M.P., and Mr. Moran might go out if they wished to do so, District Inspector Royse replied openly in Court, "I won't allow them to go out. I am responsible for their custody here," and that the Judge had to repeat his instructions before the constabulary permitted them to be complied with; if it is permitted to a District Inspector in Ireland to refuse to carry out the instructions of a Judge in his own Court; and if any, and what, communications have been made to Inspector Royse by the authorities with regard to his conduct on this occasion?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: District Inspector Royse states that the report mentioned is utterly misleading. The facts are that during the trial of Mr. Sheehy, M.P., and Mr. Moran, these gentlemen being about to leave, the District Inspector prevented them. They appealed to the Judge, who said they might be allowed to do so, and the Judge further stating, in reply to an inquiry from the District Inspector, that it was not necessary that they should be accompanied by an escort, they were at once allowed to leave the Court. There does not appear to have been any repetition by the Judge of his instructions, nor any necessity for such, the incident not having occupied a minute's time.

THE CENTRAL TELEGRAPH OFFICE.

EARL COMPTON (York, W.R., Barnsley) asked the Postmaster General whether any answer has been given to the petition of the male staff (established) of the Central Telegraph Office, which was presented in January, 1888, praying for the removal of certain grievances; whether the present system of classification can be altered in

order to allow uninterrupted promotion of telegraphists up to a salary of £190; whether all pay is stopped during sick leave in the first, second, and senior classes, while the same rule does not apply to the higher paid officials; whether only one Bank Holiday, or an equivalent, is granted to telegraphists every 18 months; whether any change can be made in the system of long and short duties; what is the rate of pay for overtime work, and what is the largest number of hours in one day that a clerk may be kept at his duties; and whether Her Majesty's Treasury has been consulted as to any alterations in the present arrangements which may be considered advisable by the Postmaster General?

*MR. RAIKES: On the 10th December last I gave the following reply to a question on the same subject which was put to me by the hon. Member for the Southern Division of County Down:—

"The petition to which the hon. Member refers prayed that a previous one, to which an unfavourable reply had been given, should be reconsidered. It is, I think, detrimental to the interests of the service that, when a petition has been fully considered and an answer given; a fresh Memorial should be immediately presented in the form of a rejoinder. I am not in a position to hold out hopes of any change in the status of the Memorialists which would largely increase the expenditure of the Department; but the subject shall receive further consideration."

I have now to inform the noble Lord that I am not prepared to alter the present system of classification so as to allow uninterrupted promotion up to a salary of £190. As to Bank Holidays, telegraphists can only to a comparatively small extent enjoy the privilege of being absent from duty on those days; but this is only one of the conditions of their employment which they accept when they join the service, and they are in no worse position in this respect than many other classes of the community. As far as possible, steps have been taken to meet the wishes of the staff in regard to the alteration of long and short duties. Such duties cannot, however, be abolished without an unjustifiable waste of force. The rate of pay for overtime is one-eighth of a day's pay for every hour during the daytime, and one-seventh of a day's pay for every hour during the night, with an additional rate of one-

fourth for any extra duty performed after three hours of extra duty. The number of hours in one day for which a telegraphist may be kept on duty is governed by the exigencies of the service. I do not consider that any alteration in these arrangements is practicable, and I have, therefore, not consulted Her Majesty's Treasury on the subject; but I may say that there remains one question—namely, that of payment during sick absence, which is still under my consideration. This question, however, is one which affects not merely the telegraphists of the Central Telegraph Office, but a large body of officers elsewhere.

IRELAND—MEETINGS IN GWEEDORE.

MR. HENRY J. WILSON (York, W. R., Holmfirth) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is now aware that, after Deputy Divisional Commissioner Allan Cameron and District Inspector Concannon had ascertained, on the morning of Sunday the 17th of March, that the hon. Member for Holmfirth did not intend to address any meeting in the Gweedore district, a detective followed him during the afternoon; that he and his wife were closely watched, by a constable in uniform, on Sunday night, while walking up and down in front of M'Bride's Hotel; that he was followed, on Monday 18th March, from Middletown Barrack to Derrybeg Chapel by armed constables on a car; that the wife of John M'Cafferty, a car driver, was roused up at night, on Tuesday the 19th of March, by Head Constable Mahony, who desired to ascertain where the hon. Member for Holmfirth had gone, and when he would return; and on what authority it was stated that "as soon as it was ascertained who he was, and that he had apparently no intention of addressing any such meeting, no police supervision was exercised?"

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The local Constabulary Authorities report that they have made careful inquiry relative to the charges the hon. Member makes against the police, and find that he labours altogether under a misapprehension. It is not the case that he was followed by a detective on Sunday afternoon, March 17. The detectives obeyed the positive orders

which they had received from the District Inspector, that they should not watch the hon. Member after he had given the assurance that he would not hold a meeting. It is also not the case that either he or his wife was watched on that night by a constable in uniform. It is true that the police patrol mentioned proceeded on duty on Monday, the 18th of March, but it is not the case that it was following the hon. Member, the fact of its having proceeded along the same road having no reference to him. It is not a fact that Mrs. McCafferty was aroused at night on the 19th to ascertain where the hon. Member had gone. Her house, with a number of others, was searched for persons believed to be concerned in the murder of District Inspector Martin. The hon. Member's name was neither mentioned, nor was any reference whatever made to him.

MR. H. J. WILSON: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary if he will afford me any kind of means of testing the reliability of the utterly erroneous statement he has read? (*Cries of "Order."*)

MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): My hon. Friend the Member for Holmfirth (Mr. H. J. Wilson) is not an Irish but an English Member; and will the right hon. Gentleman explain how it is he came to be deprived of his right, as a citizen, to address a public meeting? Did the police supply police passes, in order to give him facility of movement?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: My answer to the last question is in the negative. In regard to the other question, I presume the authorities were of opinion that a meeting of the kind indicated at that place and particular time might lead to a breach of the peace.

ROYAL NAVAL ARTILLERY VOLUNTEERS.

SIR WALTER FOSTER (Derby, Ilkeston) asked the First Lord of the Admiralty whether, in view of the statements recently made with regard to Royal Naval Artillery Volunteers, their utility would be enhanced by the re-constitution of the corps as Royal Marine Artillery Volunteers?

*THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (LORD G. HAMILTON, Midlesex, Ealing): Under the Act of Parliament which established the Royal Naval Artillery Volunteers provision

was made for their being employed either on land or at sea, as the Admiralty may direct, within certain limits named in the Act, so that I do not see that a re-constitution of the corps such as that suggested in the question would open out any fresh field of employment whereby the Admiralty could utilize their services. All land defences being under the War Office, the power of employing the corps on shore is practically a dead letter as far as the Admiralty are concerned. I understand the Royal Naval Artillery Volunteers have expressed a decided objection to transferring their services to the War Department, so that this source of employment does not seem likely to be available. I believe that a meeting of the officers commanding these Volunteers is likely to take place, and any proposals emanating from such a meeting will be carefully considered by the Admiralty.

POLLUTION OF SCOTCH LOCHS.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) asked the Lord Advocate whether he is aware that the opinion of the Dean of Faculty has now been obtained as to the possible proceedings for preventing the continued pollution of Loch Long and Loch Goil; whether according to that opinion there are serious technical obstacles to any proceedings by private individuals, which obstacles do not exist in the case of proceedings by the Crown; and whether the Government, as representing the Crown, which is the proper guardian for the public of the soil of the foreshore and of the bed of the Firth of the Clyde, will now take steps to prevent the continued injury to the foreshores and fishing by the wholesale pollution reported on to the House in 1887, and since persisted in?

*MR. J. P. B. ROBERTSON: The private notice given me by the hon. Member was the first intimation I had that any opinion had been obtained upon this matter by the distinguished lawyer mentioned. I have not seen the opinion, but if the hon. Member will furnish me with a copy of the case, and of the opinion, I shall be glad to consider it.

POSTAL DELIVERY IN ULSTER.

MR. PINKERTON (Galway) asked the Postmaster General if he will grant a Return of towns in the Province of

Ulster, having a population of 2,000 and upwards, in which there is no postal delivery on Sundays?

*MR. RAIKES: In reply to the question asked by the hon. Member, I can inform him that there are seven towns in Ulster which have no Sunday delivery by postmen, the delivery being to callers at the Post Office, namely Antrim, Ballymoney, Belfast, Londonderry, Newtownards, Portadown, and Ballymena.

MINE OWNERS AND WORKMEN.

MR. BURT (Morpeth) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department if his attention has been called to the fact that great dissatisfaction has been caused by certain mine owners refusing to meet checkweighmen on deputations representing the workmen; whether he is aware that some employers who formerly received the checkweighmen on such deputations now refused to do so, alleging that the new Mines Regulation Act precludes them from doing so; and whether there is any section of the Act that has altered the law on this point?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (MR. STUART WORTLEY, Sheffield, Hallam): Yes, Sir; the Secretary of State has been informed that in some instances complaints have arisen in consequence of the unwillingness of the owners or their representatives to meet checkweighers on deputations representing the men. If it is contended that the Coal Mines Regulation Act of 1887 has any bearing on the point the Secretary of State can only regret that such an erroneous impression should prevail, as that Act has made no alteration in the law, and in no way precludes mine owners from adopting a course which is likely to remove misunderstanding and to prevent friction.

ARMY PRIVILEGES.

MR. BUCHANAN (Edinburgh, W.) asked the First Lord of the Admiralty whether he can consider applications for the Indian Staff Corps and the Army Service Corps from Subalterns of the Royal Marine Artillery, who were appointed before the rule prohibiting any transfers was made, and who joined the Service in the full belief and expectation that they would be allowed the

privileges expressly declared by the Admiralty to be open to them?

LORD G. HAMILTON: I fear I am unable to sanction any exception to the rule now in force, which was only adopted after its necessity had been proved. I should explain that the officers of the Marines have no claim or prescriptive right to these appointments, and the Admiralty must exercise their discretion as to whether or not they can spare officers or allow them to serve in corps unconnected with the Naval Service.

THE BENGOLLYN.

MR. HALLEY STEWART (Lincolnshire, Spalding) asked the President of the Board of Trade whether he is aware that the *Bengollyn* left the port of Liverpool on Wednesday the 20th March, encountering a furious gale the same evening; that on the day of sailing the barometer marked the very low reading of 29.02, and that it had been steadily falling for five consecutive days; that the warning north cone signal was hoisted at the port of Liverpool; whether anything has since been heard of the *Bengollyn* except that wreckage of the ship, including some seamen's chests, has drifted ashore on the coast of North Wales; and whether it is possible to frame any regulations, appealing to which captains will be able more readily to resist an owner's undue pressure to put a vessel to sea in the teeth of manifest peril to his own life and that of his crew?

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (SIR M. HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): Inquiry has been ordered, and when the report which will deal with the points raised in the hon. Member's question has been received I shall be happy to forward it to him.

IRELAND—THE SPECIAL COMMISSION —THE PRISONER TRACEY.

*MR. M'CARTEN (Down, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the prisoner Thomas Tracey, before his removal from Belfast Gaol to Millbank, was supplied with dinners of the first quality, including beer or porter, daily, and if he was also daily supplied with a copy of the *Freeman's Journal*, containing the Reports of the Special Commission; whether he has recently been brought back to

Belfast Gaol; whether, since his refusal to swear what was required by Head Constable Preston, and since his return to Belfast Gaol, Tracey has been obliged to live on ordinary prison fare, the Police Authorities having discontinued the supply of such dinners to him; whether he will state the reason for the different treatment given to Tracey before he was brought to London as a witness, and since his return; and whether Tracey has been supplied with the *Freeman's Journal* during the present week, or since the examination of Richard Pigott; and, if not, why?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: With regard to the inquiry in the first paragraph, I beg to refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave to a similar question put by him on the 4th March. If he refers to *Hansard* he will find I said—

“I understand that the Prison Authorities do not provide bail prisoners with food and drink of the nature indicated in the Question. The dinners supplied to Tracey at Belfast were not at the expense of the proprietor of the *Times*, nor had they any connection whatever with the Special Commission trial, but were provided by the Police Authorities in connection with a totally different matter. A newspaper was also supplied to the man under precisely the same circumstances.”

The prisoner has recently been re-transferred to Belfast Prison. As regards the third, fourth, and fifth paragraphs, from the date on which the man was removed from Belfast to London to give evidence before the Special Commission the police ceased to supply him with food or to afford him any other indulgence.

IRISH JURIES.

MR. MURPHY (Dublin, St. Patrick's) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, whether he is aware that, when a Protestant game-keeper, named Frackleton, was tried last week in Dublin for the wilful murder of a man named Kavanagh, a special jury, on the application of the prisoner, was empanelled; whether it is a fact that no juror was ordered by the Crown to stand aside while the prisoner exhausted his challenges; whether the result was a jury composed entirely of the co-religionists of the prisoner; whether the verdict was one of manslaughter; whether his attention has been drawn to the fact that the Attorney General asked Judge Murphy,

after the jury retired, to say “that there was not a shadow or a particle of evidence reducing the crime to manslaughter,” and that the Judge, in sentencing the prisoner, said that he feared “lest in any way he had failed in placing before the jury the irresistible case made against the prisoner of having taken away the life of one human being, and having all but taken away the life of another, without any provocation from the man Kavanagh now dead, or from the other victim of his drunken fury;” whether he is aware that the murdered man, Kavanagh, has left a widow and three children in a destitute condition; and, will the Government, following a precedent in a somewhat similar case, grant them a sum of money from the Compassionate Fund?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I proceed to answer those portions of the question to which a reply was not given yesterday. The jury was not a special one. The Attorney General did make the application referred to. The Judge did make the observations attributed to him. It is believed that Kavanagh left a wife and children; their precise circumstances are unknown. I am not aware of any precedent for the course suggested in the last paragraph, but if the hon. Member will supply me with the particulars, I shall be glad to consider it.

MR. CLANCY (Dublin County, N.): Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that two or three years ago in the time of Lord Spencer an Orangeman was murdered in Belfast and the Government of that day gave to the widow and family a sum of £100 out of the Compassionate Fund?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: That would not justify the Government in making an allowance in the present case if the circumstances are altogether different. If it can be shown that money has been given from a benevolent fund under similar circumstances, I shall be glad to consider the matter.

SWAZILAND.

MR. CHAMBERLAIN (Birmingham, W.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether King Umbandine has recently addressed any petition either to Sir Arthur Havelock or to the Colonial Office, praying for a British Protectorate of Swaziland; and,

if so, what reply has or will be made to his application?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Baron H. DE WORMS, Liverpool, Toxteth): No such petition has been received at the Colonial Office, nor is there any information of such a petition having been addressed to Sir Arthur Havelock. I may refer my right hon. Friend to the replies on this subject which I gave to the hon. Member for Leicester on the 25th of February and 8th instant.

NAVAL DESIGNS.

LORD CHARLES BERESFORD (Marylebone): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether he will lay upon the Table of the House the Papers relative to the designs and building of what is known as the *Admiral* class of battleship?

LORD G. HAMILTON: These Papers and Minutes are of a very confidential character, and could not be made public without detriment to naval interests. I may, however, state that full and frequent discussion took place, both in writing and conversation, between the different members of the Board before that type of vessel was introduced into the Navy.

UNARMoured BATTLESHIPS.

LORD CHARLES BERESFORD: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether, considering the recent statements made by distinguished Naval Officers as to the possibility of the unarmoured-ended class of battleships being put out of action by small gun fire without their armour being pierced, he will reconsider his objection to giving a fair and practical trial by perforation, in order to settle the doubt which exists as to the stability of these vessels with their unarmoured portions wounded; the names of the vessels referred to are the *Ajax*, *Agamemnon*, *Anson*, *Benbow*, *Camperdown*, *Collingwood*, *Howe*, *Rodney*, *Colossus*, *Edinburgh*, *Inflexible*, *Sanspareil*, and *Victoria*?

LORD G. HAMILTON: I am not aware that any distinguished naval officer with a knowledge of modern ordnance has advanced the opinion stated, but even if that opinion had been stated it only alludes to one of the many possibilities that will occur in a

future naval action. To test this possibility and exclude all others would be a most misleading and mischievous experiment. I may add that in the opinion of my naval and technical advisers there is no ship afloat or building belonging to any foreign Navy of the same date as the vessels referred to in the question that has not an inherent weakness of some kind which will expose her in action to risks just as great as, if not greater than, those alluded to by my noble Friend.

LORD C. BERESFORD: In consequence of the answer of my noble Friend I shall on the first possible occasion call attention to the necessity of removing the doubt as to these ships' stability under certain circumstances.

IRELAND—JUDICIAL BUSINESS IN DONEGAL.

MR. BLANE asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether Moville, one of the most important towns in Donegal, might have the benefit of a County Judge's Court; and, if, on a former occasion, Government promised inquiry into the matter, and if result can be stated?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: In consequence of several memorials which were received, the Quarter Sessions for the County of Donegal were re-arranged by Proclamation of the 22nd May, 1885; but there was then no application from or on behalf of Moville. The last memorial received from Moville appears to have been some 17 or 18 years ago. At that time the matter was fully considered by the then Lord Lieutenant and the Privy Council, who did not feel themselves able to comply with the prayer of the memorial.

THE LAND ACT (1887)—INSTALMENT ORDERS.

MR. CHANCE (Kilkenny, S.): I beg to ask Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland whether the procedure under Section 30 of "The Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1887," to obtain a stay of execution and an instalment order in cases of proceedings for rent usually involves an appearance to the writ, a motion for judgment, a cross motion under the section, both moved on notice by counsel and grounded on affidavits, the marking and registering judgment, and the payment of court fees on the order;

whether the costs of a plaintiff in such case usually amounts to about £9, and the defendant's costs to about £5, both of which the tenant defendant has to pay; and, whether the Government intends to take any steps to secure the simplification of procedure and reduction of expense in such cases?

MR. MADDEN: After the Easter Recess, perhaps I may be able to give an answer to the question whether it is possible to secure a simplification and reduction of costs in these cases.

H. M. S. SULTAN.

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.): I wish to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether it is proposed to hold an inquiry as to the occurrences subsequent to the stranding of the *Sultan*, and the measures taken to save the ship; and, if so, what will be the form of the inquiry, and when and where will it be held?

LORD G. HAMILTON: It will be necessary to hold a further inquiry into the occurrences subsequent to the stranding of the *Sultan*, in which the injury inflicted on the ship, and the working of the watertight compartments and other arrangements, will have to be investigated. I am not yet in a position to state what the form of the inquiry will be, nor where and when it will be held.

IRELAND—SECRET POLICE CIRCULARS.

MR. JAMES STUART (Shoreditch): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether a circular was sent out to constabulary stations from the offices of divisional magistrates in November, 1888, headed "Very Secret Agrarian Crime," requesting certain particulars regarding all members of the National League and of the Land League convicted of agrarian crime since September, 1879; whether among the particulars requested in respect of such cases, were the "names and present addresses of witnesses generally, and what each can prove," and "any points of interest between League and offence"; and whether any of the information collected in consequence of this circular was placed in the hands of the solicitor for the *Times* newspaper?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have always refused to answer questions as to such alleged private circulars, because they must either have become known through a breach of confidence or they must have no existence.

MR. STUART: I suppose the right hon. Gentleman does not deny the existence of the circular.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I neither deny nor affirm it. That is the answer which I have invariably given to such questions, and which everyone who holds any office is, I think, bound to give.

EVICCTIONS IN WICKLOW.

MR. M'CARTAN (Down, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, with reference to the case of Charles Frizelle, Castlekevin, county Wicklow, whether he will state under what section of "The Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1881," the tenant could have applied to the County Court Judge to stay the ejectment proceedings taken against him by the landlord for the non-payment of the old rent; whether he is aware that the tenant, having served his originating notice to fix fair rent before November 1887, was entitled to the benefit of the fair rent from 1st May, 1887, but, owing to the insufficient number of Sub-Commissioners appointed by the Lord Lieutenant, Frizelle could not get his fair rent fixed up to the time of the service of the eviction notice; whether the service of this notice converted him into a caretaker, and thus deprived him of the right to have his application to fix a fair rent heard; and whether he will make some provision to meet such cases of hardship where the tenant is willing to pay a fair rent, but is unable to get such rent fixed owing to the insufficient number of Sub-Commissioners?

MR. BALFOUR: I am sorry I have not with me my memorandum as to this question. I will ask the hon. Member to put it on Monday.

TELEGRAPHISTS.

MR. M'CARTAN: I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether promotions from the maximum of the first-class to the senior class at the Central Telegraph Office have been accorded within the past three years to telegraphists who had only been waiting five months; and

whether there are telegraphists who have now been waiting over two years for promotion; and, if so, whether he will take their case into consideration?

*THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES, Cambridge University): The facts are as implied in the hon. Member's question. In the one case there were vacancies; in the other there are not. As soon as vacancies occur, the claims and qualifications of the first-class telegraphists will certainly be taken into consideration.

THE PILOTAGE BILL.

MR. LLEWELLYN (Somerset, N.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will inform the House how soon after Easter the Pilotage Bill will be introduced?

*SIR MICHAEL HICKS BEACH: Some time ago I circulated a draft copy of this Bill, and I am now considering the suggestions received. I hope to be able to introduce the Bill about a fortnight after the Easter Recess. The hon. Member for Sunderland has a question on this matter on the Paper. In reply to him I may say I shall be happy to send a copy to any Member who desires.

MR. HANDEL COSSHAM (Bristol): I should like to have a copy, as I have received several letters in relation to the matter.

THE MATTHEW ARNOLD MEMORIAL.

MR. TOMLINSON (Preston): I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education whether the attention of the Committee of Council has been drawn to a circular which, from its contents, it would appear that it is intended to have circulated amongst teachers in public elementary schools headed, "Proposed Memorial to the late Mr. Matthew Arnold"; whether he is aware that the circular in question contains the following clauses:—

"The Committee hope that managers, teachers, and children will co-operate in raising this memorial. It has been determined that the subscription of a teacher shall be from sixpence to five shillings, and that that of a scholar shall not exceed one penny. The Committee think that children should not be asked individually to subscribe, but they suggest that a general invitation to do so might be given to them to enable them to participate in the memorial;"

Mr. M'Cartan

Whether the Committee of Council intend to take any steps to prevent any undue pressure being brought to bear upon teachers in elementary schools to induce them to subscribe to the memorial; and whether they will take some mode of expressing their disapprobation of bringing any pressure to bear upon teachers?

*SIR W. HART DYKE: I have no knowledge whatever of the matter, nor should I be justified in assuming that any undue pressure was likely to be exercised in support of the proposed memorial. The teachers are well able to take care of themselves. The Department has no power to interfere.

MR. TOMLINSON: I beg to give notice that I will call attention to the subject on the Education Vote.

FOYNES HARBOUR.

MR. MURPHY (Dublin, St. Patrick's): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he can give definite information if the Board of Works will afford the necessary facilities for passenger and fish traffic at Foynes Harbour, or permit railway and steamboat companies to make the necessary arrangements without imposing impossible conditions.

MR. JACKSON: Yes, Sir.

IRISH PRISON TREATMENT.

MR. SEXTON (Belfast W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will appoint to the Commission on Prison Treatment any Irishman acceptable to Irish public opinion; and, whether he can now name the Members of the Commission.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: In answer to the right hon. Gentleman I have to say that it does not appear to me that the matters which the Committee on Prison Treatment will have to decide have any relation to public opinion on political matters. The reference of the Committee will be strictly limited to the points which I have on previous occasions indicated as being those with regard to which I thought a change was desirable, and certainly I have no inclination to frame the constitution of the Committee in a manner which is likely to preclude change, as my own personal opinion is in favour of it. If an Irishman were appointed upon the principle

suggested by the right hon. Gentleman, it would be necessary also to appoint an Englishman, Scotchman, and, I suppose, a Welshman on similar principles; and it is, in my opinion, desirable to restrict the number of the Committee, and to remove from it, as far as possible, any political flavour. The fifth name has not yet been settled.

MR. SEXTON: I said nothing about political opinion. I wish to ask whether the right hon. Gentleman will appoint men in whose impartiality the public will have confidence, and when the fifth name will be given?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: As soon as we have received the acceptance of the gentleman who has been asked to take the position, the fifth name will be given. With regard to the first part of the right hon. Gentleman's question, I would say that the Chairman (Lord Aberdare) is a man who entirely fulfills the conditions which the right hon. Gentleman has laid down. I will endeavour to see that the fifth man does the same.

MR. O'BRIEN.

MR. SEXTON: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland what is the cause of the delay in presenting the evidence taken in the inquiry concerning the prison treatment of Mr. William O'Brien, M.P.; and when it will be presented?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The papers will be ready on Monday.

THE ROYAL ARTILLERY BAND.

CAPTAIN HEATHCOTE (Staffordshire, N.W.): I wish to ask the Secretary of State for War why H.R.H. the the Commander-in-Chief has refused to allow the Royal Artillery Band to play at a *fete* at Medeley; and if there is any regulation as to military bands being confined to their own districts; and, if so, on what occasions has this rule been relaxed in the case of the Royal Artillery Band since June, 1888?

*MR. E. STANHOPE: The reason for the refusal to allow the band of the Royal Artillery to play at the *fete* in question was that the occasion was not considered of sufficient public importance to justify a departure from a rule laid down by the military authorities—that military bands are not, except under special circumstances, to play outside their

own military districts. On 23 occasions since June, 1888, engagements outside the Woolwich district have been allowed to be accepted by the Royal Artillery Band, or by portions of it.

CAPTAIN HEATHCOTE: I should like to ask whether, considering that the rule has thus been broken 23 times in a little over nine months, the right hon. Gentleman thinks it is worth maintaining?

*MR. E. STANHOPE: I hardly presume, not being a military man, to express an opinion upon it. But if my hon. Friend cares to have my personal opinion in answer to his question, I should say that the rule does not seem to me worth maintaining.

LOCAL RATING.

MR. JAMES (Gateshead): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury, whether, in accordance with the undertaking given by the Chancellor of the Exchequer in Committee on the Local Government (England and Wales) Bill, it is the intention of the Government to submit any measure during the present Session upon the subject of local rating, taking into consideration how the rates may be adjusted between owners and occupiers?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: The question would seem to imply that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had undertaken that the Government would deal with the subject of rating this Session. No such undertaking was given. What the Chancellor of the Exchequer said was that the whole question of rating would be considered by the Government. I am afraid, however, there is no probability of the subject being dealt with this Session.

THE 1887 BURMESE CAMPAIGN.

MR. GROTRIAN (Hull, E.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty when the medals for the campaign in Burmah of 1885 will be awarded to the officers and men of the Royal Navy and Royal Marines who participated in it; and whether he will explain the delay in issuing them?

*LORD G. HAMILTON: The issue of these medals is dependent on their being received from the Government of India; but I understand that they will be supplied shortly, when immediate steps will be taken for their distribution.

CUSTOMS AND BOARD OF TRADE—
STATISTICAL RETURNS—PERU AND
CHILI.

MR. LABOUCHERE: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade, whether he can explain how it is that the nitrate and guano shipped from the provinces of Tarapaca and Atacama, which were ceded by Peru to Chili in 1883, are set down in the Statistical Returns of the Customs and Board of Trade as shipped from Peru; and whether he has observed that, in some financial newspapers, this error has been attributed to the fact that Her Majesty's Government does not recognise the cession of these provinces by Peru to Chili?

*SIR MICHAEL HICKS BEACH: In the absence of official information respecting any changes in the boundaries of Bolivia, Peru, and Chili, no alteration in the list of countries and ports as distinguished in the Statistical Records has been made, but attention has already been given to the points to which the hon. Member calls attention, so that the necessary adjustments may be made in future.

IRELAND—CRIMINAL LAW AND PRO-
CEDURE ACT—TREATMENT OF
PRISONERS.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE (Bradford, C.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Irish Members, Priests, and others at present in prison, under the Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act for speeches made or for the publication of speeches in proclaimed districts have, since the issue of the new Provisional Prison Rules, been subjected, like common criminals, to the plank bed, deprived of the means of occupying themselves with reading and writing, and compelled to clean out their own cells?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: In answer to the right hon. Gentleman, I have to say that the new Provisional Prison Rules have no relation to any of the points mentioned in his question.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: I suppose they are been subjected to the plank bed, and other things to which I refer.

MR. BALFOUR: They are subject to the ordinary prison discipline.

THE SCOTCH LOCAL GOVERNMENT
BILL.

MR. BUCHANAN (Edinburgh, E): Will the right hon. Gentleman the Lord Advocate have the Local Government Bill for Scotland circulated before the Recess?

*MR. J. P. B. ROBERTSON: Every effort is being made to do so, Sir.

THE CENSUS BILL.

SIR J. LUBBOCK (London University): I wish to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether, in view of the greatly increased labour that will be imposed upon the Census Commission in consequence of the numerous changes of boundaries brought about by the operation of the Local Government Act, 1888, it is the intention of the Government to introduce a Census Bill during the present Session; and whether, in view of the strong representations made to the Government, it is intended to make any provision for a more frequent enumeration of the people.

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (MR. C. T. RITCHIE, Tower Hamlets, St. George's): The Government cannot undertake to introduce the Bill in question in the present Session; but all questions as to alterations of boundaries are now being considered and dealt with. All the representations referred to by the hon. Baronet will receive the consideration of the Government.

DOG LICENCES IN IRELAND.

DR. KENNY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether complaints have reached him that owing to the fact of the extensive areas of the Petty Sessions district in Ireland, and the difficulty which frequently exists of finding petty sessions clerks at these offices, much inconvenience is experienced by those desiring to pay the licence duty on dogs, he will recommend the Inland Revenue Authorities to make arrangements for the sale of dog licences at such post offices throughout the country as are money order offices, giving for their sale remuneration similar to that given for the sale of money orders?

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: No complaints have reached the Registrar of Petty

Sessions Clerks of inconvenience to the public arising from the causes alluded to with reference to the issue of dog licences. The duty on dogs in Ireland is a local, not an Imperial tax, and is collected throughout the country by the clerks of Petty Sessions, who are local, and not Imperial officials. A portion of their salaries consists of remuneration from the dog tax for the issue of dog licences. Having regard to these facts, I do not see that the course suggested in the concluding portion of the question would be either feasible or expedient.

PUBLIC EXECUTIONS.

MR. HANDEL COSSHAM (Bristol): I wish to ask the Home Secretary if he is aware that the Press were excluded from the execution of the man Withers, and will he take steps to prevent such exclusion in the future?

*MR. MATTHEWS: By law it rests with the Sheriffs or Visiting Justices to determine in their discretion what persons shall be admitted, and I have no doubt that in this case the local authorities exercised the discretion wisely. I do not, however, think it part of my duty to officially express any opinion.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

MR. SEXTON: I wish to ask whether, as the House is to re-assemble after the holidays on Monday the 29th, instead of Thursday the 25th, the Government will undertake not to proceed with the Irish Estimates on Monday the 29th?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I cannot come under any obligation to that effect; but I will do the best I can, and I hope that hon. Members will assist in forwarding the necessary public business.

IRELAND—THE BATTERING RAM AT EVICTIONS.

MR. CLANCY (Dublin County, N.): I wish to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant whether the new battering ram which he has provided is to be wielded by the police or by the emergency men?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The battering ram is to be used for the defensive purposes which I have before indicated. If any further information is desired I shall require notice of the question.

SCOTCH BUSINESS.

MR. ESSLEMONT (Aberdeen): Will the First Lord of the Treasury be good enough to say he will not take Scotch Estimates on the day this House assembles after the Recess? It would be very inconvenient as many Scotch Members would be compelled to travel on Sunday.

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I have no hesitation in giving the assurance that no Scotch business will be taken on the Monday after the holiday.

STANDING COMMITTEES.

SIR JOHN MOWBRAY reported from the Committee of Selection, that they had added to the Standing Committee on Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping, and Manufactures the following 15 Members in respect of the Weights and Measures Bill:—Major Banes, Mr. Barclay, Mr. Coddington, Mr. Cremer, Mr. Firth, Mr. Hubbard, Mr. Lafone, Mr. Lane, Sir Frederick Mappin, Mr. Montagu, Mr. Jasper More, Mr. Rankin, Mr. Bryn Roberts, Mr. Royden, and Mr. James Stevenson.

Ordered, That the Report do lie upon the Table.

MOTIONS.

—o—

THE EASTER RECESS.

Motion made, and Question proposed:

"That this House, at its rising on Tuesday next, do adjourn until Monday the 29th April; that on Tuesday next the House do meet at Two of the clock, and unless previously adjourned, do sit till Seven o'clock, when the Speaker shall adjourn the House without Question put."

—(Mr. William Henry Smith.)

IRELAND—THE CONDITION OF DONEGAL.

MR. PARNELL (Cork City): I wish to take this opportunity to press further upon the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant the desirability of returning a straightforward answer to the question which was put to him by the hon. Member for Shoreditch (that with regard to a circular alleged to be issued to the Constabulary headed "Very Secret, Aggravated Crime"). I should have thought that that question was capable of a reply—yes or no.

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Gentleman is not in order. It is most inconvenient to refer to questions on the Paper which have been disposed of.

MR. PARNELL: I have always understood that on a Motion of this kind it would be in order to refer to any subject of interest which any Member of the House was desirous of bringing before the House. I have known such a practice as long as I have been a Member.

*MR. SPEAKER: I was pointing out the inconvenience of going over questions that have been disposed of.

MR. PARNELL: Unfortunately, on this occasion we did not receive any answer at all to the question. The right hon. Gentleman declined to answer, yes or no, to the question; and I submit, with great respect, that I am not out of order in pressing the right hon. Gentleman for an answer to that question. I fear very much that the refusal of the right hon. Gentleman to reply to the question indicates that the question is founded on truth and fact. I wish to say at once and most distinctly that I think the Government are perfectly entitled to apply to the police authorities or to their other agents in Ireland for the information described in the question by the hon. Member. But if this were to be done, I submit that it should have been done for the purposes of the Government, and that it should have been done without disguise, in an open and English fashion. In the time of the late Mr. Forster, when he was Chief Secretary—a much more troublesome time, happily, than this which now occupies our attention—a secret Circular of an objectionable character was issued by his Administration. Mr. Forster, when questioned, as the hon. Member for Shoreditch has questioned the present Chief Secretary, admitted that the Circular had been issued, and admitted its objectionable character, and promised to withdraw it. But the right hon. Gentleman who was then Chief Secretary was a straightforward man. The complaint that we make now, without going as far as to say, as we did in those days, that the Circular in question was rubbish, is that if the Government have been acting for the purpose of the Government, they ought not to be and would not be ashamed of admitting what

they have done. I trust that we may have from the right hon. Gentleman, before this Motion is agreed to, a reply—an English and straightforward reply—to the question which has been put to him. We know the position which the Government announced that they had taken up with regard to the proceedings before the Commission. But if this Circular has been issued it will be a token and almost a proof that the statements of the Government with regard to their position in the proceedings before the Special Commission are untrue. I do not wish to find fault with the action of the House last night, but personally I regret that the First Lord of the Treasury thought it his duty to intervene and to ask the House to close the debate which was initiated by my hon. Friend the Member for one of the divisions of Donegal (Mr. Mac Neill). Several of my friends and I myself had taken notes and were desirous of saying something with reference to the matter. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary had sat down a short time previously, after making the most unfounded and sweeping assertions against the Irish Members. It really looked as if it were intended to prevent any reply to those assertions being given. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary asserted against us on these Benches that we had never made any proposals for the advantage and benefit of these smaller tenants such as are in Donegal. The recklessness of the assertions of the right hon. Gentleman is notorious to the House. But I think that even he out-Heroded himself on this occasion. If there is one question that we have had more at heart since the distress in 1879 and 1880, which first attracted our attention to these small tenants, it is the means and remedy to be adopted for the relief of tenants of this kind. And the right hon. Gentleman has no right to tell us that we, forsooth, have never made any proposals for the relief of these tenants. I can recollect in 1880 that we produced a Bill for this express purpose—a Bill brought in by Mr. O'Connor Power, the then Member for County Mayo—which was adopted by Mr. Forster and first joined on to the Relief of Distress Act, and then was introduced as a separate Bill, though subsequently thrown out by the House of Lords. We

produced a measure expressly for the relief of the small tenants. Again, in 1881 we pressed upon the House the necessity of settling this question of arrears intimately connected with the question of the position of the small Irish tenants. Again, in 1882 we brought forward another Bill which contained an arrears clause, and succeeded in obtaining from the Legislature the Arrears Act of 1882, which was of enormous advantage to this very district of Donegal, and which has kept that district in peace from that day to this, until the recurrence of distress and partial famine has forced on the present disorder. Again, in 1883 I obtained from the Legislature the introduction of clauses into the Tramways Bill for the express purpose of dealing with the congestion of these districts, where the holdings, as described by the right hon. Gentleman, are too small to enable the tenants to subsist. Those clauses, unhappily, were not successful, but they failed, not owing to our fault, but on account of the exorbitant prices claimed by the landlords for the land which we desired to buy especially for the purpose of these tenants. And certainly the right hon. Gentleman is not entitled to tell us we have not at all times and in every circumstance done our best and utmost to deal practically with this question of the relief of the congested districts. What has the right hon. Gentleman done himself? He has now been in office for three years—and the Government of which he is a Member has practically been in office for four years—since the autumn of 1885. What practical proposal has he or his Government made for dealing with this question? I admit that it is a very difficult question; that it is one requiring an intimate knowledge of the conditions existing in those districts. But it is not to be settled by the right hon. Gentleman as he tried to settle it last night—by hurling taunts across the floor of the House against us, and by—to show the inconsistency of the right hon. Gentleman's statements—in one breath talking of the Plan of Campaign as being the cause of all the trouble, and in the next showing, as he truly showed, that it is because the holdings are too small. What I wish to point out is this: that the right hon. Gentleman has admitted that the battering ram, which has been

introduced into Ireland for the first time—this Government battering ram—is to be used for defensive purposes by the police against the poorest and most distressed tenantry throughout the whole of Ireland, tenants who, as he states himself, are paying rents of only 1s. or so per week. There might be some excuse for the use of the battering ram on the substantial stone houses of the strong farmers of Limerick or Tipperary, but surely the right hon. Gentleman must recognize the unfitness, the cruelty, the barbarity of the introduction of such a weapon, and its trial for the first time upon the miserable cottages which almost a touch would throw down. The right hon. Gentleman says that the difference between the Plan of Campaign and the offer made by the landlord is infinitesimal, and cannot affect the issue.

*THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, East): No, Sir. I do not wish to interrupt the hon. Gentleman unnecessarily, but what I said was, that the difference between the demands of the Plan of Campaign on this estate and the offer was infinitesimal from the point of view from which I was then speaking, and which was raised by the hon. Gentleman's argument—namely, the bearing which the annual rent which the people had to pay had on their comfort.

MR. PARNELL: So I understood the reference of the right hon. Gentleman, and I did not intend to misrepresent him. I admit that it appears to be so; but if it is infinitesimal, if the difference is so small as to make it a matter of no practical importance, so much the more ought the right hon. Gentleman to have hesitated before he adopted those unusual methods in the interests of the landlords of this district. It is true that the rents of these poor creatures are small, and I should tell the right hon. Gentleman I have always said that I believe that if justice were to be done the tenants in these crowded districts ought not to be called on to pay any rent at all. I do not say that from the point of view of the land naturalizer, or from the point of view of the Socialist at all, but I say it from my own knowledge, that the only reason why any rent is payable in respect of those holdings at

all, the reason why any value whatever can be attached to them, is owing to the fact that they are occupied by such a class. If you remove the present occupiers from those crowded, barren districts, there is no other occupier or tenant who would give 6d. an acre for this land. No Scotch farmer would go over there and offer 6d. an acre for it for grazing purposes. It is unsuitable for any purpose, except as the place where the homes of those poor people are. If it were not that they had constructed those little cabins, if it were not that they had fenced round those little fields with stone walls—the stones abounding so much that sometimes the fields seem to be all wall and all stone and no arable land at all—if it were not that those bits of mountains and scraps of bog had been reclaimed by the labour of those people, and made useful for their habitation, if it were not the fact that these people go over to England and Scotland to earn annually enough to pay their rent, I say there is no other class of tenant that the ingenuity of the landlord could devise who would give 6d. an acre for the land, for which those people have frequently to pay 6s., 7s., 8s., 9s. and 10s. an acre. From the point of view of justice, this land derives its entire value, in the first instance, from the labour of those tenants; and, in the second place, from the fact that they are a class of people who come across to this country annually to earn their living, and leave their wives and children behind in order to till the fields and gather in the scanty crops. This may be, and I believe it is, a partial distress. But I believe in my soul that it is not a gotten-up distress. We have been familiar with the disposition of previous Chief Secretaries to minimize distress. I recollect one of the predecessors of the right hon. Gentleman, now the hon. Member for the Isle of Thanet (Mr. J. Lowther), who was Chief Secretary in 1879, and who scoffed just in the same way as the right hon. Gentleman did last night at the notion of distress in Ireland, and we saw what followed upon it. But even then some mitigation was extended to those peasants. The outdoor relief rules of the Local Government Board were relaxed. The existence of distress having been denied for months, after a time, as I say, the out-door relief rules were re-

laxed, and permission was given to the Boards of Guardians to grant relief in the shape of food and fuel to persons outside the workhouse. I would urge on the right hon. Gentleman, in the present instance, the consideration of some such step. The outdoor relief should be extended to the grant of seed potatoes, so that the people might be enabled to put in their crops, and so that the calamity might not be intensified by the lack of any harvest next year. The supply of fresh seed has always been of great advantage to the tenants of those poor districts. The potato seed supplied in 1880 and 1881 secured for those seaboard districts a plentiful potato crop for many years subsequently, and we have no reason to anticipate the approach of any serious distress over large areas from that day to this. It sometimes happens, however, as in the case of Donegal, that parishes over large areas are afflicted with partial failure. And it is not asking too much from the great and rich English Government, that the Chief Secretary should direct his practical attention to this matter, and do what he can, apart from political considerations, and without hurling taunts at his political antagonists, to rescue the unhappy people of those particular districts. I have pointed out what was done in 1880, and I would suggest in addition, that the seed potatoes should also be given to those people in the shape of out-door relief under such supervision as will be necessary to prevent abuse. It is a small matter, and cannot entail any considerable expenditure on the Exchequer. I hope, in any circumstances, that the Chief Secretary will be more alive than he was last night to the state of the case, and to the duties incumbent upon him as the holder of his office.

*Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. Member has dealt with two very widely different topics, and I will take them in the order in which he has placed them before the House. The first point referred to is the answer which I gave to the hon. Member for Shoreditch (Mr. James Stuart) in reply to a question about an alleged confidential circular which that hon. Gentleman appeared to imagine existed. The hon. Gentleman who has just sat down appeared to think that I had invented that answer in order to screen the Government from

some accusation which might be made against them; and under his somewhat cold style of rhetoric ["Oh, oh!"]—well, I rather thought that by using that phrase I was paying a compliment to the hon. Gentleman—a compliment one cannot always pay to hon. Gentlemen opposite—under his somewhat cold style of rhetoric, I say, he made a distinct charge against me of want of straightforwardness—a charge which, I think, would have justified me if I had thought it worth while to rise to order, and ask for the protection of the Chair. He also compared my conduct with that of the late Mr. Forster entirely to my disadvantage. Well, Sir, I recollect the observations which used to be made about the late Mr. Forster, and I know very well that, though I have not, perhaps, been treated with great moderation of criticism by hon. Gentlemen, they have never said anything of me worse or as bad as they were in the habit of saying about Mr. Forster when he was alive. It seems that Mr. Forster's good qualities have been discovered by hon. Gentlemen subsequent to his leaving the office of Chief Secretary, and I am not without hope that, when I am relieved of my present duties, some traces and scintillations of merit may be found in my character even by hon. Gentlemen opposite. With regard to this particular charge made against me, I have only to say this. Since I have been Chief Secretary several questions have been put to me with regard to alleged secret circulars issued to the police. They were put to me long before the *Times* case was ever thought of, and I have invariably returned to those questions precisely the same answer in substance which I returned to the question of the hon. Member to-night. I would ask hon. Gentlemen what motive could I have in this case for concealing the truth, if the truth were that the circular had been issued? Why should the circular not be issued? If it had been issued, and if I thought it a subject which should be discussed in the House, I should have no hesitation in avowing it; I cannot conceive why the Government, if they see fit, are to be prevented from collecting and arranging information in their possession, or in the possession of their officials, "regarding all members of the National League, and of

the Land League, convicted of agrarian crime, since September, 1879." That is a perfectly legitimate subject of inquiry. All I say is, I am not going to answer in this House, under any provocation, questions about alleged secret circulars which, if they exist anywhere except in the fertile imagination of hon. Gentlemen opposite, must have been betrayed by a breach of confidence on the part of some official. So much for the least interesting part of the hon. Gentleman's speech. I now pass to the second part, which was in reality a continuation of the debate of yesterday evening, and a reply to observations I felt it my duty to make on that occasion. The hon. Member for Cork was not in his place when I spoke, and therefore labours under the disadvantage of having to consult the recollection of his hon. Friends, and such reports of my observations as appear in the daily journals, which, if I recollect rightly, were not first-person reports. The hon. Gentleman was very indignant with me for hurling taunts across the floor of the House at hon. Gentlemen opposite. This is a very singular observation for him to have made. As a matter of fact, I got up after the debate had gone on about two hours, and that period had been occupied not by me but by hon. Gentlemen opposite in hurling taunts of the most violent kind against the Government. When a reply was attempted by me, the hon. Member for Cork comes down and says I was the person who hurled taunts across the floor of the House. What were the taunts I was supposed to have hurled? The principle one was that I had accused hon. Gentlemen—this is the version given by the hon. Member for Cork—of never having suggested any solution of the difficulty connected with the congested districts in Ireland. I will remind the House of the arguments which led up to the statement which the hon. Gentleman has thus paraphrased. I was made the object of certain attacks because I was said to have supported the evictions to the best of my ability which are now taking place in Donegal. The hon. Member who dwelt upon this subject appeared to think, as the hon. Member for Cork appears to think, that the poverty of the tenants of this district was of itself a sufficient ground for not insisting that the law should be complied

with. The hon. Member attributed by inference, if not by direct assertion, as did the Seconder of the Motion, the poverty of those people to what he described as "landlordism." I stated distinctly in reply that the causes of the poverty of these people, which I did not deny and never attempted to minimize, wherever else they could be found, could not be found in landlordism, and I pointed out, as was, I have since discovered, pointed out on a previous occasion by the right hon. Member for the Bridgeton Division of Glasgow (Sir G. Trevelyan) that the question of rent was absolutely insignificant when you were considering the material prosperity of these people; and that, if the rent taken as a whole was absolutely insignificant, the difference between the terms of the Plan of Campaign and those of the landlord were, if possible, more insignificant. These rents are very often only 30s., £2, £3, or £4 a-year—many of them are less than 1s. a-week. These people are labourers living on allotments. There is no labourer living on an allotment in England who pays only 1s. a-week for his house, and those men, besides their cottages, have gardens from which they obtain a large amount of food for their support, and they are also able to raise a crop which they may sell, and for this land they pay an annual rent enormously less than that paid by any single agricultural labourer in England, however poor or undesirable his cottage and garden or allotment may be. I therefore felt myself justified in saying that, if the lot of these people was a hard one, and poverty existed amongst them, you could not attribute it, with any sense of justice or any apprehension of the obvious facts of the case, to the existence of what is absurdly called landlordism. I then said, "What have hon. Gentleman opposite done to provide a remedy for that state of things?" I said "They have done nothing." The hon. Gentleman traverses that statement, and he enumerates a number of measures—four or five measures—some of which passed, and some of which did not pass, which represent the efforts of hon. Gentleman below the Gangway, and, I suppose, represent the programme that they are going to carry out when they have a National Parliament in Dublin. What are those measures? The Compensation for Dis-

turbance Bill, which did not pass, in 1880; the Arrears Bill, which did not pass, in 1881; an arrears clause, which passed, in 1882; and a migration company started in 1883. With regard to the first of the two measures which became law, I do not deny that, in order to start the Land Act of 1881 on fair terms, a measure for dealing with arrears was necessary; but to describe that or any possible Arrears Act as a remedy or even a serious palliation of the poverty which exists in congested districts is absolutely to mistake the whole economical conditions which prevail in them. Are we to be told that, when the hon. Gentleman has uncontrolled management of Irish affairs, he is going to deal with the congested districts by triennial or biennial Arrears Acts? I tell him that he could not do a crueller kindness to these people. I say the only conceivable result of periodically passing of the sponge over those debts would be that the tendency to sub-divide and multiply, which is the primary root of the evils under which these districts labour, would be augmented and strengthened, and although it would be within the power of the statesmanship of the hon. Member to destroy all regard for obligations of law and contracts it would not, by such methods, be within his power to mitigate in the slightest degree the chronic distress which prevails in those unhappy parts of his country. Then, with regard to the migration company, which is the other remedy that was carried into effect, it is notorious, and was confessed by the hon. Member for Cork himself, that that scheme has been a total and absolute failure. The hon. Member said it was because land was too dear. I suppose that, when the efforts of his Friends have reduced the land of Ireland to prairie value, land may be cheaper there than it is now; but, judged by the price of land in every country in Europe, in England, Scotland, France, Germany, Italy, or Austria, the price of land in Ireland at this moment is low, and to be had in unlimited quantities.

MR. PARNELL: Not unoccupied land.

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not know of any difficulty in the way of the hon. Gentleman getting what land he wants. It does not appear how he

intends to cheapen land in Ireland. Does he anticipate that when he is at the head of affairs it will be his duty to decrease still further the price of land in Ireland? So much, Sir, for the measures that were passed into law. With regard to the Bill for Compensation for Disturbance, which was not passed into law, I do not wish to revive the controversies which have gathered round that measure ever since its first inception. We know that the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian is never tired of referring to the rejection of that measure as the cause of many of the difficulties which have since arisen; but I do not intend to dwell upon that, because it is not relevant to the present controversy. It is not relevant, because, if it had been passed into law, whatever else it might have done, it would not have relieved congested districts in Ireland. If that Bill would have done anything, it would have made it difficult to evict. Now, eviction may be right, or it may not; it may be justifiable, or it may be unjustifiable; but, at any rate, no one can say that to make eviction impossible for a limited or even an indefinite period would by any possibility remove, in the slightest degree, the particular class of evil under which these districts are suffering. I have, therefore, gone through the four remedies suggested by the hon. Gentleman—the panacea which the hon. Gentleman and his friends wish to apply to Ireland. I have weighed them in the balance, and they are all found wanting; and I ask again, when I am reproached for enforcing the law in Donegal, what connection has that with the chronic evil of poverty prevailing in that district? How would that chronic evil be diminished if all law was cast to the winds; and what remedy have hon. Gentlemen opposite at their hand to apply to these distressed parts of Ireland? The right hon. Gentleman thinks it a shocking thing that a battering-ram should be used against the tenants of Donegal, because the tenants are poor. I do not see that the two subjects are connected. If hon. Members had studied the newspapers in the month of January, they would have seen that in this very district, and on this very property where the hon. Member for Cork tells us that the houses are so fragile that a touch would knock them down,

elaborate fortifications against eviction were erected, and resistance was carried on day after day, accompanied by attacks made on the police of so ferocious a character, that the officer commanding the troops was more than once on the point of giving the order to fire. Had he done so, that might or might not have been a source of gratification to those who live by disorder in Ireland; but I think it would have been a tragic and melancholy necessity; and it was because I desire to avoid any such necessity, and because I do not wish the police to be injured or possibly killed in the execution of their duties, that I took the course I did; and I maintain, in the interests of humanity, as well as in the interests of the law, that there never was a course more justifiable. I do not know that I have anything more to say, except with reference to the extent of the existing distress in Donegal. The reports I have received on the subject admit, what I have more than once stated, that the potato crop is in many parts a deficient crop. They tell me that the oat crop is a good crop, and that prices for cattle and produce have been good. They do not tell me that anything of the character of famine is imminent. They do not tell me that distress has reached an abnormal point. The question is what ought under these circumstances to be the action of the Government. The hon. Member says relax the Poor Law; give us a loan of money; give us seed potatoes. Now, I frankly admit that circumstances may arise, as they have arisen in Ireland, when steps like that become absolutely necessary. But I feel certain that every man in this House who really has the good of these poor people at heart will agree with me that the necessity is from every point of view a lamentable one—that the demoralization produced by these gifts is not conducive to their ultimate and permanent prosperity, and that, however they may tide over a few months of exceptional distress, you pay for that temporary relief by perhaps the permanent aggravation of the evils you wish to deal with. Therefore, nothing but the most overwhelming necessity ought to make the Executive revert to such measures. It would be an easy thing for the Executive to deal with the poor of Donegal by granting the boon, and, as far as I am concerned, nothing

would be pleasanter to myself. It would make my path in this House smoother and the administration of Donegal easier to me. But I am sure the hon. Gentleman, if he will think over this matter, not from a political point of view, but from the point of view of permanent benefit to these people themselves, will see that any Government which, in order to obtain any temporary relief for itself, passed measures of this kind likely to create permanent demoralization would be betraying its trust and neglecting its duty. I can assure hon. Gentlemen that I shall keep critical watch on what goes on in Donegal. We know enough of the history of public subventions, and I am not at all sure that the impartial observer of these eleemosynary grants is not forced to the conclusion that they have done more harm than good in the long run. I will refer anyone who chooses to the Parliamentary papers relating to distressed Unions issued by myself in 1887. The seed loan is usually quoted as showing what the Irish may do in favourable circumstances in paying back loans. I am far from denying that in a large number of cases the loans have been paid back with admirable honesty and punctuality. But I believe that one of the defaulting districts was this very district in Donegal, and under such circumstances to hastily or unnecessarily revive a public subvention which has thus once failed would not be to teach a lesson to these people of that kind which I am sure they ought to learn. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bridgeton (Sir G. Trevelyan) was subjected to savage reproach in 1883 because he referred to the existing Poor Law as the proper method of averting the consequences of poverty. I am sure he was influenced by the highest sense of public duty and the merits of the case, and I say that the relaxation of the Poor Law is not a thing to be done by the Executive Government, except in case of overwhelming necessity. If the history of the Poor Law teaches us anything, it teaches us this—that the reckless administration of it is more dangerous than any act of tyranny or oppression ever urged against the most oppressive Government which ever ruled in this country. I hope the House will feel that, while I am alive to all that is going on in Donegal,

I do not admit, from the information given to me, that the distress is of exceptional magnitude, and I am sure Gentlemen on both sides will support me in the line I have taken up—namely, that until an overwhelming necessity is demonstrated I should not be at liberty to carry into effect the suggestions made, I have no doubt with the best intentions, by the hon. Member for Cork.

SIR W. HARCOURT (Derby): The right hon. Gentleman began his speech on the subject of the misery of Donegal by a sneer at the cold rhetoric of the hon. Member for Cork. I venture to think that the unhappy poor of Donegal and the people of Ireland, and, I will say, the people of England, will prefer on this occasion the touching appeal of the hon. Member for Cork, sneered at by the Secretary for Ireland—

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I did not sneer at that part of his speech, nor at any part; but when I was accused of stating what is false I thought the repartee moderate.

SIR W. HARCOURT: We are accustomed—the prisoners in Ireland are accustomed—to the moderate repartee of the right hon. Gentleman. We now know what is meant by the moderate repartee of the Chief Secretary for Ireland. It means the placing of the Irish Members and Irish people under lock and key in prison, and knocking down the houses of the Irish tenants. I think the public will judge of the moderate repartee. I think the appeal of the hon. Member for Cork on behalf of these unhappy people will be preferred to the passionate invective of the Chief Secretary for Ireland urged in defence of evictions. Listening to that speech, and looking at it from end to end, I ask what is the policy of the Government with reference to this population of Donegal? What are they going to do for it? What assistance are they going to render to the population, which all admit is a most wretched and a most miserable reproach to the Government? What is the policy of the Government? It is, in one word, a policy of extermination. The Irish Secretary is going to destroy their hovels. He has invented a new machine—a machine which he says is to be the instrument of the law. It is not the instrument of the law but of the police. The police have this defensive battering—

ram, and the police are the servants of the Government. He says it makes no difference, and he objected, when I said that it made a difference, that the people are in a state of misery and wretchedness. I am speaking in the presence of English Gentlemen opposite, many of whom are landlords. I ask them if they agree with the Irish Secretary on that point? Suppose there were an English village with a few wretched cottages where the people could hardly tolerate existence. Would it make no difference to them if the persons to be evicted were wretched cottiers or well-to-do farmers? In the one case I can imagine them saying—"Here is a farmer who can pay his rent if he chooses, and against him I will invoke all the processes of the law." But I know no English gentleman who would say to the wretched cottiers—"It makes no difference to these poor creatures who are just on the point of starvation. It makes no difference to them, and, therefore, I will have my battering ram and level their houses over their heads." That is the doctrine of the Irish Secretary. It is nothing to him that the tenants are wretched and miserable. Eviction was made for them; that is his logic.

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: That has no resemblance to what I said.

SIR W. HARCOURT: What is your argument? You say that poverty has nothing to do with the evictions. I appeal against that doctrine. I appeal to the people of England, Scotland, and Ireland. Poverty has everything to do with them, and that is why I uttered an exclamation of indignation when I heard the language which came from the lips of the Secretary for Ireland. To say that poverty is no element will, I am sure, shock the sentiment of every man. The right hon. Gentleman, in almost passionate terms, sneered at the notion that a plea of poverty should be a plea for mercy. The right hon. Gentleman says—"These men do not pay their rents; I will level their houses." That is his first moderate repartee. There has been harsh treatment enough of the people of Ireland for generations before. But it was left to the ingenuity of the right hon. Gentleman to invent a new machine for getting rid of the population of the congested districts. That is the first policy of the Govern-

ment—to level the houses of the people. We have not yet had the full development of the ram. What is the battering ram for? Is it meant to knock the people down?

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: For the protection of the police.

SIR W. HARCOURT: For the protection of the police! Is it intended to knock the people down and not the houses? I have never before heard of a protective ram. That is a nice Irish bull for an English Secretary to invent. The right hon. Gentleman is, I believe, having an opportunity of ascertaining what this protective ram can do. It has been doing its work to-day, and we shall learn for what purpose. Eviction, then, is the first remedy the Government mean to apply, and the right hon. Gentleman stood up last night as the supporter of the evictions which are now going on in Donegal. That is the first part of the policy of the Government. The hon. Member for Cork made an appeal which might have touched the heart even of the present Irish Secretary. He said that these people are in distress and misery. Well, the right hon. Gentleman will not believe in their distress. He first of all says that the potato crop is deficient; but that is nothing; and he simply denies the distress. Of course, if there is no distress there is no need for assistance. I have before heard this Government making statements with reference to the rents of Ireland. I heard their statements in 1886-7, when the hon. Member for Cork and his colleagues brought forward measures founded on their knowledge of the condition of Ireland. And what happened? The Government appointed a Commission to inquire into the question, and it turned out that the Irish Members were perfectly right, for that Commission endorsed the accuracy of their statements, and showed that the statements made from the Bench opposite, on the faith of official representations, were altogether untrue. And that was their own Commission. Therefore, when the right hon. Gentleman, who knows nothing about Ireland but what is told him by his subordinates, makes statements in the presence of Irish Members, I prefer the statements of the Irish Members to his official information, and I will assume, therefore, that there is distress in Donegal.

The Government are asked, "Will you do anything to alleviate that distress?" and the right hon. Gentleman says "No," and that there are seed potatoes in the local markets. Now, the potato seed loan has been as well repaid as any loan ever was paid in Ireland. Yet the right hon. Gentleman rejects all remedies and will give no assistance. Was I not right, then, in saying that the policy of the Government for Donegal is a policy of extermination? They have now been, as the hon. Member for Cork says, three years in office, and at the beginning of their administration the noble Lord the Member for Paddington (Lord R. Churchill) proclaimed that they were going to bring forward large measures for the purpose of dealing with land in Ireland, especially in the congested districts. They have been in office three years. They have done nothing, proposed nothing. In the presence of this condition of things in Donegal, in the presence of the Bill of the hon. Member for Cork and the Irish Members, they say—"We have nothing to propose; we reject your proposals, and the remedy we are prepared to sustain is eviction, and nothing but eviction." That is the policy of the Government in reference to these miserable districts of Ireland, and I say that it is a policy of extermination and nothing else. As he is not now in the Chair, I may appeal to my right hon. Friend the Member for Bodmin (Mr. Courtney), who has written so many letters and accompanied them with so very little action. Let us know to-night what the right hon. Gentleman has to propose. He is one of the main supporters of a Government who have nothing to say and nothing to do for the people of Ireland. Is he for this negative policy, for this single policy of extermination? Is that the policy of the Party with which he acts, and in reference to which they give their support to the Government? After all we were told of what was going to be done, we see that nothing has been done. When we come to a condition of things such as that which now exists in Donegal, your only remedy is the state of terror which you have created at Gweedore and the ram which you have sent down to Letterkenny. Your policy is the policy of evicting an oppressed and distressed people by the most cruel means,

and that is the only remedy which the Secretary for Ireland suggests.

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN, St. George's, Hanover Square): The House can see the colour which the right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down gives to the speeches which have been made on this side of the House. Of all the many misrepresentations—unintentional, of course—which are made of the utterances of the Chief Secretary, I do not think there has ever been so glaring a one as that contained in the speech to which we have just listened. The right hon. Gentleman has said that the policy of the Government is a policy of extermination, and that this is the only policy of the Government. The right hon. Gentleman took good care not to examine the arguments of my right hon. Friend, but he spoke of the tone in which the Chief Secretary spoke, and, as usual, he said "the country will judge." But the country, unfortunately, cannot sit in that Gallery. They can read what is said, but they cannot see the contrast of tone between my right hon. Friend and the right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down. Hon. Members below the Gangway cannot for a moment say that my right hon. Friend did not speak with feeling on this question. ["No!"] Even at the risk of that misrepresentation which he knew he would receive, my right hon. Friend preferred that misrepresentation to doing that which he describes as being so easy, and to relieving himself of the calumnies made upon the attitude which he adopts. The right hon. Gentleman opposite, with his great debating ability, fixed upon the one point in the earlier part of my right hon. Friend's speech in which he justified the measures which are being taken. The right hon. Gentleman appealed to English gentlemen, and asked how they would act in such circumstances. No person who listened to him would believe that there exists in Donegal at this moment a Plan of Campaign, which was designed to disturb—and has resulted in disturbing—the whole relations between landlord and tenant, which has upset all the relations which did exist previously, and which has substituted a state of warfare for which hon. Gentlemen who sit below the Gangway are mainly responsible. I

believe the majority of the tenants have paid their rents, or a portion of them, to the trustees of the Plan of Campaign. I should like to know whether the right hon. Gentleman was aware of that? He spoke of the tenants as being so poor as not to be able to get a shilling to pay their rent. Now, the rent has been paid by the tenants; but in order to carry out the general design, individual tenants are sacrificed over and over again. If there is a policy of extermination, as the right hon. Gentleman calls it, it results from the war initiated by hon. Members below the Gangway. The evictions are taking place not because the tenants cannot pay, but because they have paid into other hands than those of the landlords, who are holding the rent against the landlords. That is a very different situation from that which has been depicted by the right hon. Gentleman opposite. Then the right hon. Gentleman asks—"What is this battering ram designed for?" and ignores the strong argument of my right hon. Friend, who showed that, if these houses are to be entered at all, it is far more humane and more likely to save life and limb to use a ram to smash a door than to pour boiling water on the police. The right hon. Gentleman prefers that a policeman's head should be battered rather than that a door should be smashed in by a battering ram. Hon. Members below the Gangway have no pity whatever for the police, whom they call the instruments of the Government. Their heads may be broken as much as they like. Indeed, they hold that the heads of the police ought to be broken. ["No!"] Then why encourage the people to barricade their houses and resent the officers of the law? If the police organize what is properly called a defensive arm as a means of defence against outrageous proceedings undertaken under the auspices of hon. Gentlemen, the country will judge whether it is a more humane and civilized course, when a house is to be entered, to batter in a door than to allow a limited number of police to be battered by persons in the house in defiance of the law. I ask whether my right hon. Friend has not shown conclusively that, if the Government do not think that hasty steps ought to be taken in order to supply doles and charity to the people of Donegal, it is because

it would be very demoralizing to enter upon such a course, and would only aggravate their condition. Hon. Members below the Gangway may think honestly that it is a wise plan continually to give relief out of the Exchequer, but it is not, and cannot be, the opinion of right hon. Gentlemen who sit on the Front Bench opposite. Right hon. Gentlemen opposite may agree with hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway that there are exceptional cases in which such relief may be given and would be given by any Government. But the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian and his friends know that there is no more dangerous proceeding than from time to time to assist by extraordinary charity. The distress has been watched by the Government with great anxiety, and will continue to be watched, and if it be necessary to afford relief certainly it will be our duty to do so, but we do not see any hope of applying such a system of charity as has been suggested. I rose mainly to protest against the tone adopted by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby (Sir W. Harcourt), who accused my right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary (Mr. A. J. Balfour) of callousness to the sufferings of the population, which excite the sympathy of this side of the House quite as much as it does of the other side. We cannot, however, shut our eyes to the fact that these poor people are being made the catspaw of the political aspirations of hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway opposite, and that those relations between landlord and tenant which in this country would come to the relief of distress, hon. Members have done their best to destroy.

Mr. WADDY (Lincolnshire, Brigg): I do not rise for the purpose of making observations on the tone of the debate, although I cannot help remarking that we are constantly hearing a great deal from occupants of the Treasury Bench about the tone adopted by, and the vile intentions and wicked practices of Members below the gangway. The whole of the Irish mischief is constantly attributed to them, and the absurd statement is repeated so frequently that I really believe that those who make it are at last beginning to believe it. Now, Mr. Speaker, I wish to inform the House that the evidence of my own eyes is in direct and blank

contradiction to what has been said by speakers on the Treasury Bench. I understand the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) and the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) to say that the battering ram was used for the purpose of smashing the door and making an entrance. Now, Sir, the importance of this battering ram performance is that it marks an entirely new phase in principle as well as in action. What the police used to do was to stand on one side while a small army of emergency men did the work. But now the Government are supplying a machine by which the right hon. Gentlemen say entrance is to be made. It is no longer the engine of the landlord, but of the Government, and I congratulate the Government on the fact that after three years of their rule the peasants of Donegal are at this moment arrayed against them, according to their own account, in a state of civil war. I leave the world to judge of the success which has attended and the propriety which has actuated their movements. I wish to point out that the battering ram is used for the purpose, not of effecting an entrance, but of destroying the houses built by the tenants. When the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer drew a comparison between the English agricultural labourer and the Irish tenant he knew, or ought to have known, that it was illusory. You can not draw a parallel between the houses built by the tenant with his own money and his own hands and the houses built and paid for by the landlord. What is the result? The landlords in this country do not knock down the tenants' houses; they are their own. But in Ireland the battering ram is applied to one part of the house, and when a great gap has been made it is moved to another part, where it is used in the same way, and so on, until there is one wide gaping ruin and the roof must come down. I have seen this done, and it is done because it is the house not of the landlord, but of the tenant, because if you bring down the house you destroy the nest and make the birds fly; because you are determined to carry out completely what is rightly called by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby (Sir W. Harcourt) the policy

of extermination. If there is any doubt about it, you may go and see for yourselves. Go, if you will, and look to-day at the house of Matthew M'Grath. I have seen it with these eyes. The whole wall is battered down, and the roof is drooping down to the ground, because there is nothing to support it. Go, also, and see a house at Kilrush, and also the house of Thomas Birmingham. That which moves the indignation of the people in Ireland, and ought to move the indignation of the people in England—and would do so if they knew the truth—is that this engine has been invented, not for the purpose of carrying out the law, but for the purpose of destroying the houses and rendering permanently homeless the people who lived in them. But there is another matter as to which I must join issue with the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary. The right hon. Gentleman has given no answer to the question of the hon. Member for Shoreditch (Mr. J. Stuart). When the Government has received confidential information, it has a perfect right to say that it believes it is for the best interests of the public that the information should be regarded as privileged. But that is not the point now. The question is whether certain information has been collected and then made use of. Has the Government handed over this information to the solicitor for the *Times*? It is suggested that the Government has sent out a circular not giving information, but asking certain questions, and they can do no harm in telling the House whether they have done so. Is it true that they have once more made themselves parties as far as they dare, to that of which they, in common with the whole world, are now thoroughly ashamed? Is it true that they have been assisting in a transaction which the whole civilized world looks upon at the present moment with nothing less than odium? If they have been giving information to the *Times*, will they, at all events, purge themselves of their partizanship by giving it also to the other side? That is a question to which the House has a right to an answer.

*MR. CHAPLIN (Lincolnshire, Sleaford): I rose at an earlier period in the evening with the object of putting a few questions to the Government on a totally different matter, but I find it impossible

to hear the attacks which are being made on the Government, and which are constantly made on landlords in Ireland, and to abstain from replying to some of them. The last speaker referred to transactions in connection with the appointment of the Royal Commission now inquiring into the charges made against hon. Members of this House as things of which the whole world is ashamed. I take leave to tell the hon. Member that he is totally and absolutely mistaken. Speaking for other Members as well as myself, I have to say that we have nothing to retract, and that if the same transactions were to happen again we should take the same course. Since the appointment of the Commission there was not a single occasion on which I ever said a word in public upon the questions which the Commission is now investigating, and I regard the debates which we have had upon it as indecent and irregular in the highest degree. In reply, however, to a distinct challenge by the right hon. Gentleman the Attorney General for the late Government, I did upon one occasion, before the Commission was appointed, state the views which I held, and which I know are shared by the great majority of hon. Gentlemen sitting on this side of the House at the time. I said then, that "we desired to judge no man," and I stated in the House that the feeling on my own side was that we were bound to assume that all our brother Members were absolutely innocent of the charges until they were proved to be guilty. I repeated that statement twice over, and, in face of the attitude we thus took at that time, it is monstrous that charges and recriminations should be made against us for which there never was a shadow of foundation. There is, I wish also to say, no monopoly whatever of sympathy for the poor distressed people in the congested districts of Ireland on the other side of the House, as is constantly assumed by hon. Gentlemen opposite. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby (Sir W. Harcourt) asked the Government what they were going to do for the congested districts. Well, I ask, did the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. Gladstone) do? He was practically in power for 15 years, when all these things were going on in exactly the same position as now,

except that at that time the difficulties of the Government were not increased by the operation of the Plan of Campaign. Over and over again public attention was called to the state of the congested districts in Ireland, and yet all through those years, when the right hon. Gentleman could do almost anything he liked, I am unable to recall to mind that the right hon. Gentleman and his friends and associates ever took any effectual measures for the relief of the congested districts. Under these circumstances, whoever else it may lie with it does not lie with any right hon. Gentleman on the Front Opposition Bench to taunt the Government with neglect of their duties in this respect. When the action of English landlords is referred to, I wish to point out again, in justice to Irish landlords, that their position is wholly different from that of landlords in England. Parliament has created the distinction by the legislation of 1881 and previous years, and it cannot too often be repeated that at that time the Government of the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian not only deprived the landlord of his power of control over his estates, but at the same time absolved him from his duties, and placed him in the position of a mere rent-charger and nothing else. The right hon. Gentleman (Sir W. Harcourt) ought to look nearer home, to evictions with which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. Gladstone) is not altogether unconnected. ["Oh!"] I fully believe that in circumstance such as those which are said to exist in the west of Ireland, English landlords would be very slow, as a general rule, to evict. What the circumstances connected with the Hawarden estate may be I am not in a position to state, nor would I impute to those connected with that estate conduct which which would reflect anything but credit on landlords in any part of the world. But the fact remains that evictions took place on the Hawarden estate because the tenants were poor and unable to pay their rents, and I say that the tenants on the Hawarden estate were in precisely the same position in that respect as the tenants about whom all this discussion is taking place. Therefore, when the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby appeals to English landlords in this House and

asks what course they would take under the circumstances referred to, he ought to apply to a right hon. Gentleman from whom he might receive the latest and most perfect intelligence, the Member for Mid Lothian. ["Oh!"] I do not think that I have said anything which can justly be called either offensive or inaccurate in any particular. If so, I should be only too ready to withdraw it. It was certainly not my intention to be offensive, and I do not think that in anything I have said I have transgressed Parliamentary practice and manners in every respect. [*An ironical cheer from Mr. Gladstone.*] I am very glad to hear it. I remember it was said by the Member for East Mayo, in one of our debates not long ago, that such agitation as is occurring in Ireland would be impossible here. That is true at present no doubt, because the same means are not taken in England to create agitation as are pursued in Ireland. But I maintain that if the same means were taken, there would be no great difficulty in getting up agitation against landlords upon the estates either of the right hon. Gentleman or any one else. That is why these attacks on Irish landlords are unjust and ungenerous in the highest degree. When the hon. Member for the Brigg Division of Lincolnshire (Mr. Waddy) spoke of the battering ram being used because the houses are not the landlords' property he was incorrect in his statement, because, when the stage for eviction has been reached, the House, as I understand the law, is the property of the landlord. Whether the law is right or wrong I am not arguing, but that is a conclusive answer to the statement of the hon. Gentleman. Turning, however, to more prosaic matter, my right hon. Friend, the Leader of the House (Mr. W. H. Smith) the other day stated that the Government proposed to ask the Royal Agricultural Society to appoint some person or persons to proceed to Holland in order to inquire and ascertain whether, under all the circumstances, it was safe to import animals into the interior of this country from the Netherlands at the present time without being subject to slaughter or quarantine. Well, Sir, I have only to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he can give us any further information on this point—

Mr. Chaplin

that is to say, whether the Royal Agricultural Society have agreed to send somebody, and, if so, who has been appointed. I also desire to know whether we are right in understanding that until the inquiry has been made, and the report has been received, the Order in Council will not be allowed to come into operation. If the right hon. Gentleman can give me an assurance on that point it will be a matter of great satisfaction to the agricultural community throughout the country.

MR. SEXTON (Belfast, West): I will not trouble the House by referring to what the right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down describes as "prosaic," but I will allude to the earlier part of his speech, which I suppose he would describe as "poetic." The right hon. Gentleman has proved on this occasion that, as usual, he is much more courageous than discreet; for, as a Gentleman of considerable experience and undoubted maturity, he possesses a considerable share of the rashness of youth. I think the right hon. Gentleman would have done better had he avoided the topic of the Special Commission, because, so far as it has proceeded, the Commission has unearthed, to the condemnation of the world, the foulest plot that was ever directed against the character of public men, or the hopes of a nation. It is idle for the right hon. Gentleman to say that he is satisfied with the result of the Commission.

*MR. CHAPLIN: I did not say so.

MR. SEXTON: Then the right hon. Gentleman is not satisfied with the result of the Commission?

*MR. CHAPLIN: I beg to explain. I carefully abstained from expressing any opinion as to the proceedings before the Commission, because, as I said, I regarded the debates that had taken place with regard to it as indecent and irregular.

MR. SEXTON: Then, in that case, the right hon. Gentleman is in the conspicuous, but undesirable, position of Satan reproving sin; for he takes advantage of a speech which has been delivered to the House on the subject for the purpose of making an elaborate retort. The fact is that the forged letters have been the very bread of life to the Tory party for the past two years, and they had flourished those letters upon every hustings in England, and there

are many hon. Gentlemen on the opposite benches who may be said to have been returned here with the writ in one hand and the forged letters in the other. The right hon. Gentleman has had the courage and audacity to ask the Liberal Party what they have done for Ireland, and, at the same time, he gave the House an idea of the code of ethics which govern his own mind when he said that a house which a tenant has raised up by his own capital and labour becomes the property of the landlord upon his eviction. It would be more just to say that if the right hon. Gentleman had run a horse in a race and had lost, that that horse became the property of the winner.

*MR. CHAPLIN: Allow me to explain. I cannot believe that the right hon. Gentleman is intentionally misrepresenting me. What I said was that the law, whether it be right or wrong—on which I did not express any opinion—makes the house, under those circumstances, the property of the landlord.

MR. SEXTON: Yes, the law which the right hon. Gentleman himself helped to make; the law for the iniquity of which himself and his Party are responsible, and every step to remedy which has been persistently and obstinately impeded by the right hon. Gentleman and his friends. I ask, how dare the right hon. Gentleman ask the Liberal Party what they have done for Ireland? Does he think that the memory of the past is obliterated and blotted out? Does he think that we know nothing of what has happened in Ireland since 1870? I know very well that perception is not a prominent quality in the mind of the right hon. Gentleman; but there seems to be no limit to his irresponsible and irrational daring. He asks the Liberal Party, forsooth, what they have done for Ireland. Why, Sir, I wonder how it is possible for the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. Gladstone) to listen to this in mere silent indignation. If the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian has failed to remedy the agrarian situation in Ireland so as to meet such crises as this, it is due to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Sleaford and his associates on those benches, and his confederates in the House of Lords. Does the right hon.

Gentleman forget all that has been done by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian? Does he forget that the right hon. Gentleman introduced a Bill for the purpose of giving compensation for disturbance? Well, what happened to that Bill, which would have met the case of many of the tenants whose position called for such a remedy? That Bill passed this House in the face of the vehement and persistent obstruction of the right hon. Gentlemen opposite; but when the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian, by an effort for which the Irish people will ever be grateful, passed that measure for the relief of the small tenants through this House, it was defeated by the associates of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Sleaford in the House of Lords. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian passed a Bill which saved the homes of tens of thousands of poor tenants on whose behalf we plead to-day. He passed the Act of 1870 and the Act of 1881; and if those two Acts have not been—and they have not been—a complete and genuine protection for the tenants of Ireland, the defect is due, not to any fault on the part of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian, but to the persistent efforts of the Member for Sleaford and his friends to mutilate those measures, and render them less useful for the purposes they were intended to subserve. Within the limits of Parliamentary experience, it is impossible to cite an example of more measureless audacity than that displayed by the right hon. Gentleman to-night in daring to rise up in this House, and question the Liberal Party as to their efforts on behalf of the Irish tenants. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer has on this, as on many former occasions, constituted himself the Censor of Debate, for which position no man in this House is by temper and disposition worse fitted; for he invariably succeeds in lowering the tone of the Debate. But there is one sentence of the right hon. Gentleman with which I agree. He said "the country will judge." Yes, Sir, the country will judge, and the country is waiting for the chance of judging. We are willing to challenge you at this moment to proceed to a General Election. I should like to hear the hon.

Gentleman who sneers at this say what was his majority at the last election. We, on this side of the House, call on you to go to a General Election. Who is it that fears the judgment of the country? It is the Government who are afraid to face the verdict of the country. It has been said that this Parliament will continue until 1893, and that nothing will induce the Party in power to appeal to the country, unless it be a hostile vote of the House. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer can argue pleasantly—such are his disposition and nature—over the woes of others; but, in this case, he is speaking of what he does not understand. He has referred to the Plan of Campaign in Donegal. Does the right hon. Gentleman know what has been the action of the Plan of Campaign? Will the right hon. Gentleman deny that on 57 estates in Ireland the Plan of Campaign has resulted in settlements under which the landlords have conceded the demands of the tenants? The moneys are lodged in a Trust Fund, and the moment that the landlord is willing to agree to the settlement, every penny of the money lodged in the Plan of Campaign will be ready and at his disposal. Is it not disgraceful, is it not painful that Irish Members, acquainted with the affairs of their country, should have to listen to such a speech as that of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, inspired by contempt for the Irish Members and for the sufferings of their race, and marked at every point by the most absurd ignorance of the state of affairs in Ireland? What does the Chancellor of the Exchequer know about these poor people in Donegal? Irish Members around me will confirm me when I say that this district was naturally rock, mountain, and marsh; the Ordinance survey and valuation of Ireland will confirm me; it was not worth sixpence an acre; it was not worth a penny until these poor squatters came upon it. The value of the land is due to them. They carried soil upon their back from the valley and they brought seaweed from the strand to improve the land; and when the Chancellor of the Exchequer speaks eloquently of the Irish landlords, does he think that we are ignorant of how these men have laboured to make the soil, and not only they but their fathers before

them? The experience of the Donegal district may be described in this way—that land, naturally worth nothing, was made worth something by the penal servitude of the tenants. They made it worth something while the landlord, if I might borrow a phrase from the Chief Secretary for Ireland, critically watched from his chateau, or his club in London, until he saw the soil spread up the mountain side and over the rock, and then he raised the rent from 6d. to 1s., from 1s. to 5s., and even 10s. an acre. And after this revolting plunder, sanctified, I suppose, by law, carried on for years, and, in some cases, generations, the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer stands up at the Table and tells us that the rent in this case is an insignificant consideration. Little he knows how these people live, and how little they can live upon. Little he knows that the father leaves for the harvest in England, and that the whole family live meagrely that he may be able to use his wages thus earned to satisfy the landlord. I know of a family who depend for sustenance upon the enterprise of a poor girl, the daughter of the house, who, after buying thread, makes a pair of socks, and then, with bare feet, travels along the road to sell these socks for twopence. That is the way they live, and yet the rent of a shilling a-week is described by the right hon. Gentleman as insignificant. Why, these poor people live, many of them, on a shilling a-week. Had they lived under an equitable rent for 10 years, they would have been able to have put by the difference between that and the rack-rent, and would not to-day have been compelled to live on Indian meal. They would have been able to have satisfied the primitive wants belonging to a way of life undiscoverable by a gentleman with £18,000 a-year of private income and £4,000 a-year of salary. Now, Sir, the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Balfour) has said that he would critically watch the case. I think it is a revolting phrase, but I think it is one which very well tests his method of regarding Ireland. Does he know that seeding time has come; does he know that the fate of these people must be settled in a fortnight or a month? The right hon. Gentleman will stand criti-

cally by, he will analyze their sufferings, he will watch them in the extremity of their despair and of their hunger, and by the time his critical mind has come to a conclusion he will find that their homes have been levelled by his spiked battering ram—15ft. long, bought with Imperial money, hung upon chains, and surrounded by armour, made to ram horizontally in defence. And when their homes have been levelled by the battering ram, these people will be turned out to starve by the roadside, or drift into the workhouse. That will be the result of the critical examination of the Minister. What information can he give us? What Reports has he received? If he has got any Report, will he lay it on the Table of the House? We know the facts of the situation. People have been eating meal since last September, and the potato crop at that time was a quarter of the average crop. Does he consider what that means? The credit of the tenant is gone. The encouragement given by the right hon. Gentleman to the landlords to proceed to evictions has destroyed the credit of the tenants. They are eating seed potatoes in many instances. My hon. Friend the Member for Cork has asked the right hon. Gentleman whether he will provide some seed potatoes for this season. He has replied that he will give the matter his critical observation. Seed potatoes in Donegal are 6d. a stone—which is famine price—or more than 100 per cent in excess of the market price, 2½d. It means that seed potatoes are not in the market at all, that they have been eaten, and that the people have absolutely no seed potatoes. I ask the right hon. Gentleman to give us some assurance upon this subject before the debate concludes. Unless the people are provided with the means to seed their ground, undoubtedly there will be death from famine, and there will be a state of affairs which will cast disgrace upon the British Government, and on which the right hon. Gentleman, if he has any human feeling, could not look upon with equanimity. There is a gulf between the right hon. Gentleman and the late Mr. Forster. Mr. Forster, when he adopted a policy which was considered cruel, felt himself under the necessity of pursuing it, but I think Mr. Forster pursued that policy reluctantly, and I

have no doubt he never ceased to be a man of humane instinct. The right hon. gentleman on the other hand is a cold and deliberate inciter to cruelty. Another thing I will say of Mr. Forster, that when you asked him a plain question he gave you a straight answer. The right hon. Gentleman thinks that other Chief Secretaries have been worse treated than he. I do not think we could have another Chief Secretary whose character would display so revolting a combination. I call it a most revolting combination of human character to find the minimum of frankness associated with the maximum of cruelty. I should like for a moment to test the question of frankness. The right hon. Gentleman was asked to-day with reference to the issue of a secret circular, about a month after the meeting of the Special Commission. The Chief Secretary has two ways of dealing with Irish affairs—either he point blank refuses to answer, or he gives an answer which is worse than misleading. He boldly refused to answer to-day the allegation about the circular. Now, I have the text of it before me. This circular was issued last November, when the Commission Court sat. It is headed “Very Secret; Agrarian Crime.” It is unfortunate for the British Government in Ireland that under the present system, even that which is very secret immediately becomes public. This circular is not simply “private” or “confidential,” it is very secret, and has consequently come into our hands. It is from Dublin Castle to the police—

“Very secret! Agrarian crime! Please let me have as soon as you can the particulars asked for on the opposite margin regarding all Leaguers convicted of agrarian crime since September, 1879. Of course ‘Leaguers’ include members of the Land League as well as of the National League. Be very discreet in collecting this information. From the local knowledge of the police no difficulty is apprehended in the performance of this duty. (a) Where tried and offence: (b) names of persons, addresses, and witnesses generally, and what each can prove; (c) names and present addresses of persons who can produce records of each conviction as entered; (d) remarks, showing nature of evidence given, and any point of interest showing connection between League and offences.”

That is the circular issued by the Government, which declared its determination to stand impartially between the parties. Would any honest man—I will not say Chief Secretary—desire to bring

into Court a case which he was not prepared to submit to the test of cross-examination? How were we to be prepared with the material for cross-examination when we were unaware that this circular had been issued? Although the right hon. Gentleman refused to answer, we know that his refusal was simply an admission of the existence of the circular. We can all appreciate the advantage it would have been to the Chief Secretary if he could have said, "No such circular has been issued." Why, he would have bounded to the Table if he could have made such a declaration. He could not do so; two things restrained him—a desire to keep within the lines of truth, and the second, a more binding, restraining influence, I imagine, was the knowledge that we had a copy of the circular in our hands. Now, I say, quoting the Chancellor of the Exchequer, "the country will judge." A Special Commission was given to us to enable us to clear our character. The Government were most anxious that we should clear our character. They loved us more than brothers; they desired that we should prove ourselves worthy of retaining our places in this Imperial Assembly, and, prompted by that desire, they directed the police to set about collecting not merely evidence, but rumour. Why, we had the result offered to the three Judges who form the Special Commission in the very form of this special circular. A District Inspector had a Return in the form of this circular; but the Judges refused to receive it, and the Court was plunged into inextinguishable laughter when the District Inspector was found to have included in his Return of reasons why Irish Members should be expelled from this House—perhaps for disfranchising Ireland—that in one case a Land Leaguer was alleged to be reasonably suspected of having been guilty of "furious driving." Yes; the country will judge as to this Circular, and as to the methods adopted by the Irish Government to assist us in the endeavour to clear our character in this inquiry, and as to the sincerity and frankness of the Chief Secretary. It is too late for the right hon. Gentleman to pretend that we never made proposals for an alteration of the condition of things in Donegal. The poor tenants of the district stand on a

special footing and must be dealt with in a special manner, and if we were responsible do not doubt but we should deal with the case promptly. We have made many proposals, in the form of compensation for disturbance, for dealing with arrears and on the direction of migration. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian kindly and compassionably assented to our proposal in the Bill of 1882, and those proposals have been effectual in saving these poor people in their homes. If hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite who are so ready to deride the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian, if the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Sleaford (Mr. Chaplin) and others, had urged upon their Government the concession in the legislation of 1887, of our demand for providing for arrears, and a provision similar to that which the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian agreed to in 1882, the distress we lament and deplore to-day in Donegal would not have arisen. My hon. Friend the Member for Cork proposed a system of migration. The Chief Secretary says it is easy to get land. My hon. Friend when defeated in his efforts to embark upon legislation attempted by other means to effect his object and carry out migration for the relief of the crowded districts, but he was boycotted by the landlords; he could not get land at less than 25 years' purchase. If he could have got it at 20 years' purchase, if he could have obtained it on any terms that would not have meant a material loss, he would have bought it, and the question would have been disposed of. The Chief Secretary, who has done nothing to assist in a solution of the difficulty, says you can get land cheap, and I tell him you cannot. There is this special feature attached to these Donegal holdings that whatever value they have belongs to the tenants, and the landlord has no right to rent for such. The tenants cannot pay rent from the produce of the land, they come over to England every year, they labour in the harvest fields here, they carry home the bulk of the wages they thus earn, and out of this they pay the landlord's rent. When the Chief Secretary and the Chancellor of the Exchequer speak of the English labourer and his allotment, they simply display their ignorance, for there is no analogy in the cases.

Is it the case that an English labourer builds his own house and gives his allotment whatever value it has? A comparison in cases fundamentally distinct is fallacious, and tends only to mislead. Does the House know what occurred in Donegal yesterday? There were seven evictions carried out, the battering ram standing by in a position of self-defence, and in these seven houses there was not found one potato or other food. I challenge contradiction to my statement. In one house broken into was a woman with a babe on her breast; her husband was absent. The first emergency man who entered after the door was burst, without warrant, gave the woman a violent push. The poor woman holding her babe with one arm stooped to seize a stool, and another emergency man gave her a blow on the face with his clenched fist, blood spurt- ing out from the force of the blow. Here was a poor woman, her husband being absent, trying to defend her house against the brutal wretches who were executing a brutal law. She had not in the house a single potato or item of food whatever. With the aid of the battering ram the pro- ceedings were carried out in pur- suance of what has at other times been described as a policy of concilia- tion. I press for a reply before this debate closes. Will nothing be done by special grant of out-door relief, by provision of seed for the tilling of the farms for the present year, to save these people from starvation? What is the use of the right hon. Gentleman oppo- site standing upon the abstract letter of the law? What has been done has been a direct incitement to landlords to evict. The Government have incited the landlord not to come to a settlement with his tenants, for they have taken away from the tenants their guardian, their benefactor, their protector, their banker—Father M'Fadden. The right hon. Gentleman will not discuss the arrest of Father M'Fadden. Does he forget the case in which, the Attorney General having declined to proceed against a policeman who was accused on the finding of a coroner's jury of having killed a man at Middleton, the Chief Baron called attention to the failure of justice, and in the interests of justice the Attorney General was compelled to proceed before a magis-

trate? It is a question, in the case of Father M'Fadden, of the exercise of the functions of the Attorney General. What is he about to do? We have a right to know. The materials have been for many days before him; is he going to institute a prosecution or not? The imprisonment of Father M'Fadden means that the case of the other per- sons is prejudiced by the closing of the mouth of their principal witness. It means that the accused can make no adequate arrangements for their de- fence. It means there is no one to look after these poor starving women and children, no one to assist the tenants by endeavouring to promote a settlement with the landlord, should he be willing to come to terms. By your method of arresting Father M'Fadden you have done more than, in my memory, has ever been done by any Government to plunge the district into confusion and despair, to bring about breach of the law and peril to life and property. The police were planted about the church from an early hour. The warrant for arrest had been held for several days and no attempt was made to execute it—it was held over while Father M'Fadden went about the parish on his parochial duties. Why, if, as the Chief Secretary says, you are anxious that arrests should be made in a manner and at a time when they are likely to cause the least disturbance, did the police wait until the people were assembled on a Sunday morning? The police were there 100 strong from 7 in the morning, why did they not effect the arrest at an early hour? They waited until he passed into church and until Divine Service was over. Perhaps the House is not aware that on that day Father M'Fadden, with the near prospect of his own arrest, addressed the people from the steps of the altar with as powerful an address in the interest of peace and on the duties of self-denial, forbearance, and Christian church. Divine Service be- ing over, Father M'Fadden walked out, wearing his soutane and biretta, and carrying his breviary in his hand. Outside the door the people were col- lected, and the authorities could not have chosen a psychological moment more likely to provoke a riot. Inspector Martin, whose tragic death no man can deplore more deeply than my colleagues

and myself—he was known to be a man of excitable disposition and should never have been sent on such an errand—came to the priest and seized him by the arm at the same moment drawing his sword, saying, “Come along with me.” With the force used the priest’s garment was torn, and as the sword flashed an excitable girl in the crowd cried out that the Inspector had struck the priest with his sword. Father M’Fadden asked for the authority for his arrest, and the warrant was produced. From that moment—and the evidence of the police is unanimous on this—Father M’Fadden did as he was desired, and went in the direction of his house, went on so fast indeed that he stumbled by the way. Father M’Fadden, as well as the officer, was struck in the burst of irrepressible uncontrollable fury which seized the people when, as they thought, they witnessed an attack upon their best friend and protector, whom they loved and almost worshipped. They rushed forward with the tragic result we all deplore. Father M’Fadden called out in English and Irish to the people to preserve peace and return to their homes. We have it from Father M’Fadden himself that in the course of his 10 years’ administration of the parish he had never before in many crises found the people escape from his control, and the only occasion on which they failed to respond to his appeal was when he was powerless, because the people saw him made the victim of outrage. This holy priest, this devoted man who has given his time and his substance to the service of these poor and wretched people, stands charged with murder. Now, I beg the House of Commons to try and consider these things apart from all political feeling—I appeal to every Member, no matter what his political opinion, what is the possibility of convicting such a man, who all his life has behaved in the interests of peace and for the welfare of his people, of such a crime? The release of this priest is necessary for the preparation of the defence of the other persons accused, he is the one moral bulwark between the desperate people of his parish and the teachings of despair. I most unfeignedly declare that I have nothing but the interests of public peace at heart when I say that justice is outraged by the indefinite

postponement of proceedings. If the Attorney General, having the evidence before him, finds it is not sufficient to sustain the charge, let him fulfil the duty he owes at once to justice and to his Government and withdraw the charge, giving thereby the best security he can for the preservation of peace in Donegal. How long is the military occupation of the country to continue? Forty-six men have been arrested; you hold 23 of them in prison. Every reasonable man, every lawyer, must be aware that this is far in excess of any number that can be criminally concerned. Cordons were drawn around an area of 16 miles, and soldiers and police dragged the country into a net, searching every house, stable, and field for evidence. The ordinary course of procedure is subverted; instead of collecting evidence and making arrests as suspicion pointed, the police swept the country with a drag net, and having got their prisoners then searched for evidence. The whole thing is scandalous to the last degree. We had a drunken constable on the witness table giving his testimony in a matter of life and death, but the magistrates saw nothing wrong until his ribaldry became so intolerable they were obliged to censure him. We had a prisoner identified in the dock by a constable, and when the accused changed places with another, the constable a few minutes afterwards declared an entirely different person to be the same man. We have had a policeman who knew the names of prisoners telling them to the witnesses. We have had throughout the whole proceedings the most flagrant examples of that tendency among official witnesses to have less regard for truth and justice than *esprit de corps*, and the desire to procure convictions. What is to be the sequel? When is this system of oppression and military terrorism to cease? It is bad enough that these poor peasants should suffer hunger as the result of your system of rule; but if they must live in hunger, at least let them live in peace. Hunger and ease are the rights of a dog; but you not only condemn these poor people to starve, you deny them ease. The men have sought shelter in the mountains and caves, and so you institute a system of passes. I have heard of two men gathering seaweed being asked for

passes—for their authority to be at work. They had no passes; they were taken to the police station and examined, and subsequently set at liberty; but they were fined for working without permission, for when they came back the tide had washed away the result of their day's labour—the seaweed they had collected. We have heard of midnight visits to the house of a poor woman who was in that condition that ought to excite the sympathy of any man. Three nights before the birth of her infant was she visited, and again three nights afterwards. Upon her bed, which lay upon the ground, did the police trample in carelessness, in wantonness, or reckless search for something. The police went to the bed where the children were and turned down the clothes—we have all this on undoubted evidence—it is not sufficient to say it is not true—and finally they went to the bed of a girl of thirteen, and held a gun to her head while they put a series of questions to her. Is this conciliation? Is this civilization? Is this the Unionist policy for Ireland; or is it rank, undiluted, revolting barbarism? I trust, at any rate, the arrests are completed; that, under these conditions of hunger and destitution, the people are at liberty to live, and that we have heard the last of these military cordons, domiciliary visits, and passes. It is high time that a district so scourged by nature should have relief from the terrorism of man. I wish Members would pay a visit to the district and see these miserable houses, built of mud and wattles, which are being levelled to the ground by the battering ram of self-defence. There is not on the face of the earth a district more bleak and stern. It has been well described by the correspondent of the *Daily News*. Whoever sees the place must be convinced a policy is being there pursued unworthy of a statesman, of a Christian, of a man—a policy repugnant to the feelings of humanity and the sense of justice dominant in the breasts of Englishmen; and I believe the British people will yet avenge on the Chief Secretary at the first opportunity the contempt with which he treats those principles they hold sacred, and which they endeavour to carry into effect all over the globe wherever the British Empire holds sway.

*THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. MADDEN, Dublin University): I do not rise to interpose for any considerable time between the House and the termination of this debate, but merely to make a few observations, having regard to the direct challenge or appeal from the right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down, to the Government, and especially to myself, and to make some statement with regard to the concluding portion of his speech. The right hon. Gentleman put forward a number of circumstances or alleged facts upon which in express terms he asked the House to conclude the innocence of Father M'Fadden. I only wish to point out that it is absolutely impossible for any Member of the Government to enter into that question at all. What is the position? We are invited to enter into the consideration of circumstances which are alleged to point towards the innocence of Father M'Fadden and other persons awaiting trial in connection with the lamentable murder of Inspector Martin. Let the House consider what the position would be if we accepted this challenge and entered into circumstances and considerations that might be considered as pointing to the guilt of the reverend gentleman or of any of the accused; surely every fair-minded man must see at once that would be in the highest degree improper? I think I may venture to say every fair-minded man on either side will understand why it is no Member of the Government can enter into a discussion of the matter in regard to which we have been challenged. Let it be clearly understood I do not in the least degree contend that the circumstances which the right hon. Gentleman has with power and eloquence brought before the House are unfounded in fact, or that they do not point in the direction in which he asks the House to believe they point; I say I am precluded in the discharge of my duty from discussing the question at all, or considering the bearings of any of the circumstances mentioned. But, before I sit down, there are one or two other matters as to which there is no such obligation of silence imposed. The right hon. Gentleman has brought forward two specific allegations, one in relation to the alleged treatment of men who were engaged in the collection of

seaweed, and the other as to domiciliary visits made by the police to make arrests or collect information. I merely wish to remind the House that both these allegations were made the subject-matter of distinct questions in the House, and both questions were answered by my right hon. Friend or myself upon information we obtained. That information satisfied us, and upon it we founded our statements that, in substance, the allegations were in their main features without foundation.

MR. SEXTON: I repeat the statements deliberately and emphatically, and I challenge inquiry.

*MR. MADDEN: The statements having been embodied in questions and put on the Paper in the ordinary way, inquiry was made, and we gave the result. Inquiry was made through the usual sources for obtaining information, and everyone must recognize that it is the only way by which a Member of the Government, whether it is the Home Secretary as representing the English Government, or the Chief Secretary as representing the Irish Government, can, when questions are asked, procure the necessary information to answer them. I do not ask the House to judge as between the statements in the questions and the answers given; but when those statements are repeated, as they have been, let the House remember that when those statements were made previously the information we obtained, in the only way in which we could obtain it, was in contradiction of those statements. Another reference was that in relation to what occurred after the Middleton inquest, and it is my duty to refer to this, as the right hon. Gentleman cast a distinct slur on my learned colleague the Attorney General for Ireland's conduct in the matter. The allegation was that the Attorney General was to blame in not putting a person on his trial in consequence of the result of a Coroner's inquisition, and it was suggested that the course taken by the Attorney General met with the disapproval of the Lord Chief Baron. I say distinctly, without wearying the House by going into details, the course taken by the Attorney General in refraining from putting the man on his trial on the Coroner's inquisition was in accordance with the practice which prevails both in this country and

in Ireland. He took a course which met with the entire approval of the Chief Baron—namely, that of having a magisterial inquiry into the facts of the case, with the result which is known to the House. The Lord Chief Baron at no time animadverted on the fact that the man was not put on his trial upon the inquisition of the Coroner's jury, and that was in accordance with the practice his predecessors had followed, and which is followed in England.

MR. SEXTON: I did not say anything about the approval or disapproval of the Lord Chief Baron.

*MR. MADDEN: The action of the Attorney General for Ireland was in no way the result of the debates in this House, neither has the Lord Chief Baron at any time animadverted on the fact that the man was not put on the trial on the inquisition of the coroner's jury. I must repeat that the course taken by the Attorney General in this case was the usual course. But I have simply risen to explain to the House, in regard to the portion of the speech of the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Sexton) in which he challenged me to meet certain charges, that, having regard to the circumstances of the case, the matter is one which cannot possibly be discussed in the House at this moment.

COLONEL NOLAN (Galway): I should like to bring the discussion back to what, I think, is the most important point of the statement of the hon. Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell), and which to a great extent has been lost sight of. The hon. Gentleman has specially warned the Chief Secretary that there is very great distress in the districts, and has implored the right hon. Gentleman to make some provision to meet it. I think it would be impossible for the Poor Law Authority in the district to find funds to afford adequate relief, and therefore it is imperative that the Chief Secretary should afford relief. The right hon. Gentleman has said that for the Government to afford relief would amount to an encouragement to what he called the congested districts. The right hon. Gentleman seems to have lost sight of the fact that there is no multiplying in the West of Ireland. The marriage and birth rate there is only about half what it is in England; indeed, there is no possibility of the population increasing. A second reason which the

right hon. Gentleman gives is that the original seed rate has not been paid. But of the £700,000 94 per cent has been repaid, and it is only in the exceptionally poor districts where the money has not been repaid.

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I said the seed rate has been exceedingly well paid, compared with other Irish loans, but that it has not been particularly well paid in that part of Donegal.

COLONEL NOLAN: Anyhow, all over Ireland 94 per cent has been paid, and there is every probability that another 3 per cent will be paid. A loss of 3 per cent on the whole loan is not very great, all the circumstances considered. Suppose you now advance £7,000 or £8,000 for the same purpose, and £4,000 or £5,000 was not repaid, I do not think that would be an extreme case. The right hon. Gentleman talks about eleemosynary aid, but I do not look upon the matter in that light at all. I never forget that we in Ireland contribute £8,000,000 to the Imperial Exchequer, and that we only get back for any useful purpose whatever about £2,000,000. Instead of asking for alms on this occasion, we are only asking for a small portion of our own money.

MR. STUART (Shoreditch, Hoxton): I rise to emphasize the fact that the Government's reply to what has been brought before it has been a reply of shreds and tatters. The Solicitor General for Ireland did not refer to the Circular about which questions have been put to the Chief Secretary. I put on the Paper a question upon the subject very reluctantly, because I felt that if the charge happened to be baseless, it was very undesirable it should remain on the Paper for even the short time a question may appear on the Paper. I made up my mind to put the question on the Paper owing to the circumstances under which the Circular came into my hands, and because I felt the Government would have an opportunity of denying its correctness. Up to this moment its correctness has not been denied. The Government, too, appear to be wanting in appreciation of the point raised by us. They say they will not deal with the case of Father M'Fadden. Why have we raised the case? Here there is a population in the extremity of distress; they cannot even get seed potatoes; and you will not do anything for them.

Who helped them in their trouble before? Father M'Fadden and Father Stephens, whom you are about to send to prison. When the people were evicted, who received them and comforted them? Father M'Fadden and Father Stephens. It is because you have removed what the people relied on, that you are called on and implored by us to take some steps for meeting the difficulties of the people. One would have thought from the remarks of the Chancellor of the Exchequer that the Plan of Campaign commenced all the trouble in Donegal. That is not the case at all. The Plan of Campaign has helped to stop evictions not only in Donegal, but all over Ireland. Last night the Chief Secretary seemed to think that an attack on the right of private property is what I and others mean when we speak against the system of landlordism. He asked what I meant by landlordism. I can show by a short quotation what landlordism in Gweedore, with which the Government are identifying themselves, is. I hold in my hand a letter addressed to Father M'Fadden by a landlord in the neighbourhood of the Olphert estate.

"It is useless," this gentleman writes, "to deal kindly any longer with these tenants. I may tell you that I would not now accept 99 per cent. of all rents and costs due to me, as I am going to clear out the two townlands, and it is my land I want now. Remember, they are merely living on my land as long as I let them, and I will not regard cost in carrying out my plans. I have ample private means and will set aside a sum yearly until all are out of that. In doing this I am only following out the Scriptural precept that 'a man may do what he likes with his own.' I am determined on this, and in five or at the most ten years' time there will probably not be a single family left there."

This is an example of the "iron sleet of arrowy shower" which in my remarks yesterday I referred to, and against which Father M'Fadden has been a rock of defence, and it is an example of the unjust system which the Donegal peasantry have been taught by our administration to identify with the Government of the Queen.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland Division): I wish to call the attention of the House to another estate on which the Government or their agents are acting in a somewhat different fashion. The Plan of Campaign has been raging on the Massereene estate some time, and there is still a dis-

pute there. In the *Down Recorder* an advertisement in the following terms has appeared:—

“Vacant farms. Important to Protestant tenant farmers and their sons. There are several vacant farms to let in the counties Louth and Meath in close proximity to the important seaport and market town of Drogheda. None but Protestants need apply. Special advantages offered to suitable tenants. For further particulars apply to Messrs. Dudgeon and Emerson, Land Agents and Solicitors, 14, Upper Sackville Street, Dublin.”

I think that advertisement might almost be left to speak for itself. I believe that four Protestant tenants have already gone down to the estate, so that actually the Government or their allies are endeavouring to break down the combination of tenants by appealing to the devilish passion of religious prejudice.

MR. GILL (Louth, S.): I hope the Government will pay some attention to the matter just brought under their notice by my hon. Friend. The Massereene estate is about to become the scene of one of the worst struggles that the country has witnessed since the *régime* of the right hon. Gentleman began. A number of Catholic tenants on this estate have been expelled from their holdings, to which Orangemen are being imported. This is a new policy, so far as the present crisis is concerned; but it is not novel in the agrarian history of Ireland. It is an attempt to work on the sectarian animosities which have wrought so much misery in Ireland. These sectarian animosities, wherever they have been fostered and not discouraged and put down with a strong hand, have always resulted in bloodshed and outrage, and scenes that every friend of Ireland and humanity must deplore. If the landlord of this estate succeeds in the course he is now pursuing, the result must be that the Catholic tenants will be driven to despair, because they will be deprived of that hope, and that self-confidence, and that aid which they now receive from being banded together—a fact which has served to keep their hands free from crime. This experiment has been tried in Ireland before. One of the most notorious cases of the kind was that of Lord Lorton in County Longford. Men were driven to despair, and the result was that a series of outrages and murders took place upon that estate

which wrought ruin to everyone concerned, ruin and death to the Protestant farmers who had come there, and ruin and crime to the unfortunate Catholics who had previously been at peace with the rest of the population. The experiment proved a failure from every point of view. Yet the Chief Secretary is now about to lend encouragement to a scheme ostentatiously insulting to the feelings of the people of one particular religion—and that the chief religion of the country. He proposes to lend his countenance to a scheme which involves the expropriation of tenants whose demands the Land Courts have admitted to be perfectly just. What has taken place during the last month has proved that we, the Irish Parliamentary Party, and those who have the control of the National movement in Ireland, would and do deplore as much as anyone the terrible consequences which must follow this policy, and I warn the right hon. Gentleman that terrible consequences must ensue if he allows a policy of this kind to be carried out. The Massereene dispute could have been brought to an end long ago if the right hon. Gentleman had not lent encouragement to the emergency agents of Lord Massereene. We have seen recently how, through the Plan of Campaign, settlements have been arrived at on several estates, and how willing the tenants have been to submit to arbitration. The Massereene tenants have been equally willing; terms could be easily arrived at, but it seems that the landlord intends to exclude certain of the tenants from the arrangement, and wishes to make victims of them. I say this is a case in which the Government should take some steps to bring the landlord to his senses—steps such as were successfully adopted by the immediate Predecessor in office of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary. Now, Sir, I feel confident in the strength of the tenants’ organization on that estate; I am sure that the proposed experiment cannot succeed, and I urge that it is the duty of the Government, in the interests of the peace of the country, to check the unjust and oppressive conduct of the landlord.

MR. A. BLANE (Armagh, S.): On the estate of Lord Lurgan in my county, the tenants were recently invited by the landlord to purchase under Lord Ashbourne’s Act, and I believe some of

Mr. T. P. O’Connor.

them signed agreements to do so at 16½ years' purchase. Now one of these tenants was in arrears with his rent, and at the time I questioned the Chief Secretary as to this man's position and liability. The right hon. Gentleman would not answer me at the time, as he said a case raising a similar question was pending before the Courts. To-day I have received a communication to the effect, that this tenant was sent to Armagh Gaol yesterday because he resisted an execution for arrears which, certainly, was not contemplated under Lord Ashbourne's Act. This man's house was surrounded by constables with fixed bayonets, and because he resisted he was carried off to the county gaol. I think it was most unreasonable for the landlord to take these steps after the man had signed an agreement to purchase at 16 years' purchase. Why will not the Chief Secretary interfere to prevent action like this? We can never get any information from him; when we put a question in this House we are invariably met with platitudes and commonplaces; but if Lord Ashbourne's Act is to work successfully tenants must not be entrapped in this way. I do not think the Chief Secretary could have really understood the facts of this case. He allowed the law to take its course; the Attorney General directed the prosecution to take place; and when the appeal was heard, instead of the Government remaining neutral, they actively maintained the prosecution. I say it is a grave public scandal that a tenant should have been treated in this way. A certain Member of the Conservative Party was returned to this House for the express purpose of resisting every reform and maintaining every abuse, and I believe that not a few Members of the Party act upon that principle. In this particular case the Resident Magistrates said they had grave doubts as to whether the action taken against the man was legal. In England, I believe, the prisoner receives the benefit of the doubt, but in Ireland the reverse is the case, and the benefit is refused to the accused. I have no doubt in my own mind that this man was perfectly justified in resisting the execution, as he had signed a purchase agreement under Lord Ashbourne's Act. Lord Ashbourne's Act does not contemplate the collection of arrears at all. It is, however, rather a hopeless thing to

draw attention in this House to abuses in Ireland, because the Tory Party is interested in the maintenance of every abuse, and in resistance to every reform.

Question put, and agreed to.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

—o—

SUPPLY.—COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

THE CONTROL OF THE PUBLIC EXECUTIONERS.

*SIR E. LECHMERE (Worcestershire, Bewdley): I beg to move—

"That, in the opinion of this House, such persons who may from time to time be employed, in pursuance of justice, in carrying into effect the extreme penalty of the law by hanging should be placed under the direct control of the Home Office."

I desire to draw the attention of the House to a very great scandal, and to suggest an easy method by which I think it might be put an end to. I may say that I am perfectly indifferent as to the term which may be used in describing the person who carries out the extreme penalty of the law. I do not care whether he is called an executioner or a hangman. What I contend for is that, as long as capital punishment by hanging is the law of this country, those who administer the law should be under the obligation of selecting and appointing proper persons to carry out the punishment so as to prevent the repetition of such scandals as have taken place. I think that the conduct of the person or persons who may be appointed should be under the immediate control of some official of the State, and I conclude that the Department of the State which is most fit to exercise that control is the Home Office. I have no intention of suggesting any interference with the ancient office of High Sheriff, part of whose duty it is to superintend executions. It may naturally be asked what is the present position of the common hangman. The present hangman, Berry, has not been selected or appointed by anybody. Calcraft, Marwood, and others of his predecessors were appointed by the Court of Aldermen of the Corporation of London with

a view of their carrying out executions at the Old Bailey. When executions had to be carried out in the provinces, Sheriffs found it convenient from time to time to write to the authorities at Newgate in order to obtain the services of the hangman. The executioner appointed by the Court of Aldermen received a retainer of £20 a-year, with an addition of £10 for each execution; the object of the retainer being to secure the first claim upon him whenever his services might be required. In the case of the present hangman, however, there has been no appointment whatever. He seems somehow to have slipped into the office after the dismissal of a man who was discharged for gross misconduct and drunkenness. It is a remarkable thing that there are no rules and no conditions laid down anywhere for the guidance of the executioner, in the carrying out of his duties, with the single exception that, by the rules of the Home Office, he is bound to sleep within the precincts of the goal on the night preceding the execution. To show that this rule is by no means sufficient to ensure propriety of conduct on the part of the executioner, I may mention some circumstances connected with the present executioner that are already known to the House, as I have already put questions to the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary (Mr. Matthews) with regard to them. In May, last year, Berry had to hang two men at Hereford. On the night preceding the execution he went down to Hereford and was *fêted* at a smoking concert in one of the hotels, he himself being a performer. I put a question to the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary (Mr. Matthews) on this subject, and his reply was that the executioner was appointed by the Sheriff, and neither the Home Secretary nor the Prison Commissioners had any control over him. After hanging the men at Hereford, he went to Worcester, where there was the same sort of *fêting* at public houses, and where he held a kind of *levée*. The High Sheriff of Worcestershire, anxious to prevent unseemly conduct on the part of the executioner, similar to that which had occurred elsewhere, took special pains to speed Berry on his way to his home in Bradford, but instead of proceeding there he alighted at Kidderminster, where a scene occurred which

excited a great deal of scandal. I have here a letter from the Mayor of Kidderminster, which reads as follows:—

HEATHFIELD,

WOLVERLEY, KIDDERMINSTER,

FEBRUARY 4TH, 1889.

"DEAR SIR E. LECHMERE,

I have this morning a report from our Chief of the Police, to whom I had given instructions to furnish me with all facts bearing upon Berry's visit to Kidderminster.

The gist of the matter seems to be this—he arrived in the town about 10.30 a.m., and left again by the 4.9 p.m. train. During that time he visited at least three public houses, at two of which he gave addresses of about ten minutes each, in one on 'Morality,' and in the other on 'Phrenology.' These were heard by Inspector Griffiths, the second in command of our Borough Force. At the public house where he lectured on Phrenology, the attendance might fairly be described as holding a *levée*. There is no doubt as to his distributing cards bearing his name as Public Executioner. We have tried to procure one, but have failed to do so, and it would be impossible now to obtain one without exciting remarks and suspicion. Berry was certainly sober whilst in the town, as the Chief Constable gave orders as soon as he heard he was in the place that he was to be watched and arrested if he became intoxicated. I may add, that at one of the houses he visited, he spoke of Crowther whom he had executed that morning. I hope these details will meet your requirements. I have every reason to believe them to be strictly accurate.

I am, yours very sincerely,

EDWARD J. MORTON,

Mayor of Kidderminster."

I have also a letter from a Town Councillor of Kidderminster, who says—

"I have gone into this matter thoroughly, and find that he did visit public houses at Kidderminster, including the following:—"The Anchor Inn," Worcester Street; "Lyttleton's Arms," Park Butts; "Plough and Harrow," Bewdley Street. At the first he freely distributed his card, and held animated converse with all comers. One of such cards I enclose, but it must be returned to me. At the second public house he and his assistant were demonstrating in the presence of numerous men and women, and his language is described as foul and disgusting. The assistant above referred to is a barber at Kidderminster named Silcox, and was passed into the gaol by Berry under an assumed name as his pupil."

I thought it my duty to call the attention of the Home Secretary (Mr. Matthews) to these facts, and did so by means of a question in this House. I may say that I have no personal feeling in this matter. I believe that this man does his terrible work with all the skill, and, I believe, with as much humanity as men of that occupation have ever brought.

Sir E. Lechmere

to bear on the work they have to do. But he himself has stated that he is absolutely without any conditions or rules. As long as he is the servant of the High Sheriff he is under the orders of the High Sheriff, but before and after the execution he is under no authority or rule or control. The feeling of Grand Juries and Courts of Quarter Sessions on this subject is known by a considerable number of presentments. Grand Juries in Surrey, Dorset, Westmoreland, Leicestershire, Worcestershire, the City of Worcester, Lincolnshire, Gloucestershire, Durham, the City of York, and elsewhere have all expressed themselves in favour of the Resolution I have ventured to propose to the House. Two Judges have expressed their opinion on the subject—namely, Lord Chief Justice Coleridge and Mr. Justice Denman. The Lord Chief Justice, in receiving the presentment of the Grand Jury at Worcester, said—

“The Judges were deeply interested in the right and duly decorous administration of the law, and there was not one of them who would not heartily sympathize and do everything in his power to enforce the recommendation.”

Mr. Justice Denman expressed a different view when the York City Grand Jury handed in a presentment respecting the appointment of a public executioner; his Lordship said—

“He would forward the recommendation to the proper quarter, but he did not think that such a subject should be put into the hands of the Government. He would suggest, as a better plan, for the Visiting Justices to appoint a person connected with the gaol who was a thoroughly respectable, praiseworthy, and efficient man, who should be set apart to carry out the work of execution, in consideration of which he should have an addition to his salary quite independent of the Government of the day. He did not think it desirable that the Sheriff should have to hunt up a man from other places, but any particular gaol might furnish some person from amongst the warders who might perform the office. That was his opinion. It might be wrong, but such gentlemen as those of the Grand Jury would be more likely to come to a right decision on the matter.”

With all deference and respect to Mr. Justice Denman, I contend that the employment of persons connected with gaols as executioners would be anything but conducive to good discipline. Let me, on that point, quote the words of a very excellent Prison Governor, Lieutenant Leggett, Governor of Worcester Gaol:—

“I cannot too strongly protest against the suggestion of employing the officers of any prison in such a capacity. I could not believe that any one with *actual* experience of prison life and duties could have seriously entertained such an idea for a moment. Now, more than ever, is it desirable to raise the standard of a prison officer's status. If he were liable, as a part of his duties, to be called on to officiate as assistant to the common hangman, or, in his absence, as principal, how should such a man be looked upon in the future by his brother warders, his relatives and acquaintances in his immediate neighbourhood? Such an arrangement, in my humble judgment, would be highly unpopular throughout the prison service.”

I think that very likely the House is very little acquainted with the Report of the Committee appointed by Lord Cross some years ago, and of which Lord Aberdare was Chairman, to consider certain circumstances mainly arising out of a lamentable miscarriage of justice which had taken place a short time before. One of those who gave evidence before the Committee was Colonel Cowan, one of the Sheriffs of London. He said, with reference to the appointment of hangman—

“I think leaving it to the discretion of the Sheriff to select a person is not so perfect, and not so good, and it is not so likely to be a good appointment as would be the case if the authorities selected the man and gave him the necessary amount of instruction.”

Colonel Cowan also said—

“The great practical object is to secure a fit man for the office who shall conduct it with skill, and at the same time be a fairly respectable man who is not likely to do anything to disgrace an office which, in itself, is not too much respected.”

Another witness, and a very important one, Dr. Carte, who spoke from experience, as having been medical officer to one of Her Majesty's prisons, said—

“I am of opinion that there should be a regularly appointed hangman under the control of the Home Office, or whatever office the post would properly come under. I deem the manner in which Sheriffs bargain with an ignorant hangman for his bungling services most objectionable. Not only would I have a regularly appointed hangman, but I would have certain rules laid down for him to follow.”

An hon. Member called attention to the fact that there were not forty Members present. The House was counted, and, forty Members being in their places,

*SIR E. LECHMERE continued: Should the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary (Mr. Matthews) be

willing to make any change, I think that the hangman should be properly appointed and should be certificated. He ought to possess a certificate to the effect that he was well qualified by his conduct to perform the duties. I believe also that there should be an assistant executioner, so that when two executions take place on the same day in different parts of England, there may be two men capable of performing the duties. I think that the men should be paid by the State, in accordance with a custom which is almost universal. In France and Germany the executioner is paid by the State, and even in our small dependency of Malta the same system is adopted. In conclusion, I would ask the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary (Mr. Matthews) if he does not think that any grave constitutional principle is involved, to support my Motion. I believe that no constitutional principle whatever is involved, and that the change I propose would be not only beneficial to the State, but approved by the public at large, and by those who are interested in carrying out the administration of justice in the country.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words, "in the opinion of this House, such persons who may from time to time be employed, in pursuance of justice, in carrying into effect the extreme penalty of the Law by hanging, should be placed under the direct control of the Home Office,"—(*Sir Edmund Lechemere*),

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

MR. LOCKWOOD (York): I rise to second the Motion, and I hope the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary (Mr. Matthews) will see his way to accept it in the terms in which the hon. Baronet opposite has moved it. I would point out that it does not propose in any way to interfere with the duties which High Sheriffs, through their Under Sheriffs, are, in the present state of the law, called upon to perform. It merely asks the Home Office, as a responsible body, to see that persons are appointed who are qualified to carry out the terrible work, and who will be responsible to some office with regard to the way in which executions are carried out. I am aware that a Report of a Committee of

the House of Lords, published in June, 1888, suggested that the High Sheriff should be relieved of all responsibility in connection with the execution of criminals, and that the opinion was expressed by that Committee that the penalty of death should be enforced by the authority which now has charge of all prisoners and controls the execution of other penal sentences. I see very grave objections to that recommendation being carried out, and I do not think that we should ask the Home Secretary, upon the consideration of a Resolution such as this, to pledge himself to any such sweeping arrangement. What the hon. Baronet has asked for is that the Home Office should grant certificates to properly qualified persons, and that the certificates should be held subject to the work being done in a proper manner. No doubt many hon. Members, and a large number of persons outside that House, hold strong views on the question of capital punishment. Some are of opinion that it should be abolished altogether; but every one will agree that if capital punishment continues to form a part of the Penal Code of this country, it should be carried out with decency. There have been grave scandals in connection with executions. I have heard of scenes such as the hon. Baronet has described. Reception has been held the night before executions, and the man who was to carry out the sentence of the law was the hero of the hour. The terrible implements of death were shown—I suppose for the purpose of satisfying some morbid curiosity—and after the sentence of death has been carried out there has been another reception. Then there have been descriptions of that which the law says should be kept private. And, also, an exhibition is made of the mode in which the wretched criminal has been prepared for his death; but I will not go further into this disagreeable subject. I will only say that I regard the Resolution of the hon. Baronet as a possible means of putting a stop to such scandals in the future. Now what, I ask, is our present system? It is the duty of the High Sheriff to take over into his custody the criminal who has been convicted and sentenced to death. This is a duty which, however, is performed by the Under Sheriff, and I believe it is necessary

that the Under Sheriff should be present when the sentence of death is passed, and also when it is carried into execution, for the purpose of identification. Moreover, if the Under Sheriff is not able to secure the services of anyone willing to discharge the terrible functions of the executioner, that officer, according to the dreadful traditions of our law, has to perform the duty with his own hands. Under these circumstances, we can imagine how it is that the Under Sheriffs—and here I must not be taken as finding fault with the way in which they, as a rule, perform their duty, for I believe they do it well—are willing to accept anybody who offers himself as prepared to carry out the last sentence of the law. Were the Resolution of the hon. Baronet carried into effect, the result would be that a certain number of men would be appointed who would hold certificates and licences from the Home Office, and, if I may call the attention of the Home Secretary to the 7th section of the 31st Victoria, chap. 24, he will see there is no doubt that the Home Office has power to grant these certificates or licences, for by that section it is provided that—

“The Home Secretary, under this Act, may from time to time permit such rules and regulations to be observed in the execution of the judgment of death as he may from time to time deem expedient for the purpose.”

These words, it appears to me, are wide enough to give the Home Secretary the necessary power, supposing he does not possess it otherwise, as I think he does; but if he has no discretion in the matter, I venture to think that under that section there is ample authority to him to grant such certificates and licences. The subject is not an agreeable one to enlarge upon, and I have said what I have to say upon it; but I would appeal to the right hon. Gentleman, in the interests of the community, to lend a favourable ear to this proposal. In the Courts of Justice, from the highest official down to the lowest officer who disturbs the proceedings by calling “silence,” everyone has a responsible duty to perform; but in the case we are discussing, the man who carries out the last terrible sentence of the law, and on whose conduct so much depends, is an irresponsible individual. I trust the Home Secretary will be able to accept this Resolution, in

order that those employed in the office of executioner may be responsible instead of irresponsible persons.

MR. MORRISON (Skipton): I am prepared to go as far as the recommendation of the Select Committee of the House of Lords, because I think that the hangman should be appointed under direct responsibility to the Home Office. This goes further than the Motion of the hon. Baronet, and would recognize what is in fact the present practice—namely, that the apparatus of the executioner should be provided by the Home Office. It will be admitted that it is a very odious thing to throw on the gentleman who holds the office of High Sheriff of his county the duty of making provision for carrying out the sentence of death. I am not quite prepared to accept the Motion of the hon. Baronet, and would point out that if the suggestion I have made were carried out it would get rid of the greatest scandal of all—namely, that although the High Sheriff engages the executioner for individual executions, he has no further control over him after the executions are performed. I would only further endeavour to enforce what has fallen from the hon. Baronet as to the extreme inexpediency of having the executions performed by the regular staff of the gaol. Such a duty would be very unpopular among the governors and warders of our prisons. I believe it is the opinion of the most experienced governors of our gaols that to adopt such a proposal would tend to interfere with the authority of the warders over the prisoners, and would also have a tendency to prevent good men from applying for the post of warder, it being eminently necessary, when one remembers the difficult, delicate, and responsible duties those officers have to discharge, that every care should be taken to secure that really good men should be induced to offer themselves for that position. I think that the appointment of the hangman should be directly in the hands of the Home Secretary, and I think we should derive further advantage from following up the practice which has lately been adopted of excluding reporters from executions.

MR. H. COSSHAM (Bristol, East): I think we are much indebted to the hon. Baronet for having called attention to this question as to the execution of

the extreme penalty of the law—a subject which tends to produce in the public mind a considerable amount of feeling. One of the unfortunate circumstances connected with the position of executioner is that the man who has to do the work of carrying out the law is frequently regarded by a certain section of the public rather in the light of a hero. It was my misfortune the other day to come to London in a train which brought the public executioner up from the West of England, and it was a matter of horror to me to find, when we got to Swindon, that that man became a centre of attraction for the people there assembled, and was pointed at by almost everyone as a man of importance, who was to be looked at. I think there can be nothing more morbid and lowering to the public taste than a feeling of that sort. I hope the House will recollect that in all the cases in which hanging has been abolished, the crimes for which it used to be the penalty have decreased in number. This would seem to be a point in favour of the abolition of capital punishment altogether, rather than in the direction indicated by the Motion of the hon. Baronet; but at any rate, if capital punishment is to be retained, the execution should be carried out in such a way as to cause the least amount of shock to the public mind and public taste. Therefore, I shall support the Motion of the hon. Baronet as far as it goes, but I would invite him to walk in the more advanced path of endeavouring to obtain a better mode of treating criminals than that of hanging them. During the last few days a man was hanged—I have no doubt with perfect fairness—after memorials from something like 20,000 or 30,000 persons had been sent in in his behalf. If any other method of punishment were adopted, I have no doubt there would be far less sympathy than is now awakened on the part of the criminal, rather than on behalf of the law, and the fact that there is this sympathy with the criminal leads me to think that the law cannot be a wise one. I hope the House will take every opportunity of keeping awake and deepening the sentiment which has been aroused in the public mind against capital punishment; and, while supporting the hon. Baronet as far as he goes, I ask the House to look for some other mode of dealing with

the question rather than that of merely mitigating the existing evil in the small way now proposed.

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.): It seems to me that the Resolution of the hon. Baronet goes too far on the one hand, and not far enough on the other. At present the Sheriffs are entirely responsible for the effectual and decent carrying out of all executions, their responsibility including all the necessary arrangements, and the selection of the persons on whom the success of these grand proceedings depends. It seems to me that the Resolution of the hon. Baronet would, if adopted, place us in an illogical position, because, while it would continue to leave the Sheriffs responsible for the execution of the last penalty of the law, it would still place those officers under the obligation to employ, as the chief instrument in the proceedings, a person whom they do not appoint, and over whom they do not have full authority. I think there are only two logical courses open to us—the one being, to leave the matter where it now is, and the other to transfer the entire responsibility and control over the arrangements for executions from the Sheriffs to the Home Office. Now, I hold that if this were entirely a new question, this House could not hesitate long as to what would be the proper course. I have always regretted the passing of the existing Act, and had I been a Member of the House of Commons at the time, I should have used every legitimate means to prevent its being passed. But, as we have to face the fact that all the persons engaged in the execution of every other sentence of the law are under the control of the Home Office, it is futile and idle for us to stickle at the transfer to the Home Office of the execution of the ultimate penalty of the law. And there is another consideration which weighs with me in this matter. We have recently had attention called to a case in which the Press were excluded by the local authority from being present at the execution. My hon. Friend reminds me that the instance to which I refer occurred at Bristol. Much may be said for excluding the Press—as much may be said for admitting the Press. There seems to me, however, one

thing which is absolutely indefensible and untenable, and that is that the practice throughout the country should vary according to the personal opinions of the Sheriff. Where the public eye, acting through the reporters, is most required, is at executions; otherwise, you have no check whatever upon the proceedings of the officials. If the recommendation of the Motion were adopted, and the control over the proceedings were transferred to the Home Office, we should, at all events, secure uniformity either in one direction or the other. For these reasons, Mr. Speaker, although I do not at all sympathize with the Resolution on the Paper, and I shall not vote for it, yet I think the balance of argument is rather in favour of the transference of the entire responsibility to the Home Office.

*THE HOME SECRETARY (Mr. MATTHEWS): Sir, the various speakers have developed a diversity of views, which is always the danger attendant upon a discussion of this sort. One speaker advocates the abolition of capital punishment altogether, and another pointed out the Resolution was not a logical consequence of the reasons given in support of it. With much that has been said by the Mover everybody will be in entire sympathy; but I must at once offer emphatic opposition to the suggested transference of responsibility for the execution of the sentence of death from the Sheriff to the Home Office, for such transference, I think, would be a great mistake. As long as we retain capital punishment it is a matter of considerable consequence that the responsibility for carrying it out should devolve upon local officers rather than upon Government officers. The presence at an execution of such an officer as a Sheriff is an assurance to the public that there will be nothing unfair; that no undue partiality will be shown to the convict, no matter what his rank, position, political antecedents, or status in society may have been. It is important to have a local officer to take care that the right man is executed. If the responsibility were transferred to the Home Office I would be bound to send down an official high in rank to be present when the sentence of death was passed, so as to be in a position to take care of the minor though not unimportant detail that the right person was

really executed. Every Under Sheriff at present is responsible for the identification of the unhappy man who is to suffer. You could not leave this and the general responsibility with the Sheriff without leaving him also the free choice of the agent for carrying out the execution. Then as to the presence of the Press, I think that is essentially an open matter, and judging from the way in which the Bristol Press seems disposed to treat so melancholy an event as an execution, I can well understand that there are reasons for excluding the reporters of the Press. On the other hand, there may be other cases in which such reasons do not exist; and the law, to me it seems properly and wisely, gives discretion to the local authorities as to whether or not reporters shall be admitted. The discretion is now vested in the Sheriff or Visiting Justices. It would be perfectly impossible for the Home Secretary, without knowing the local circumstances, to exercise that discretion. These are duties which are properly fulfilled by the local authorities. Inasmuch as I am afraid there must occasionally be mishaps and failures in carrying out executions without those instruments, allusion to which would distress a man of feeling, so long as those contingencies are inevitable, then I cannot help feeling that if a Government Department were made responsible, those failures in carrying out executions might be made the ground of Party attacks of the most intolerable and regrettable description. If, as I understand my hon. Friend, he does not mean to take the responsibility from the Sheriff, then as the cautious logic of the hon. Member for Bethnal Green pointed out, you cannot control him in the choice of the executioner who is to take part in the most terrible part of the melancholy function. It would be inconsistency to insist on the responsibility of the Sheriff and to deprive him of the choice of the means for fulfilling that responsibility. But the person who seems most warmly in favour of the Motion is Berry himself. Berry has written me a letter which would really "draw iron tears down Pluto's cheek," in which he urges me, "as a Conservative Member of Parliament and a gentleman of sound education, to kindly assist Sir E. Lechmere to carry his Resolution through the House

of Commons." Therefore, Berry is one of the persons supporting it. If satisfactory to my hon. Friend, I am willing to give a partial undertaking. It would not be an easy thing for the Home Office to select some officer who might be considered capable of conducting this terrible function skilfully, and at the same time be a man of respectability who might be trusted to abide by the conditions imposed upon him; but if such a man can be selected he might be tendered to the Sheriff to be employed if the Sheriff thought fit, just as at present a scaffold is offered without in the least insisting that it shall be used. No doubt this plan would give security against such misconduct and painful incidents as attention has been called to. In the Kidderminster case Berry acted in defiance of the express agreement with the Sheriff—that he was not to go to any place of public entertainment after the execution, but was to proceed direct to the railway station accompanied by a warder. He violated these conditions, and there might be no security that an official from the Home Office would not equally yield to the temptation, which seems to be offered by a morbid curiosity, except it were the risk of forfeiting his employment. I will consider whether it is possible for the Home Office to select some fit and well-conducted person. It has been pointed out that many persons regard this as a hateful office, the holder of which, so far from being an object of interest, should be abhorred, and there are few respectable men who would undertake the office unless the temptation is made larger than can be offered. But it by no means follows that I could not find a fitting person who might be confidently recommended to Sheriffs. I will undertake to consider the matter and see whether it is possible to find such a person. The suggestion of Mr. Justice Denman that a warder in every gaol should be selected for the duty seems to be quite impracticable. At some gaols there is not an execution in 10 years; and it would be an extravagant undertaking to appoint an executioner at each gaol. I have no corps in connection with me from which I could obtain a man to accept so ungrateful and unwelcome a post; but I am prepared to endeavour to carry out my hon. Friend's views in the direction he has stated;

Mr. Matthews

but it must be clearly understood that I could only tender the services of the man so selected to the different Sheriffs, leaving it to them to employ him or not as they thought fit, just as scaffolds and other appliances are offered to prison authorities and the Sheriff, leaving their responsibility entirely untouched. I hope my hon. Friend will be satisfied with this offer, and will not press the Resolution to a Division.

*SIR E. LECHMERE: I am to a certain extent satisfied with the undertaking of the right hon. Gentleman, who may probably in carrying it out draw up rules and conditions which will have the effect of securing the object in view. I would, therefore, ask leave to withdraw my Amendment.

Objection being taken, the Speaker put the Motion, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question," which was agreed to.

Main Question again proposed.

THE INHABITED HOUSE DUTY.

LORD HENRY BRUCE (Chippenham): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to call attention to the subject on which, if the forms of the House had permitted, I intended to submit the following Motion:—

"That the laws regulating the levying and collecting the Inhabited House Duty as at present applied to banks, warehouses, institutions, professional, business, scholastic, lodging, private, tenement, and other houses, be amended, and, where necessary, repealed, in order to remedy the unjust and anomalous conditions relating thereto."

Sir, I refer to this subject under a full sense of the old saying, that threatened, perhaps, I might say doomed, men live long. There can be no question of the antiquity of the Inhabited House Duty, though we may not quite say that it is "as old as the hills." It was first imposed in 1696, in the reign of William and Mary, and it was continued under various titles until 1834, when it was repealed. But I think I may safely say that previous to that time, in 1803 and in 1808, in the 43rd of George III., Schedule B, was passed, and under its provisions the Inhabited House Duty was re-imposed and is still levied with few exceptions. By the Act of 14 and 15 Victoria, cap. 36, private and professional

houses, institutions, schools, banks, fire and life insurance offices, and lodging houses are charged 9d. in the £, but I would call attention to this fact, all places of business—hotels, restaurants, and shops of every description, public houses and market gardens—are charged 6d. in the £. It was on the 30th June, 1857, that the tax was re-imposed—the year in which the window light duty was repealed—and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian then spoke of the impost as “irrational,” reminding the House that it was only the old tax of 1834 re-instituted with all its injustices. The right hon. Gentleman on that occasion said that “He, for one, could not regard the house tax as resting on a secure foundation, seeing that it re-introduced the very objectionable features which had once before been the cause of the abolition of the tax.” I observe that in the list of those who took part in the division at the time were the names of Lord Beaconsfield (then Mr. Disraeli), Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Sidney Herbert, Lord Henry Bentinck, and the Right Hon. J. C. Herries. Well, from time to time, certain modifications have been made, and it may be said that the question has been “well tinkered.” Nearly 20 years ago, the present Chancellor of the Exchequer moved that the tax should be devoted to local purposes, and not, as at present, to Imperial purposes. In 1871 the inhabited house tax yielded £1,200,000, whereas now its amount is £1,933,000. The late Lord Iddesleigh, when Chancellor of the Exchequer, received a deputation on this subject in 1874, again in 1876, and in 1877. On each occasion the deputation pointed out to him the anomalies experienced in the operation of the tax, and the grievances it carried, and Lord Iddesleigh expressed sympathy with them in their object. The present Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) has done much the same thing. A deputation waited upon the right hon. Gentleman in May, 1887, and, in reply to their representations, he admitted—

“That the anomalous position of the house tax justified a great deal of the murmurs and complaints which are made against it. He looked forward to a large measure abolishing exemptions, and placing the whole tax on a

more satisfactory footing, and should look for the support of all the hon. Members of the House of Commons present to aid him.”

As regards the question of caretakers, that subject was brought before Lord Iddesleigh (then Sir Stafford Northcote) in the years 1874, 1876, and 1877, and a Bill was brought in by him and passed dealing with this particular branch of the subject. The Act received the Royal Assent in 1878. The measure was brought in under the Customs and Inland Revenue Bill. It was, unfortunately, supplemented by an Act promoted by Somerset House, which had the effect, I doubt not, of stultifying the effect of Sir Stafford Northcote's Act. This particular Act I allude to defines a caretaker as a person obedient to the employer or occupier of the premises, and enacts that if an officer or porter in such employ is kept as a caretaker of the premises, such a use of him renders the premises liable to the duty. Therefore you must employ a person entirely separate to look after your premises. I cannot understand how it is that the house duty is charged upon persons who only employ one servant, who is not employed otherwise than domestically. Not only does it affect business and professional men, but it affects thousands of others. But, Sir, there is another old-standing grievance, that no distinction is made between occupiers who let apartments for acknowledged business purposes, and those who occupy premises for dwelling purposes only. The entire abolition of the inhabited house duty is not only a popular measure, but a just one. Furthermore, this is a tax on the working man. There are fifty times as many houses rated below £50 as there are houses rated above that amount. I will give the House an illustration. A landlord holds part of a street where the rents are from £36 to £40, the tenant paying the taxes. The property tax of 6d. falls on the richer man, but the house duty falls upon the poorer man, the tenant, who has to let part of his house in single rooms, and has to charge proportionately. I maintain that houses which are building or may be built, and existing houses which have been or may be converted into tenement dwellings for the working classes—whether such tenements be self-contained or not—should be free from in-

habited house duty, if let as provided by Section 12 of the Working Classes Act, 1885:—

“In any contract made for letting for habitation by persons of the working classes a house or part of a house, there shall be implied a condition that the house is at the commencement of the holding in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation.”

All persons of the working classes naturally thought that they would get some benefit for this provision. It is unnecessary, however, to enlarge on the roaring trade which the jerry builders have done through the anomalies of the Act. But the working classes surely should have some compensation in respect of the clause which I have quoted, and what I maintain is, if the tax were abolished, that one penny in the pound on the income tax would be sufficient to meet the deficiency, and the income tax is very often 6d. in the £, whereas the inhabited house duty is 9d. in the £. Another grievance is that the duty is assessed on the gross rental; and yet another grievance is that the collectors of this tax are not paid by salaries instead of by poundage. M. Turgot, a celebrated French financier, once said that the “art of taxation was to pluck the goose without making it cry.” But in the present case they make it cry because of the imposition of the tax, and interference with many of those personal liberties which Englishmen think they ought to possess. But it is never too late to mend; and let me hope that the Chancellor of the Exchequer will take a new departure, and, if the duty cannot be abolished, let an attempt be made to investigate its anomalies, and also let it be a local tax, and not devoted to Imperial purposes. No tax is more universally condemned, and yet none is more tenaciously stuck to by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Many trades and professions have appealed against this duty—warehousemen, manufacturers, officers of Her Majesty's Services, solicitors, auctioneers, mining, professional, and practising engineers, and scores of brewers, wine merchants, and hotel keepers. Really, the tax inflicts injury on to many trades and professions; and it brings in so very little money, that I feel quite sure that any Chancellor of the Exchequer who would either modify it or abolish it altogether

would earn the gratitude of the vast majority of this country.

*SIR GUYER HUNTER (Hackney, Central): I rise with much pleasure to support the noble Lord in his protest against this duty. The inhabited house duty has been protested against by almost every class of Her Majesty's subjects. It falls particularly heavily on certain members of the medical profession, because, wherever a medical man has a surgery in connection with his house, he has to pay at the rate of 9d. in the £, instead of 6d. On May 3, 1887, a deputation waited on the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who admitted that the anomalous position of the house tax justified a great deal of the complaint made, and promised to put the tax on a more satisfactory footing. The protest against the inhabited house duty has been supported by 60 or 70 Members on both sides of the House, and I trust the Chancellor of the Exchequer will soon be able to fulfil the expectations he held out in May, 1887, to which I have just alluded.

MR. W. H. JAMES (Gateshead): I do not want to enter into the varied topics which have been referred to in the speech delivered by the noble Lord, but there is one matter in connection with this tax with regard to which I introduced to the Chancellor of the Exchequer a deputation from the North of England. It is a matter which, no doubt, very largely affects the general domiciliary condition of the poor in those industrial communities which have sprung up somewhat rapidly in recent years. There is nothing of greater importance to the general welfare of the community than a tax—be it local or Imperial—which affects the dwellings of the people. Fully aware, as I am, of the very great difficulty arising in connection with this matter, still I hope the subject will not be overlooked, and that the Secretary to the Treasury will be able to give us some indication of the course likely to be taken by the Inland Revenue Authorities in regard to the specific point which, in November last, we had the honour of laying before the Treasury. There are two classes, speaking broadly, of property owners. There are a large number of old houses and dwellings which have been let out in rooms, and the condition of the inhabitants of

which is, no doubt, very far from satisfactory. They have been designated as rookeries. Now I have no wish to claim any exemption whatever for these rookeries from the payment of this duty. These places are often in an insanitary condition; families often occupy one room, high rents are extracted, and it is the worst possible condition of rack renting that can be imagined. But there are other property owners who have devoted themselves to improving the condition of the poor, and who have erected houses which are let out in what are known as flats. The Inland Revenue Authorities have laid down a regulation that the inhabited house duty shall be imposed in all cases where there is not a separate entrance. It is very difficult to elucidate this matter fully without the aid of a plan, but as plans have been frequently submitted to the Treasury the Secretary to the Treasury will no doubt understand. In April or May, 1884, a debate was raised in this House by Mr. Lawrence in which the question was discussed of the position of private individuals and large societies owning industrial dwellings. At that time the First Lord of the Treasury, referring to smaller tenements, said that an invidious distinction existed. Since that time large companies who have erected these dwellings have been exempted from this duty in cases where the separate tenements were below £20 annual value. I think private individuals who have made exertions quite equal to, if not greater than, those put forward by the managers of these large societies, should not be put in a less favourable position than the public companies. I am quite aware of the difficulty that if some distinction were not drawn, old, insanitary houses, the "rookeries" which exist in London and some other great towns, would be exempted; but I cannot believe that the ingenuity of the Inland Revenue Authorities and the Government is unequal to the task of drawing some line of demarcation which would be adequate to the equity of the case. I should like to know from the Secretary to the Treasury whether he is able to hold out any hopes that this will be done. I trust that the Government will do their best to extend the exemption given to public companies to private individuals, who have done much to-

wards improving the domiciliary condition of the poor.

*COLONEL LAURIE (Bath): I should like to say a word in favour of the claims of lodging-house keepers in large watering places. They carry on a business perfectly well defined, and pay 9d. in the £ inhabited house duty. In regard to this duty the shopkeepers are placed on far more favourable terms. They pay 6d. only, and compete with the lodging house keepers in letting apartments. I am perfectly aware that the question of exempting lodging-house keepers is surrounded by great difficulties, but it was suggested by a deputation in which I took part last year that these difficulties might be obviated by a system of registration. I hope that the Secretary to the Treasury, when he replies, will allude to the somewhat unfair treatment of lodging-house keepers in these places.

*MR. KELLY (Camberwell, N.): The inhabited house duty has been long universally condemned, and, if it be continued at all, this should only be done on a graduated scale. When in 1877 it was first imposed by Lord North, it was on a graduated scale; and when re-cast in 1778 by him, it was further graduated, the scale being 6d., 9d., and 1s., and it therefore bore less heavily on the poor than it now does. I am quite aware that a house under £20 annual value does not pay the tax at all, but representing, as I do, a Metropolitan constituency I know how impossible it is, either in London or in any large town, to put up a house of so low a value, so high is the price of land. I think exemption should be given to those who furnish excellent dwellings for the poor in the shape of industrial blocks. We know that, thanks to the advocacy of the First Lord of the Treasury, some five years ago, companies industrial blocks were (as had previously only been the case with the Peabody buildings before) exempted from the duty. Sir, in recent years there has been a great movement for providing the poor with dwellings in what are called tenement houses. A great many people have strong objections to living in industrial blocks; some of the rooms are very high up, while there are others where light can never penetrate, and which are consequently most unhealthy for sick persons and children. Therefore, in the interests

of the poor, those who have built streets of houses in tenements have done, as I believe, a great work, and have accomplished not a little to solve the problem of the proper housing of the working classes. The difficulty as to these houses practically resolves itself into this—that they are not so constructed as to come within the Treasury Minute as to having only one door opening on to the passage. There is also the difficulty that they have front doors opening directly on to the street. I agree with the hon. Member for Gateshead that the last thing to be done is to encourage rookeries. I should deplore the grant of any concession which should in any way benefit owners of rookeries; but, if these rookeries are to be done away with, it is only by an extension of tenemented houses for the poorer classes. We do not want the concession to extend to any houses which have been altered for the habitation of the poor. The concession may be safeguarded by requiring from the landlord a declaration that the tenements were built for and are *bona fide* occupied by one family—and one family only. In conclusion I should like to say it seems to me that if this great question of the proper housing of the working classes in our great industrial centres is to be solved it can only be by making it worth people's while to build proper houses in tenements, and the greatest inducement that you can offer to those persons is to reduce their rates and taxes as far as possible.

*THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. W. L. JACKSON, Leeds): I hope my noble Friend will not be disappointed if I do not go at any length into the very important question which he has raised. I am bound to point out at the outset that the light and airy way in which my noble Friend spoke of £1,900,000 revenue will hardly commend itself to the Chancellor of the Exchequer. He appears to think it would be easy to raise this revenue by putting an extra penny on the income tax, but I am not sure that that would be more popular than the present tax. There is, of course, one very strong objection to the abolition of this tax. We have, in the first place, a very limited area of taxation, and I think any Chancellor of the Exchequer would hesitate a good deal

in the present day before he entered upon any scheme which would tend to limit the area of taxation, and I do not deny for a moment—and the Chancellor of the Exchequer would, if he were here, be prepared to admit—that there are anomalies in connection with this tax which he would be very glad to remedy, and which, I hope, he will in some future year have the opportunity of remedying. The hon. Member for Gateshead, I know, has taken considerable interest in this question, but I am not quite sure that he would entirely agree with the hon. Member for Camberwell, who apparently is willing that any concession which may be made should not apply to any dwellings which have been altered, but should apply only to dwellings built for a special purpose. As far as I remember his previous application to the Treasury, it went rather in the direction of some concession to dwellings which have been altered, and which certainly would not come within the category advocated by the hon. Member for Camberwell. I hope that my noble Friend who has brought forward the Motion will be satisfied to obtain the expression of opinion which he has elicited. I can assure him that it has been several times under the consideration of my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and, although I am not in a position to say that he will immediately deal with it, I am quite sure that he will not lose sight of it, but if it is possible for him to remedy some of the anomalies which do exist, he will be glad indeed to have an opportunity of doing so. I cannot admit that this is a tax which presses very heavily on the poor, as the House is aware the tax is not assessable to any separate property of a less value than £20 a year. I think the House will cordially endorse the sentiment of my hon. Friend that it is not desirable to extend or give any facilities for the extension of buildings which are known as rookeries. There is a great difficulty in defining what is a lodging house, and I admit possibly that there may be something in the claim put forward by my hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Bath, on behalf of the very deserving class of lodging house keepers at watering places. But I fear that an exemption of lodging houses—without some very strict definition—would mean

the exemption of every rookery in Drury Lane, because they would all come under the definition of lodging houses. I am quite sure the House would not desire to encourage that kind of dwelling, nor would its sympathy be in the direction of granting additional facilities for them. However, I can promise my hon. Friends that my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer will give the matter careful consideration. It is not for me to anticipate what he will say on Monday, but I hope he will be able, if not now, at any rate on some future occasion to at least rectify some of the anomalies which exist.

Motion by leave withdraw.

SUPPLY—REPORT.

Resolutions (11th April) reported.

CIVIL SERVICES.

MR. J. G. BIGGAR (Cavan, W.): I beg to ask a question of the Secretary to the Treasury. The hon. Gentleman said I think, last night, that he expected a very substantial increase in the charges under the head of Tramways in Ireland. Now, the hon. Gentleman must be aware that the tendency is to decline. The Chancellor of the Exchequer has reduced the rate of interest for Consols from 3 to $2\frac{3}{4}$ per cent, and it seems to me that if money is only worth $2\frac{3}{4}$ per cent it is rather extravagant that the ratepayers in baronies should have to guarantee a larger amount of interest on these undertakings. Cannot the hon. Gentleman see his way to lower this guarantee of interest of from 4 to 5 per cent and make it more in conformity with the present value of money? If he does not do so I fear there is some danger of the baronies repudiating their liability. I think some scheme of conversion should be arranged. When the Tramways Act was first passed by this House the Government proposition was that 4 per cent should be the amount of the guarantee, including the Government subvention, but an Amendment was moved by Captain O'Shea to raise the guarantee from 4 to 5 per cent in the interests, I have no doubt of friendly company promoters, who paid him a fee for his action, and the result was that the unfortunate ratepayers in these baronies now pay 3 per cent, whereas they would only have been called upon

to pay 2 per cent for these guaranteed railways if the Bill had been passed in its original form. There is another matter to which I should like to call the attention of the hon. Gentleman, and that is in regard to Foynes Pier, in the county of Kerry. On a recent occasion he explained that he had no responsibility as to whether or not the money granted for this undertaking was mispent: all he had to do was to see that the Treasury got proper security for it. That may be so from a strictly legal point of view, but as it is the ratepayers' money which is lent for these works there should be some supervision over the expenditure of it. Government money may be foolishly or badly laid out if there is no supervision, and then there may be no return to the ratepayers. I see in this Estimate there is a sum of £3,500 for the Ulster Canal. What is the position of this canal at present? Is this £3,500 a final gift? Do the Government intend, and have they undertaken, to lend any sum for this canal? If any has been lent how has it been expended? If the hon. Gentleman will answer these questions I shall be very well satisfied. I hope he will be able to say he will save the interest of the taxpayers and protect the guarantors of railways in various districts.

*MR. W. L. JACKSON: Speaking for myself, I cannot hold out any hope of the adoption of a scheme by which the rate of interest on guaranteed lines—lines guaranteed by certain baronies, can be reduced. I should like to point out that this is an obligation which has been deliberately entered into and which is legally binding, and there is no power on the part of the Government to alter or reduce the rate of interest. The hon. Member has hinted that, in his opinion, the taxes out of which these loans are guaranteed by the baronies will be repudiated. I am exceedingly sorry that he should give utterance to such a sentiment. I do not believe that these loans which have been so guaranteed will be repudiated either by the barony which guaranteed them or by the taxpayer; on the contrary, these railways are conferring considerable benefits on many districts, and I hope that before long many of them will be much nearer paying their working expenses than they are a present. I stated the

other night that some of the shares stood at a premium in the market. Of course, the amount of interest guaranteed is of importance to the barony, but I imagine that in the future, in consequence of the cheaper rate at which money can be obtained, no barony will give a guarantee in excess of 4 per cent. I have every reason to believe that the extension of these lines in Ireland will prove of great advantage to the districts intersected, and therefore to the taxpayers who are called upon to pay the burden. As to the question of Fenit pier and harbour, I pointed out the other night that the Board of Works in Dublin, who lend the money, only have authority to inquire as to the security offered them, and I think it should rest with the Pier and Harbour Commissioners who borrow the money, to investigate the expenditure and see that full value is obtained for it. I should strongly deprecate any interference on the part of the Government Department, except such as is necessarily part of its duty, and I am strongly in favour of local self-government in that sense. The hon. Member also asked about the Ulster Canal, and if the £3,500 is a final gift? Yes, Sir, it is a final gift, so far as I am able to say, and I have no reason to say that it is otherwise. It is the whole of the money which the Government has promised for the undertaking, and the most stringent conditions have been inserted to secure what the hon. Member very properly desires: that the money shall be spent on the improvement of the canal. The hon. Member also asked, whether the money which the Government undertook to lend has been lent. Sir, the Government has undertaken to lend no money. The hon. Member will recollect that I was called upon to give evidence before the Select Committee that inquired into this question, and I then stated that no promise had been made to lend money, but if a loan were made it would be on the merits of the security offered. I cannot pledge myself to say that under no circumstances will the Government make a loan supposing that the security offered was satisfactory. As a matter of fact, no application has yet been made for a loan, and the £3,500 is the total sum which the Government intend to give.

Mr. W. L. Jackson

MR. M. J. KENNY (Tyroné, Mid): Sir, as a rule, these guarantees are equivalent to 5 per cent on the amount borrowed, but in some cases, where the amount is 4 per cent, the guarantee is in perpetuity; when it is 5 per cent it is sometimes only for a period of 35 years. As a matter of fact, in some of the cases the railways guaranteed cannot by any possibility pay for the next 25 or 30 years, and they never will be able to pay the full amount of interest charged on the loans. Now, my hon. Friend has said that, in his opinion, some of the baronies are so taxed that they may be induced to repudiate their debt. Of course, repudiation is a very strong measure, which cannot be successfully accomplished without a very great effort. If the barony had an opportunity of contracting itself out of the debt, repudiation would be a very improper measure, but they have not that opportunity. The baronies are not rated by the Grand Jury. The presentments come before the Barony Sessions, which are composed of persons nominated directly or indirectly by Dublin Castle, and in no sense represented the ratepayers. Under the circumstances, the ratepayers have every reason to protest against the attitude of the Treasury in not affording them any relief.

The Resolutions were agreed to.

WALTHAM ABBEY GUNPOWDER FACTORY BILL (No. 175.)

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Brodrick.*)

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.): The gist of this Bill is to extinguish an immemorial right of way through some fields which are at present a picturesque resort of the people of Waltham Abbey, as well as the best means of communication between two points. Of recent years, at all events, this House has manifested the greatest possible interest in the preservation of open spaces and public parks; and, therefore, I think it will scrutinize this Bill with great jealousy. No doubt the Government will rely upon the Report of a Select Committee which sat upon this Bill last year. I dissented from the conclusion of that Committee, and even taking the decision of the Committee as

it stands, what does it amount to? It amounts to this, that the Committee found that assuming that upon the fields to which I have referred a gunpowder factory is to be erected, this park cannot continue to exist with any regard to the public safety, and the Government knew before they purchased this land that there was a right of way through it, and now they come to the House and ask us to take away an immemorial right. An effectual stop should be put upon proceedings of this kind. The law has provided a tribunal before which questions of right of way are to be tried, and it further provides that if anyone desires to close a public path, he should obtain the certificate of two Justices, which certificate shall be confirmed at Quarter Sessions. The Government originally proposed to go to Quarter Sessions, but subsequently, when opposition was manifested, and it was known that those who object to the closing of this path would be professionally represented at Quarter Sessions, they abandoned that mode of proceeding and have now come to the House. Up to a few moments ago it was quite my intention to challenge a Division upon this question by way of protest, but I am very much interested in a Bill which stands lower down on the Paper, the progress of which has already been somewhat impeded, and I am not anxious to join in stopping the progress of that Bill further. It may be to the convenience of the House that I should not challenge a Division now, but I will do so upon the Third Reading.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read 2^a and committed to a Select Committee of seven Members, four to be nominated by the House, and three by the Committee of Selection.

Ordered, That all Petitions against the Bill presented three clear days before the meeting of the Committee be referred to the Committee; that the Petitioners praying to be heard by themselves, their Counsel, or agents, be heard against the Bill, and Counsel heard in support of the Bill.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That three be the quorum.

RELIGIOUS PROSECUTIONS ABOLITION BILL.—[No. 1.]

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

*MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton): Mr. Speaker, the Bill, the Second Reading of which I have asked the House to pass, is directed against prosecutions, which are partly prosecutions at common law, and partly prosecutions by Statute. The Statute is the 9th and 10th William III., chap. 35, and that Statute enacts that any person convicted of blasphemy shall, for the first offence, be adjudged incapable and disabled in law, to all intents and purposes whatsoever, to have, to hold, or enjoy any office or offices, employment or employments, and shall, for a second offence, be adjudged disabled from being a plaintiff or defendant in any suit, or from being the guardian of his own children, or from being capable of receiving any legacy, and shall be liable to imprisonment for the space of three years. That Act has been held to be supplemental to the common law. I may best describe the Statute by using the words of Lord Coleridge, uttered in a case which was tried six years ago. In the course of the defence, the Statute had been described as shocking, and Lord Coleridge said—

“Some old things, and amongst them this Statute, are shocking enough, and I do not defend them.”

In a judgment which Lord Justice Lindley delivered in 1885, His Lordship spoke of this Statute as cruel in its operation against the persons against whom it was directed. The Statute of 6th of George, chapter 47, which applies to Scotland, makes the offence punishable by 14 years' transportation. Now, Mr. Justice Stephen in his “History of the Criminal Law,” which was written and passed through the Press in 1882, although it was published in 1883, wrote—

“Offences against can hardly be treated as an actually existing head of our criminal law. Prosecutions for such offences are still theoretically possible in a few cases, but they have in practice become entirely obsolete.”

Unfortunately, whilst the History was passing through the Press, several prosecutions were initiated, one of which was tried at Maidstone, two which were tried at the Old Bailey, and two, in one of which I was myself the defendant, which were removed by *certiorari* to the High Court, and were tried before the present Lord Chief Justice of England. Here are two views of the law which it

is my duty to submit to the House, one, the view taken by the present Lord Chief Justice of England—namely, that it is only the manner of a blasphemous libel which should be censured, and that a calm, and clear, and cool statement of views would not bring a person within the operation of the laws relating to blasphemy; and, the other the view which, with all submission to the great Judge who has expressed the contrary opinion, I am afraid is the real view of the law—the other, the view which was formed by Mr. Justice Stephen and Mr. Justice Hawkins sitting in the Queen's Bench Division, which was mentioned in the charge of Mr. Justice North in the trials at the Old Bailey, and which was formed in the case of the "*Attorney General v. Bradlaugh*," reported in the *Weekly Reporter*, vol. 433, especially by Lord Justice Lindley. It seems to me that the real state of the law has been very fully explained by Mr. Justice Stephen in an article which appeared in the *Fortnightly Review*, and which was published in examination and criticism of the charge of Lord Coleridge to the jury in the case of the "*Queen v. Foote*, and others." Mr. Justice Stephen urges that the law as it now stands is a bad law, and recommends the very measure which I am bringing before the House to night. It is right, however, I should state Lord Coleridge's view—the view that it is the manner and not the matter of the blasphemous libel which should be considered, before I put what I conceive is unfortunately the real view of the law. Lord Coleridge says:—

"It is clear, therefore, to my mind that the mere denial of the truth of the Christian religion is not enough alone to constitute the offence of blasphemy,"

and he goes on to point out that all prosecutions for blasphemy, according to his view, tend to failure. Further on in his judgment Lord Coleridge says:—

"Persecution, unless thorough-going, seldom succeeds. Irritation, annoyance, punishment which stops short of extermination, very seldom alter men's religious convictions. Entirely without one fragment of historical exaggeration, I may say that the penal laws which 60 or 60 years ago were enforced in Ireland were unparalleled in the history of the world. They existed 150 years ago; they produced upon the religious convictions of the Irish people absolutely no effect whatever."

Mr. Bradlaugh

I submit to the House that all kinds of enactments which are in the nature of persecution for opinion are enactments which fail in doing anything except driving the expression of opinion into its worst and roughest forms, and, therefore, ought not to be desired by anyone who has in any degree any faith in any kind of liberty. Mr. Justice Stephen, reviewing the charge of Lord Coleridge, a charge which he praises in language not too strong, says:—

"My only objection to it is that I fear that its merits may be transferred illogically to the law which it expounds and lays down, and that thus a humane and enlightened judgment may tend to perpetuate a bad law by diverting public attention from its defects. The law I regard as essentially and fundamentally bad."

Now when a learned Judge, who is now engaged in trying cases, can thus describe this portion of the law, I think I can submit there is something like a *prima facie* case for its appeal. Lord Justice Lindley in delivering judgment in the case of the *Attorney General v. Bradlaugh* says—

"It is a mistake to suppose, and I think it as well the mistake should be known, that persons who do not believe in a Supreme Being are in the state in which it is now commonly supposed they are. There are old Acts of Parliament still unrepealed by which such people can be cruelly persecuted."

And it was because Lord Justice Lindley found this law on the Statute Book, that he said he felt constrained to hold as he did in the case then before him. What is the state of the law? I prefer to put it in the words of Mr. Justice Stephen than in my own. He quotes in support of his statement a large number of cases, and he says—

"The result of the examination of the authorities appears to me to be that to this day Blackstone's definition of blasphemy must be taken to be true; and, if this is the case, it follows that a large part of the most serious and most important literature of the day is illegal—that, for instance, every bookseller who sells, every one who lends to his friend, a copy of Comte's *Positive Philosophy*, or of Renan's *Vie de Jesus*, commits a crime punishable with fine and imprisonment. It may be said that so revolting a consequence cannot be true; but, unfortunately, this is not the case. I suppose no one will, or indeed can, deny that if any person educated as a Christian, or having ever made profession of the Christian religion, denied that the Bible was of divine authority, even by word of mouth, he would incur the penalties of the 9 and 10 William III. c. 32. I will take a particular instance by way of illustration of this. The late Mr. Greg was not only a distinguished author, but an eminent and useful member of

the Civil Service. I suppose he was educated as a Christian, and no one could have a stronger sympathy with the moral side of Christianity. In every one of his works the historical truth of the Christian history is denied; and so is the Divine authority of the Old and New Testament. If he had been convicted of publishing these opinions, or even of expressing them to a friend in private conversation, his appointment would have become void, and he would have been adjudged incapable and disabled in law to hold any office or employment whatever; in a word, he would have lost his income and his profession. Upon a second conviction, he must have been imprisoned for three years, and incapacitated, amongst other things, to sue or accept any legacy. About this there neither is, nor can be, any question whatever."

And after a long and careful summary of the law, as laid down in many decisions, Mr. Justice Stephen winds up—

In my own opinion the practical inference is that blasphemy and blasphemous libel should cease to be offences at common law at all, that the Statute of William III. should be repealed, and that it should be enacted that no one except a beneficed clergyman of the Church of England should be liable to ecclesiastical censures for 'atheism, blasphemy, heresy, schism, or any other opinion.' Such an abolition would not only secure complete liberty of opinion on these matters, but it would prevent the recurrence at irregular intervals of scandalous prosecutions, which have never in any one instance benefited anyone, least of all the cause which they were intended to serve, and which sometimes afford a channel for the gratification of private malice under the cloak of religion."

I ask this House to give effect to what the learned Judge has said. I know there are one or two arguments which may be used to weigh heavily against me. One is, that the class for whom I speak is a comparatively small class. [Mr. DE LISLE: "Hear, hear."] There would be no reason in denying liberty to one man, even if he stood alone. Every opinion, in every age, has been at some time small, and those who hold opinions which within 100 years have been the subject of cruel persecutions within this realm should be the last to endorse the doctrine of persecution against those weaker than themselves. It may be urged that the severe penalties of the law are seldom enforced. It is only about 50 years ago that under this Act one man suffered nine years and 8 months' imprisonment in this country, and was also condemned to pay an enormous fine. It did not check the issue of the literature by him against which the prosecution was directed. It only had the effect of endearing him to a large number of people, and of making

many purchase the writings he issued who might otherwise not have done so. I hardly like to seem to be thrusting my personal case upon the House, but I may be permitted to remind the House that the declaration has been made very formally in print that the prosecution which was directed against me was initiated for the direct purpose of disqualifying me under this Statute for the term of my natural life from taking part in the political work of the country. I submit to the House that, ruling as it does over 330,000,000 of human beings, of every kind of faith or lack of faith, it is our duty to treat all alike. What is the effect of the law as it stands. Two years ago a legacy was left to myself and a gentleman in Manchester for the purpose of endowing an institution. We were all persons who might have been indicated as blasphemers under the law. The legacy was left for purely educational purposes, but the legacy was set aside, first of all in the Court of the Palatine of Lancaster, and next on appeal, on the ground that a bequest for such a purpose was an illegal bequest and voidable. It may be said "we would not object to you being allowed to utter your views, but we object to you uttering your views in an offensive language." But if persons utter their views in an offensive manner, and so as to provoke a breach of the peace they are punishable under the law as it now stands. The fact that the law is not always enforced, the fact that it is seldom enforced, the fact that Mr. Justice Stephen in his "History of the Criminal Law," describes the law as obsolete, the fact that Lord Justice Lindley has referred to the law as cruel in its operation should tend, I submit, to induce the House to grant the Second Reading of this Bill. I can quite understand it is possible that people will say that views which are different from their own, should not be offensively urged, but that brings in the question of the manner of the advocate rather than that of the matter, and I put it to persons who hold this view, whether the keeping on the Statute Book of this harsh and cruel law, does not deprive any of us, who may wish to tone and temper argument, of any fair reason for checking harsh or hasty speech or utterance. Again, let me point out that the word blasphemy

for which you punish to-day, has been an ever-changing word. It is only 240 years ago that a man, Naylor, the Quaker, of the same faith as the man (Mr. Bright) all of us in this House honoured, was tried for blasphemy. George Fox, William Penn, and scores of their co-workers were sent to gaol, or whipped at the cart tail as blasphemers. The Unitarians, had they lived even later than the times of which I have just spoken, would have come within the penalties of this Statute which Lord Coleridge says gives a ferocious power against people, and which Lord Justice Lindley condemns as an essentially bad law. I feel that this is not a time of night to trespass unduly on the attention of the House. I can only appeal to the generosity of the majority, but I would point out to them the position in which they put those who differ from them when they lack generosity themselves. I have sometimes tried to argue with my friends in France against the strict enforcement some of them have put on the Anti-Clerical laws; they have answered me "the Church shows us no mercy." It is that kind of unfortunate spirit which treats opinion as if it were a crime and thought as if it were a crime, when the very honesty of the utterance of that thought, that expression of opinion, shows you that the persons against whom you direct your Statute have at least the virtue of honesty to redeem their action from being classed as that of the ordinary criminal. It is against this unfortunate spirit I am arguing; it is for these people I am pleading to-night. I am pleading for many who have found trusts for their children cancelled, as was the case with a Member of this House, honoured while sitting in it because of the family to which he belonged, and for the great name and greater traditions associated with it—I mean Lord Amberley. He found his trust for his children cancelled because the man whom he honoured enough to give the trust that might have been brought within the scope of this statute. It is too late to-day to keep these penalties on the Statute Book. The Bill may not receive sanction for its second reading to-night, but it is something—and I thank the House for it—that the House has listened patiently and generously to an appeal made on behalf of an

unpopular minority; and one day or other justice will have to be done, and I ask the House to do it whilst those for whom they are asked to do it are few and weak, rather than leave us to win, as win we will, that outside public opinion by the ballot, which determines what the law shall be.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

MR. ADDISON (Ashton-under-Lyne): I cannot help thinking that the hon. Member to whose speech we have just listened with very great interest has not attempted in the Bill he has drawn or has had drawn for him to grapple with the difficulties that surround this question. He has alluded to a number of Acts that he himself admits are practically obsolete and never enforced, and he has taken care in the illustrations he has given of recent prosecutions to avoid telling the House that none of these prosecutions have been under any of these Acts.

*MR. BRADLAUGH: Pardon me; I thought I expressly read from Lord Justice Lindley's judgment in the *Attorney General v. Bradlaugh* a passage, in which the learned Judge said his judgment was determined by the fact that these were old Acts of Parliament still unrepealed, by which such people can be cruelly prosecuted, and he went on to say that whether the state of the law ought to remain so or not was not for him to express an opinion, but he was bound to have regard to the fact that these Acts remained unrepealed.

MR. ADDISON: Surely, so acute an interpreter of the law as the hon. Member will see that the remarks of the learned Judge exactly bear out my position. Lord Justice Lindley remarked there were a number of old Statutes still on the Statute Book, but, having in view that fact, he did not think the Common Law had been altered or tampered with. But what I was saying, and what I still point out, is this, that neither the hon. Member nor any other of the people prosecuted in recent times for what is called blasphemy, have ever been prosecuted, or indicted, under any of these Acts, certainly not under the Act of Edward VI., certainly not under the Act of Elizabeth, against defaming the Prayer Book, certainly not under

the 9 and 10 William III., nor the Act of Geo. IV., in regard to blasphemy. The hon. Member has had a very large experience in these matters, and if he were able to contradict me on this point I am sure he would do so. If he does not it shows I am right, and that not one of these obsolete Statutes during 20 years has been brought into action for any prosecution whatever.

*MR. BRADLAUGH: I quite admit there has been, so far as I am aware, no indictment whatever under the Statutes, but it is also true that in eight or nine cases, argued *in banco*, these Statutes have been quoted in support of, and as explaining, the Common Law.

MR. ADDISON: That is exactly my position, that learned Judges, who have explained what the Common Law is, have also shown that the mind of the Legislature is expressed by there being so little inclination to tamper with it that they have not repealed any one of these Acts. But it still comes back to the point I make—that all the Acts which the hon. Member has commented upon, pointing out what terrible things they are, and how persons may be sent to prison for this, or Quakers to prison for that, under none of these has anybody, in recent times, been prosecuted or indicted. But the real difficulty in dealing with this matter is that if these Acts are abolished, it will be necessary for the House that makes the abolition to deal with the matter further, and say what should be allowed and what should not be allowed in the way of attack upon religious institutions and the feelings of decent people. The same principle applies to indecency as to blasphemy—they are both matters of the utmost difficulty; and whoever has drawn this Bill has not attempted to deal with the difficulties, but has framed a Bill that goes far beyond the provisions of these Acts of Parliament, avoiding difficulties instead of meeting them, for it provides that in future in this country every blasphemy or blasphemous libel—however insulting to religion—however hurtful to the feelings of decent people, however corrupting to our youth and injurious to the community—are to be made lawful. After the passing of this Act, no criminal proceedings shall be instituted against any person for—amongst other things—schism, heresy, blasphemous libel, blasphemy at Common Law, or atheism. Now, one asks

at once what is blasphemy at Common Law? I will quote from a book well known to all lawyers, and from an old edition not intended to put a modern gloss on the definition, “Wharton’s Law Lexicon”—

“Blasphemy is an offence against God and religion by denying to the Almighty His being and providence, or by contumelious reproaches of our Saviour Christ; also all profane scoffing at the Holy Scriptures, and exposing them to contempt and ridicule.”

This, then, is what blasphemy is. The hon. Member for Northampton proposes that this shall not be punishable by any criminal proceedings whatever. Now, see what the effect of that would be. Hon. Members must be struck by this, that there must be matters which in any decent well organized community, whether the majority or the minority believe in religious principles, ought to be protected. If religious people are in the minority—instead of being, as I believe they are, and as I hope they always will be, in an overwhelming majority—if they are in a minority, their feelings are fully entitled to be respected out of common decency, if out of nothing else. Now, the hon. Member says that vile pictures, and caricatures, and offensive publications exposed in the streets or in shop windows and which might have a tendency to provoke a breach of the public peace, might still be punishable if his Bill were passed; but I cannot help thinking as a lawyer, that would not be so, because such publications would cease to be blasphemous libels, and no criminal proceedings could be maintained in respect to them. What is called tending to a breach of the peace is only the form of theory on which prosecutions for libel are founded, but if you say nobody is to be prosecuted for libel, you abolish the whole doctrine about breach of the peace. So I say the hon. Member has not attempted to grapple with the difficulties that were present to the minds of Lord Coleridge and Mr. Justice Stephen; he does not say what should be lawful, but that everything shall be lawful, however injurious, or irritating to the feelings of the community. The hon. Member quotes France, and he has considerable acquaintance with the laws, manners, and customs of France, so he must know that French legislation has done that we do not attempt to do. Notwithstanding the opinions of a large

minority, although these old-fashioned obsolete blasphemy laws do not exist in French law, yet, in the Penal Code there is an Article making it an offence punishable by fine or by imprisonment up to five years to insult or outrage any recognized religion in France. Now, does the hon. Member propose there should be something of that kind here? What does he propose to establish in substitution of the laws he would abolish but unbounded liberty and licence of every kind? What reason has he given for this? He says opinion should be free. Well, opinion is free, and nobody in England is prosecuted for his religious opinions or the want of them.

*Mr. BRADLAUGH: Yes; I was indicted.

Mr. ADDISON: I do not like to enter into a personal controversy with the hon. Member, but surely he does not mean seriously to maintain that. I pass on from his to another case, "*The Queen v. Foote*." It was not for religious opinions that in that case the very severe sentence was passed; it was for the publication of caricatures of the most outrageous kind calculated to excite the greatest possible ill feeling in the whole neighbourhood where they were exhibited. I have only just come from the library, and happened to miss the interesting discussion on the House Duty, while reading Professor Huxley's article in the *Nineteenth Century*. Professor Huxley shows clearly enough that opinion is perfectly free in this country so long as it is nothing more than an honest attempt to express opinion and not to insult other religious opinions. The hon. Member has made no case for the Bill, although I admit that there is very great difference of opinion, as he says, between Judges as to what the law is. Lord Coleridge holds that it is the manner and intention to insult and annoy rather than the matter that should be considered in relation to attacks on religion, and others who wish the law altered, press Mr. Justice Stephen's view and make it more strong. Yet, whether on the one side or the other, everybody admits that if the matter is dealt with at all it should be dealt with not only negatively but positively. We ought to know from those who propose this Bill on what principle they intend to go. If we allow free unfettered licence we shall be below every other

civilized country in the world. I beg to move that the Bill be read a second time this day six months.

Amendment proposed to leave out the word "now" and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months (*Mr. Addison*.)

Mr. HUNTER (Aberdeen, N.): I do not intend to occupy the time of the House at this late hour for more than a few minutes, but I must entirely join issue with the hon. and learned Member who has just spoken of the statement he has made in regard to the law of blasphemy. There are two views in respect to the Common Law, but there are not two views in respect to the Statute Law. It is perfectly clear that by the Statute Law any expression of opinion struck at by the Statute, in whatever language such expression may be couched, is punishable as an indictable offence. In regard to Common Law there are two opinions, that of Lord Coleridge, and that of Mr. Justice Stephen. Lord Coleridge takes the view that the mere denial of the prevailing opinion and conviction on religion does not in itself constitute a crime, but in practice I can draw no distinction between the denial of all right to express an opinion and the right to send a man to prison because he has expressed his opinion in a manner not agreeable to 12 men of the jury. What happened in the case of *Foote*? He was tried by three juries, and two disagreed; but when the jury did agree he was sentenced to a year's imprisonment. And why? Mr. Justice North did not attempt to conceal his bigotry, for in the plainest, if not the politest language, he said that *Foote* must be punished because he had "dedicated his talents to the service of the Devil;" which, in plain English, meant that he held opinions on religion differing from those of Mr. Justice North. If the hon. and learned Member represents, as I believe he does, correctly the general sense with respect to this subject of religious prosecutions, it does not seem to me it would be at all difficult if the Bill were read a second time to reconcile his view with that of the hon. Member for Northampton. I look for a solution of the difficulty to the Indian Penal Code, in which eminent Englishmen have had to deal in instituting a law for India with this

very question of religious irritation. They had to frame a law for circumstances and institutions far more difficult than anything existing in this country, where, indeed, there are few occasions for trying the question, and where very few persons derive any pleasure or satisfaction from deliberately wounding or insulting the religious feelings of his neighbours. But in India among a violent and fanatical people we from time to time hear of terrible riots breaking out from such causes at the season of the religious festivals, when the religious feelings of the people are vehemently excited. In India, therefore, we had to provide for the same difficulties that the hon. and learned Member has suggested as existing here in a modified form. I ask the attention of the House to the manner in which this question has been dealt with in the Indian Penal Code. The section runs thus—

“Whoever, with the deliberate intention of wounding the religious feelings of any person, utters any word or makes any sound in the hearing of that person, or makes any gesture, or places any object in the sight of that person”—this covers the case of pictures, etc.—“shall be punished with imprisonment, with or without hard labour, for a term which may extend to one year, or with fine, or with both.”

I would suggest that if there exists any *bona fide* desire to settle the question on fair lines, by which I mean on lines which on the one hand will give a guarantee of religious freedom and on the other hand will afford adequate protection to the religious feelings of the community, then I think a solution might be found in the section of the Indian Penal Code I have read. I would suggest that hon. Members might allow the Bill to pass its Second Reading, and in Committee I would move the insertion of this section as an Amendment that I think would meet the difficulties of the question. I trust the suggestion may meet with approval, and the Bill will then remove what is undoubtedly the cause of great difficulty. I think I can refer to no higher authority than the Indian Penal Code, than which no document in the English language was ever prepared with more careful consideration and ability.

MR. S. SMITH (Flintshire): To a large extent I agree with what has been said in favour of the Bill. The feeling is unanimous that the age of religious persecution is passed, and no

one should now be punished for holding or not holding religious opinions. We are all of one mind upon that. But still I feel that, if we pass the Bill, we shall open the flood-gates of the country to a vile tide of ribald and blasphemous literature of which few in this House are aware. For a few years past I have been making some feeble efforts to stop the irruption of foul, corrupting literature in the country, and so I have become aware of the circulation in increasing quantities of literature so loathsome—so obscene—that those who provide it, and those who habitually read it, must be degraded to the level of beasts. It is extremely difficult to draw the line between what is blasphemous and what is obscene, the two things run one into the other. If we absolutely take away all power of prosecuting for blasphemy, we may legalize the publication of literature of the most revolting kind. Hon. Members would scarcely believe that such papers could be printed as these of which I have several specimens, which have been issued in London, and some of them, I believe, by a gentleman whose name has been mentioned in the course of this debate—they shock and outrage all feelings of decency beyond description, and woodcuts are attached that turn into contempt the noblest things of the Christian religion. Just to give hon. Members an idea of what would become legal under this Bill, let me mention that one depicts the Almighty dancing a lewd dance with the Devil. It soils one's lips to say such things. I am sure the House does not wish this sort of thing to be legalized. I am told by lawyers that these infamous productions may be made the subject of prosecution, but not if this Bill passes. There are societies supported by a considerable amount of money whose business it is to circulate this infamous literature, and I am advised that if the Bill becomes law abominable publications of this class could be distributed at the doors of our Sunday schools and churches—publications that turn into ridicule and contempt the holiest things of the Christian faith, and the law could not touch them. I have every desire for liberty of opinion, but to remove every restraint upon publications of this kind is liberty carried to madness. I believe that of the whole nation, 99 out of every 100 would

repudiate the idea. I am disposed to think that with an amendment such as has been suggested by the hon. Member for Aberdeen (Mr. Hunter) the Bill might become a valuable addition to the Statute Book. I quite agree that these obsolete laws should not be maintained. No one now-a-days would wish to prosecute a man for holding opinions or for expressing them in a rational, sober manner, but on the lowest ground, I hold it is contrary to all ideas of civil society, that the holiest, deepest, and strongest convictions of men and women should be affronted in the rudest manner possible without there being any redress at law. I hold that our duty as a country goes beyond that, and that we owe obligations to Almighty God the Sovereign Ruler of mankind to uphold in all lawful and proper ways the authority of his laws. I will not insist on that argument now, but I do insist that we shall not give the stamp of legality to atrocious caricatures and literature, such as I have mentioned. I believe the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh) has no wish or desire that such literature should be legalized or circulated, but I would point out that the effect of passing the Bill will be to give the stamp of legality to such things. I support the Motion that the Bill be read a second time this day six months.

*THE SOLICITOR GENERAL (Sir E. CLARKE, Plymouth): I should be glad if the House were able, after this short debate, to dispose of the Bill to-night, but whether it is able to do so or not, I am anxious to say on the part of the Government that they give it their most decided opposition. The hon. Member for Aberdeen has suggested certain adaptations from the Indian Penal Code, and the last speaker has accepted the suggestion. But were this proposal given effect to, it would be the creation of a new Bill. It would mean the striking out of the only effective clause in the Bill, and the substitution of something entirely different. The Bill proposed by the hon. Member for Northampton is about the most unpractical suggestion which could possibly be. The hon. Member has treated the House to a dissertation as to what is the true common law in this country on the subject of blasphemous libel. It stands thus—that in the case

mentioned the Lord Chief Justice laid down the law in regard to blasphemy and blasphemous libel in terms which the hon. Member says he wishes truly expressed the law. He says he should be glad if the decision in the case of "*The Queen v. Ramsey and Foote*" did correctly represent the law; but because another learned Judge, writing a magazine article, suggested that the Lord Chief Justice was wrong in his exposition of the law, the hon. Member tries to persuade the House that it ought to pass a Bill in order to alter the law.

*MR. BRADLAUGH: I thought I had expressly quoted a passage from another Judge. I referred to a citation given at Nisi Prius by Justices Stephen and Hawkins from a dictum of Mr. Justice Lindley in the Court of Appeal.

*SIR E. CLARKE: The hon. Member does not appreciate the point I am putting. He said in his speech that the law is the subject of dispute—that there are two views of it, one being that expressed by the Lord Chief Justice in the case I have mentioned, which judgment was afterwards revised by the learned Judge and published in a corrected form, as he was anxious that his opinion on the subject should remain clearly defined; and the other view of the law, that of Mr. Justice Lindley. I say that the judgment of the Lord Chief Justice at present represents the most authoritative exposition of the law on this subject. So long as it remains, it will be idle to ask the House of Commons to pass a Bill in order to put the law even into that condition which the hon. Member desires. If the Bill would put the law into the position in which the hon. Gentleman desires to see it, then I should say the House has other and better things to do than to pass a Bill to declare that to be the law which has been pronounced to be the law by the Lord Chief Justice. But this Bill would go much further. It would sweep away the whole law, Common or Statute, by which blasphemous libel can be punished. It has been said that there is no prosecution now for the expression of religious opinions. I am astonished that the hon. Member for Northampton should have said that he himself has been prosecuted for the expression of opinions. I am certain that in that prosecution on which the hon. Member was convicted—

*MR BRADLAUGH: I never have been convicted on a prosecution for blasphemy.

*SIR E. CLARKE: If the hon. Gentleman had waited until the close of my sentence he would have seen that I am stating the fact. The prosecution on which the hon. Member was convicted, although the judgment was afterwards quashed on a technical objection, was not a prosecution for the expression of religious opinions. Another prosecution was in respect of the circulation of those very scandalous publications to which the last speaker referred. I have some knowledge of the filthy and wicked publications which have been referred to by the hon. Member, and the character of which the hon. Member cannot even indicate to the House. They were issued week after week, but there is a natural reluctance to institute prosecutions which would have the effect of advertising these publications. They contain grossly indecent suggestions with regard to matters which are regarded as sacred by Christian people. If this Bill were to pass, while anyone would be liable to criminal prosecution for the smallest imputation on the character of an individual, people would be free to scatter broadcast the most scandalous and shocking suggestions with regard to sacred things of religion without being subjected to any prosecution. This is enough to make the House reject the Bill with indignation. One knows perfectly well the terrible mischief which is done when one of these publications comes into anyone's hands, whether it be a child, a young person, or a man. The thing cannot be forgotten. It has existed and it has defiled. If this Bill became law there would be absolutely no law whatever in this country to suppress this wickedness. Some of the Statutes which it is proposed to repeal are obsolete Statutes. They might just as well be erased from the Statute Book, because they are obsolete; but their simple repeal is not the object nor the effect of this Bill. The hon. Member would not waste his time in presenting a Bill simply to get rid of the Statutes. There has been no prosecution under the Act of William III., and no prosecution for heresy since 1640. These Statutes might very well be repealed in a Statute Law Revision Bill; but as it is not the object of the

Bill to get rid of these innocuous Statutes, I hope we shall have time to divide against the Second Reading of the Bill.

MR. MAC INNES (Northumberland, Hexham): In the fewest possible words I desire to say why I intend to vote against the Second Reading of the Bill. I cannot say, with the Solicitor General, that I regard the Bill with feelings of indignation; on the contrary, I feel, to a certain extent, in a dilemma. By voting against the Bill I shall be classed with those who seem still to wish to perpetuate prosecutions for expressions of opinion, and nothing is further from my thoughts and wish. Nothing, I trust, is further from the thoughts of the great majority of the Members of this House. The day for such prosecutions has passed, and, I firmly believe, passed for ever. No one here, I am sure, wishes ever again to prosecute a man for opinions in regard to religion. Many of us on both sides of the House regret the prosecutions to which the junior Member for Northampton was subjected, but we are unable to support the Bill, looking at the form in which it is presented and at the fact that it would legalize those scandalous productions to which reference has been made. The House, however, will feel that we have for this hour and a half had a very useful discussion, and that before long, from some quarter or other, we shall have a measure which will deal with the matter in such a way as to get rid of these obsolete enactments, and at the same time, preserve the people from contamination by this offensive literature.

*COLONEL SANDYS (Lancashire, S.W., Bootle): It had been my intention, but for the intervention of the hon. Member for Ashton, to move that the Bill be read a second time this day six months, but the matter has been so well dealt with by him, as well as by my learned Friend the Solicitor General, that I shall intervene for a very few moments only between the House and a Division. The law in this country is, that those who kill the body shall be punished without mercy; but if this Bill is passed, it will be tantamount to allowing those who would kill the souls of the people to do so with impunity. On that ground I certainly shall vote against the Bill, and I would remind the House

that under the law of Moses blasphemers were led out of the camp and stoned to death by the people. I do not think, therefore, that the penalties under these Acts can be regarded as excessive at the present time. I hope the House will reject the Bill by a handsome majority, in order to show that it considers itself insulted by having such a measure brought before it and being asked to sanction it at all.

MR. WADDY (Lincolnshire, Brigg): If this measure were one to do away with the Statutes aimed at what is called schism or heresy, I should not have a word to say against it. But if this Bill is passed I believe that my children might be compelled to see on the walls of this city as they go along the streets things which I would rather they should die than see and take into their minds. It behoves us to stand up boldly for those things which we hold most precious both in time and eternity—which stretch beyond this world into the next. Under these circumstances, and with a feeling of the profoundest responsibility, I declare that though I should be prepared to vote as earnestly as any man for anything that will promote religious and civil liberty, yet, as I believe that this Bill would open the flood-gates of the vilest and most terrible iniquity that it is possible to perpetrate, I shall speak and vote against it on every possible occasion.

*MR. BRADLAUGH: I wish to say that a phrase used by the Solicitor General might possibly be understood as putting on me some kind of moral responsibility, in connection with the illustrated publications to which the hon. and learned Gentleman referred. I do not suppose that the hon. and learned Gentleman intended his words to convey that meaning, but if he did, I must say that all the evidence adduced at the trial went just the other way.

*SIR E. CLARKE: I did not think that my words had been misunderstood. The quotations I gave were from the words of Lord Coleridge to the effect that the defence was grounded on the contention that the publication was not by the hon. Member's authority.

*MR. PICTON (Leicester): After the speeches that have been delivered against this Bill, as my name is on the back of it, I wish to say I intend to vote for it purely on religious principles. I read not one word in the New Testament

in favour of supporting the infliction of any legal penalty on account of the utterance of any religious or irreligious opinion, I read rather that when the disciples of the Great Master desired to call down vengeance on those who differed from them, they were reminded that they knew not what spirit they were of. It is because I feel more strongly on this religious point than the hon. Members who oppose the Bill that I am going to support it. If it were possible for the sense of decency of religious people to be outraged under the Bill as at present framed of course I would in Committee support any amendment which might be necessary to remove that blot.

MR. CHANNING (Northampton, E.): Will the hon. Member for Northampton accept the suggestion of the hon. Member for Aberdeen, in the sense that will make distinctly illegal insults to the religious feeling of the community, and the outrage to the community offered by publications such as those referred to by the hon. Member for Flintshire.

*MR. BRADLAUGH: I should be quite ready to accept something in the direction of the clause from the Indian Code. It will, however, be quite time enough to deal with a particular illustration when it comes before me.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes 46; Noes 111.—(Div. List, No. 75.)

Main Question as amended put, and agreed to; Second Reading put off for six months.

FRIENDLY SOCIETIES ACT (1888).

AMENDMENT BILL.—[No. 193.]

Bill read 2^a, and committed for Monday, 6th May.

COLONIZATION.

Ordered, that a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into various Schemes which have been proposed to Her Majesty's Government to facilitate Emigration from the congested districts of the United Kingdom to the British Colonies or elsewhere; to examine into the results of any Schemes which have received practical trial in recent years, and to report generally whether in their opinion it is desirable that further facilities should be given to promote emigration; and, if so, upon the means by and the conditions under which such emigration can best be carried out, and the quarters to which it can most advantageously be directed.—(Mr. Ritchie.)

House adjourned at ten minutes after Twelve o'clock till Monday next.

HANSARD'S PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES.

No. 5.]

THIRD VOLUME OF SESSION 1889.

[MAY 2.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Monday, 15th April, 1889.

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

BARROW HEMATITE STEEL COMPANY
(WATER) BILL.—(*By Order.*)

Order for Second Reading read.

MR. CAINE (Barrow): I beg to move that the Bill be now read a second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time"—(*Mr. Caine.*)

*COLONEL SANDYS (Lancashire, S.W. Bootle): I have put a notice on the Paper in reference to this Bill, because I wished to draw the attention of the House to it, seeing that it involves matters of considerable importance to that part of the country with which it proposes to deal. There is also alongside of it another Bill (the Barrow-in-Furness Corporation Bill), which practically forms part of the same scheme. I do not intend, however, to put the House to the trouble of a division, because, considering the composition of the Committee to whom it will necessarily be referred, and also the fact that the whole question turns very much upon technical and engineering evidence, as well as local matters, it is probable that the House at this stage would not be willing to depart from its usual course. Therefore, although I am prepared to go into the question fully, I do not propose to embark upon any lengthened opposition. I may say that the reason why I oppose

the Bill and take an objection to the Second Reading is that the river Duddon forms part of a fishery district, consisting of five rivers, under the control of the Fishery Board, of which I am the Chairman, and I have been asked by my Board to see what can be done in the matter. Only this morning I have received a protest stating that the Bill ought not to be proceeded with at this moment, as the question is under consideration in various quarters. We have been told that it is before the Board of Trade, but we have received no information as to the questions which have been considered by the Board of Trade or the provisions recommended by them, and it is quite impossible for my Board to accept the Bill as it stands. At the same time, I am quite sure that every question will be threshed out before the Select Committee, and that all the details will be thoroughly gone into. Moreover, should the Bill when it comes back from the Committee be such as we cannot accept, it will be competent for me, on behalf of the Fishery Board, to move the rejection of the measure on the Third Reading. Therefore I will not trouble the House with entering into any details, but will simply say a few words on those provisions of the Bill which appear to me to be objectionable. In the first place, I consider that under this Bill it would be possible for the Steel Company to drain entirely the river Duddon. At certain times—the driest months in the year—it would be possible to take away all the water from the stream, and the river would become absolutely dry just at that period of the year in the summer when the salmon are running up the river to spawn. Another objectionable point is one with which the Fishery Board are not so much concerned, that it is proposed to throw a weir or dam across the river Duddon,

the effect of which will be to diminish the flow of water down to the estuary for something like 17 miles, the present flow being of the utmost importance in keeping the river open as a navigable channel. If the flow of water be materially diminished, the effect will be to prevent vessels from getting up at all. Another point to which I take exception is that the Corporation of Barrow do not require this water for the needs of the inhabitants. And in that contention I am supported by a letter which has been addressed to me by some of the ratepayers living on the spot. I also complain that the Corporation are asking for powers to apply the provisions of an Act which they obtained in 1875 in regard to the water shed to an entirely different water shed, and that they have not yet exhausted the water shed then granted to them. For these reasons I strongly object to the Bill, but I do not propose to trouble the House with a Division upon it at this stage.

Question "That the Bill be now read a second time," put, and agreed to.

MOTION.

PIER AND HARBOUR PROVISIONAL ORDERS (NO. 2) BILL.

On Motion of Sir Michael Hicks Beach, Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under "The General Pier and Harbour Act, 1861," relating to Cork, Davenport, Dover, Milford-on-Sea, and Worth—ordered to be brought in by Sir Michael Hicks Beach and Mr. Jackson.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 197.]

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887 (IMPRISONMENT OF MEMBER).

MR. SPEAKER acquainted the House that he had received the following letter relating to the imprisonment of Mr. William O'Brien, a Member of this House—

Tralee,
Thursday, 11 April, 1889.

Sir,

I have the honour to inform you that the appeal of Mr. William O'Brien, Member of Parliament, from the conviction by a Court of Summary Jurisdiction, as defined by Section 11, Sub-section 6, of "The Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, 1887," for that he, the said William O'Brien, on the 20th day of

Colonel Sandys

December, 1888, at Brennan's Glen, in said county of Kerry, being a proclaimed district within the provisions of the said Act, did with certain persons, to wit, James Gilhooly, Patrick Kearney, Thomas J. Condon, Daniel J. O'Connor, and certain other person and persons whose names are unknown, unlawfully take part in a criminal conspiracy punishable by law at the time of the passing of the said Act, to wit, a criminal conspiracy to induce certain persons whose names are unknown, to wit, tenants of farms on an estate known as the Kenmare Estate, in the county of Kerry aforesaid, not to fulfil their legal obligations, to wit, to refuse to pay and not to pay the owners of such farms the rent which they the said tenants were and might become lawfully bound to pay, and which the said owners were and might become lawfully entitled to be paid, came on for hearing before me, the County Court Judge and Chairman of Quarter Sessions for the county of Kerry, sitting as sole Judge, pursuant to the provisions of Section 11, Sub-section 7, of the said Act, at the Court of Quarter Sessions for the said county at Killarney, on the 26th day of March, 1889, and by adjournment at the Court of Quarter Sessions at Tralee, in said county, on the 10th day of April, 1889, when I confirmed the said conviction, and sentenced the said William O'Brien to be imprisoned in Tralee Gaol from the said 10th day of April, 1889, to the 20th day of May, 1889, without hard labour.

I have the honour to remain,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

JOHN ADYE CURRAN,

County Court Judge and Chairman
of Quarter Sessions
for County of Kerry.

The Right Hon. Arthur Peel, M.P.,
Speaker of the House of Commons.

CONTRACTS WITH FOREIGNERS.

Address for—

"Copies of all Contracts for Articles of Home Manufacture made in the United Kingdom by the several Government Departments, between the 1st day of April 1888 and the 31st day of March 1889, with Contractors outside the Kingdom."—(*Mr. Howard Vincent.*)

EAST INDIA (FACTORY ACT).

Address for—

"Copy of Reports on the working of the Indian Factory Act made to the Government of India in reply to inquiries recently directed by the Secretary of State for India."—(*Mr. Caine.*)

DIPLOMATIC AND CONSULAR BUILDINGS.

Return ordered—

“Showing the total amount expended on Diplomatic and Consular Buildings for alterations, additions, maintenance, and repairs, during the last 15 years—

Name of Embassy or Legation.

Original cost of Buildings.

Date of purchase or erection.

Total spent for additional land or Buildings since 1st April 1874.

Total spent for alterations, maintenance, and repairs, since 1st April, 1874.

—(Mr. Henry H. Fowler.)

QUESTIONS.

TOBACCO SMUGGLING.

DR. CAMERON (Glasgow, College) asked the Secretary to the Treasury whether the Commissioners of Her Majesty's Customs have received a memorial or memorials, praying for the release of Walter Walker, presently detained in Calton Gaol for non-payment of £821 5s., the amount of penalties to which he was adjudged liable for complicity in smuggling tobacco; whether it is true, as stated, that Walker has been in prison since the 27th of March, 1888, that his health has suffered greatly from his confinement, that his wife and children have become paupers, and that there is no prospect whatever of Walker being able to pay the penalties for which he is liable; and what sum has up to this date been expended by the Commissioners for Walker's aliment?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON, Leeds, N.): Walker has been in confinement since the 27th of March, 1888, the date of his arrest. He will be liberated at the expiration of a year from the date of his conviction, which took place on the 30th May, 1888, the period of his imprisonment being regulated by the provisions of Section 4 of the Debtors (Scotland) Act, 1880. The Board of Customs have no information as to the state of Walker's health, as to the condition of his wife and children, or as to his ability to pay the penalties for which he is liable. No sum has been expended by the Commissioners of Customs for Walker's aliment, as all such expenses are defrayed out of the Prison Vote.

SCOTLAND—CHARGE OF EMBEZZLEMENT.

DR. CAMERON asked the Lord Advocate whether it is true that James Roy M'Murich, a domiciled Scotchman, residing in Paisley, was, on the 28th of October last, arrested in that town on a warrant obtained in Bristol, on a charge of embezzlement, and conveyed to Bristol, and there tried and sent to prison; whether the offence charged against him was admittedly committed in Scotland; and, if so, if he would explain why M'Murich was allowed to be taken for trial outside the realm of Scottish Law; and whether, before M'Murich's arrest on the English warrant, any complaint had been lodged with the Scottish criminal authorities, and with what result?

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. P. B. ROBERTSON, Buteshire): The facts are as stated in the first part of the question. The offence charged was embezzlement of money belonging to the employers of the accused, who were merchants in Bristol. When an English magistrate has granted a warrant, the Scotch magistrates and police are bound to effectuate the execution of the warrant, and to send the accused to England; and in this matter there is by Statute complete reciprocity between the two countries. In this instance the question of jurisdiction was for the English and not the Scotch authorities to determine. Whether, in this case, the warrant ought to have been granted, or whether the English Court had jurisdiction to try the offence, are questions on which it is not within my province to pronounce. No complaint had been lodged with the criminal authorities in Scotland regarding this offence; but, in August last, a complaint was made to the Procurator Fiscal at Glasgow accusing M'Murich of embezzling money belonging to another Bristol firm. In that case there did not appear to the Procurator Fiscal to be grounds for preferring a criminal charge.

IRELAND—ELECTION OF POOR LAW GUARDIANS.

MR. GILHOOLY (Cork, W.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention had been directed to the distribution and collection of voting papers at the

recent election of Poor Law Guardians for the Glenlough Electoral Division of the Bantry Union, when it appears that Constable Slacké had been deputed by his superior officer to bring voting papers from the Returning Officer, and distribute and collect them in the Glenlough Electoral Division, and that Mr. J. E. Barrett, J.P., subsequently went to the house of Constable Kavanagh, who was exempt from duty, and requested him to collect and distribute the voting papers at Glenlough; whether complaints have reached him that Constable Kavanagh left a voting paper at the house of a voter, named Eliza Connell, which he did not call for, and which her son, Peter Connell, subsequently brought to the Bantry Union; whether a similar complaint was made of Constable Kavanagh two years ago; were the instructions given to Constable Slacké to distribute and collect the voting papers withdrawn; and, if so, by whom; and, by what authority Constable Kavanagh distributed and collected the voting papers at Glenlough?

*THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): The constabulary authorities report that is not the case that Constable Slacké was deputed to distribute and correct the voting papers in the district mentioned; nor is it the case that Mr. J. E. Barrett, J.P., went to the house of Kavanagh and requested him to undertake that duty. It appears that Constable Kavanagh did leave a voting paper at the house of Eliza Connell which he called for in due course, but it was not delivered back to him. It is true that the hon. Member who put this question made a similar complaint in May, 1887, but on careful inquiry it was found that there was no reason to believe that the constable did not act with impartiality. No instructions were given to Constable Slacké to distribute and collect the papers, and, therefore, no instructions were withdrawn. Constable Kavanagh was detailed for the duty by his Superior Officer, who has every confidence in his fitness for the work, and who considers it essential that the duty should be discharged by a policeman who has an extensive local knowledge, intimidation being largely practised in the divisions of the district, so much so that in 1886 a young constable who was engaged on this duty in a

neighbouring division was knocked down, and all the voting papers in favour of one of one of the candidates taken from him.

CIVIL SERVICE CERTIFICATES.

MR. LAWSON (St. Pancras, W.) asked the President of the Board of Trade, with reference to the undertaking given by him on the 5th July last, whether he has considered the desirability of issuing Civil Service certificates to all or any of the staff of the Chief Official Receiver in Bankruptcy; and, if so, whether he is prepared to communicate to the House his decision in the matter?

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Sir MICHAEL HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): The temporary arrangement relating to the office of the Chief Official Receiver in Bankruptcy, to which I referred in my reply to the hon. Member, will not expire until the 30th September next. Before that time I shall consider the position of his staff.

BIRDCAGE WALK.

MR. HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central) asked the First Commissioner of Works if any inconvenience had resulted from the boon granted in 1887 to the public by His Royal Highness the Ranger of general use of the road between Storey's Gate and Marlborough Gate; and if, having regard to the loss of time caused to persons engaged in trade and to their *employés* by prohibiting the use of the wide roadway known as Birdcage Walk "by cart, waggon, dray, truck, wheelbarrow, or other vehicle used for the conveyance of merchandise," in passing to and from the southwestern district, and to the pressure of traffic and inconvenience caused thereby in Victoria Street and other adjacent thoroughfares, some modification, temporary or otherwise, of the existing regulations is possible?

THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (Mr. PLUNKET, University of Dublin): No inconvenience, but, on the contrary, great public convenience has resulted from the opening in 1887 of the road between Storey's Gate and Marlborough Gate; but I must point out that it is only opened to the lighter class of traffic. As to the proposal contained in the second part of my hon. Friend's question, I cannot say that I

think it could be adopted with advantage to the public. At present the heavy traffic journeying between Westminster and Buckingham Gate can, and does to a great extent, travel by James Street, York Street, Tothill Street, and Broad Sanctuary. Only 100 out of 1,200 yards could be saved if it were to take the Birdcage Walk route instead, while the advantage of having a separate line for the quicker traffic—a great advantage, I think, on roads as well as railways—would be lost.

BRITISH AND FOREIGN PASSENGER VESSELS.

MR. HOWARD VINCENT asked the President of the Board of Trade if British vessels plying from the ports of the United States with passengers, are subject to the same regulations as American vessels; if a like rule obtains in most foreign ports, to avoid prejudice to the National flag; if it is a fact that Foreign vessels are allowed to convey passengers and cargoes from the ports of the United Kingdom without the supervision of the Board of Trade, and without complying with the regulations deemed essential by Parliament for the safety of the lives of Her Majesty's subjects on British vessels; and, in such case, if legislative power will be sought to place foreign vessels using British ports under the same regulations, as to overcrowding, overloading, and the adoption of precautions for saving life, as are imposed upon British vessels?

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: In answer to the first paragraph in the hon. Member's question I have to say that, according to the strict letter of the United States law, British vessels plying with passengers from United States ports are subject to the same rules as American vessels; but in reply to certain representations made by this Department in 1883, the United States Government intimated that, under the discretionary powers lodged with their Treasury by the Act of Congress, it was (in view of the courtesy extended to American vessels in this country) intended to grant similar exemptions to British vessels. Since that time the Board have received very few complaints, and they have reason to believe that but little inconvenience has been experienced by the working of the American rules. As regards the second

paragraph, I have to inform the hon. Member that inquiries are being instituted through the Foreign Office. As regards the third paragraph, I have to state that no survey is held of British or foreign ships that carry cargoes and no passengers from any port in the United Kingdom, nor of foreign ships carrying passengers unless the passengers carried are emigrants, so as to bring the ships under the Passengers Acts. British ships can be detained if unseaworthy from any cause, and foreign ships if unseaworthy from overloading or improper loading. The subject of the fourth paragraph is one that will need the very gravest consideration in the interests of British trade and with a view to maintaining as far as possible freedom from interference with British ships in foreign ports.

THE CALCUTTA REVIEW.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, whether H. D. Phillips, C.S., Under Secretary to the Government of Bengal, was editor of the *Calcutta Review*, the October and January numbers of which contain strong party attacks on persons of position and repute in India; whether it is in accordance with the regulations in India that a prominent Government official should publish such matter under the authority of his name; and, whether the Secretary of State will take any action thereon?

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Sir J. GORST, Chatham): The Secretary of State has no official information as to the present editorship of the *Calcutta Review*. The rule is that no Government officer can edit any periodical without the sanction of Government; and such sanction is only given when such periodical is mainly devoted to non-political topics, such as art, science, and literature. The attention of the Government of India will be directed by the Secretary of State to the political character which the *Calcutta Review* is assuming.

MR. J. M. MACLEAN: Will the Under Secretary obtain from the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh) a list of the "persons of position and repute in India" who are henceforth to be exempt from criticism?

No answer was given.

THE CENTRAL TELEGRAPH OFFICE.

MR. CUNINGHAME GRAHAM (Lanarkshire, N.W.) asked the Postmaster General what was the actual number of telegraphists at the Central Telegraph Office who are placed on 2 p.m. to 10 p.m. duty for the current week; whether from the time of their arrival at 2 p.m. till the time of their departure at 10 p.m. they were engaged in telegraphic operations, and are allowed no time for refreshment; what would be the cost, if any, of granting these clerks a reasonable time for refreshment; whether the Controller (Mr. Fischer) stated to a deputation that he was willing to grant a dinner time to those clerks who resided at a distance from the office; whether, having regard to the severe physical and mental strain to which the nature of their occupation subjects them, he would grant the relief asked for?

*THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES, University of Cambridge): In reply to the questions of the hon. Member I have to state:— 1. That the number of telegraphists at the Central Telegraph Office, whose hours of duty during the current week are from 2 to 10 p.m., is 26. 2. That these officers are supplied with tea and bread and butter at 5 o'clock, and that they have facilities given them for procuring supper before they leave at 10 p.m. 3. That the cost of granting to these 26 telegraphists half an hour each for refreshments would represent 13 hours of overtime, which would be difficult to provide for at this time of day; nor indeed can I think it unreasonable to expect that officers who do not come on duty before 2 o'clock in the day should have dined before they come. 4. And yet it was, as suggested in the hon. Member's question, explained by the Controller to a deputation of telegraphists who waited upon him, that if any hardship should be found to arise in the case of anyone residing at a distance from the office, the circumstances would, if represented, be fully considered. In no case, however, has any such representation been received. 5. The duty is not, either in its nature or the duration of the hours, such as appears to me to constitute any undue strain upon the faculties of those who discharge it; and yet, if any instance

to the contrary be brought to my notice, I shall be prepared to see whether a remedy cannot be applied. 6. Whether, in reply to a question put at some time or other in the course of last year, the Controller did, or did not, speak of the dinner hour as a privilege, is a matter upon which I am unable to give any information.

ALLEGED ILLEGAL ARREST.

MR. JOHN O'CONNOR (Tipperary, S.) asked the Secretary of State for War if he was aware that Private J. Smith, Manchester Regiment, was, on the 10th of March last, induced by Sergeant Griffin, Royal Irish Constabulary, to go to the entrance of the police barrack at Bansha, and that, without having committed or being charged with any offence, he was forced into the police barrack, knocked down by Sergeant Griffin, and forcibly prevented by him and Constable Spillane from leaving the barrack; and, if Private Smith has since been sentenced by Court-Martial to imprisonment with hard labour for nine months in respect to the above occurrence?

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. E. STANHOPE, Lincolnshire, Horncastle): It is true that the private, Smith, was sentenced by a Court-Martial to nine months' imprisonment in respect of the occurrences mentioned in the question; but on the evidence coming before the Judge Advocate General, he upon the 6th of this month quashed the conviction.

AUSTRALIAN AND NEW ZEALAND POSTAGE.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury) asked the Postmaster General whether his attention had been called to the fact that, whilst the postage on book packets and patterns to Australia and New Zealand is one penny for one ounce and fourpence for four ounces, it costs no less than eightpence to send a packet weighing four ounces and a-half, or in other words, fourpence for an extra half ounce; and, whether it was his intention to put an end to or lessen this difference of rates?

*MR. RAIKES: The rates of postage on book packets and patterns to Australia and New Zealand are substantially those quoted by the hon. Member, though he has omitted (perhaps unin-

tentionally) to mention an intermediate rate of twopence for two ounces between the minimum charge of one penny for the first ounce, and the maximum charge of fourpence for four ounces. It is the fact that a packet exceeding four ounces is charged fourpence additional for each four ounces. This is an old scale of charge, which survives only in the case of the few non-Union Colonies—such as Australia and New Zealand—and which I should be glad to see revised.

CHILDREN EMPLOYED IN THEATRES.

MR. SAMUEL SMITH (Flintshire) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the Government intend to give effect to the recommendations of the Royal Commission on Education with regard to placing young children employed in theatres under the provisions of the Factory Acts?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (MR. MATTHEWS, Birmingham, E.): The recommendations of the Royal Commission are still under consideration. I am not at present in a position to announce what course the Government will take.

REQUISITIONS BY BOARDS OF GUARDIANS.

MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W.) asked the Solicitor General for Ireland whether Boards of Guardians in Ireland, except under the circumstances specified in Section 9 of 32 and 33 Vic., c. 41, had any power to issue requisitions other than Form No. 34 in 48 Vic. c. 17; whether circumstances had arisen in Belfast to justify the issue of the second requisition by the Belfast Board of Guardians, those circumstances being the actual rating of the owners or landlords, or their agreeing to become liable to the rates. Those circumstances being absent in the cases of rating above £4 5s., what authority have the Guardians to issue the new requisitions, and serve them at the public expense on owners or landlords of premises rated between £4 5s. and £9; and, whether his attention has been drawn to the fact that the form used in England and the form to be used in Belfast differs in two important particulars, viz., that there is no mention in the Irish form of penalty, and no column relating to creation of present tenancy in the English form?

*THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (MR. MADDEN, University of Dublin): I do not know that it is the duty of the Local Government Board to give directions in such matters to Boards of Guardians, but I will make inquiry on the subject.

MR. SEXTON intimated that unless something were done in the matter, and explicit instructions given to the Belfast Board of Guardians, when the Vote for the Local Government Board came on he would move its reduction.

*MR. MADDEN: The question of the way in which the Belfast Board of Guardians have used the public money, is a question that would properly come before the Local Government Auditor, subject to appeal.

INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS.

MR. KING (Hull, Central) asked the Under Secretary of State for India whether the attention of the Secretary of State has been called to a certain Memorandum, which has been circulated among Members of this House, signed "William Digby, Agent in England of the Indian National Congress," calling attention to the reported contents of a Despatch which Lord Dufferin, in a speech delivered at Calcutta, announced had been forwarded to the Secretary of State from the Indian Government, and comparing the recommendations of the Despatch, as reported in certain newspapers, with an abbreviated programme of a body calling itself the "Indian National Congress," for the purpose of demonstrating the "moderation and fairness of the Congress;" whether it is true that the Despatch in question contains the recommendations set forth in the Memorandum; whether the Despatch has yet been made public by authority of the Secretary of State or the Indian Government; and, whether, in order to remove any doubts as to the true nature of Lord Dufferin's proposals, the Despatch will be laid upon the Table of this House?

SIR J. GORST: The Secretary of State does not propose at present to lay any papers before the House on the subject of proposed changes in the constitution of provincial Councils, as the matter is still under consideration. The Secretary of State has not examined the Memorandum to which the hon. Member refers. If the author of it has

become possessed of any fragments of official correspondence it has only been by a breach of official confidence.

WESTERN AUSTRALIA.

MR. KING asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, whether the Return which he promised to endeavour to obtain from the Government of Western Australia of the names of holders of land; whether persons or syndicates in that Colony has yet been received; and, if not, what explanation can be given of the delay; and, if so, whether he will present the Returns to Parliament?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Baron H. de WORMS, Liverpool, Toxteth): If my hon. Friend will refer to the answer which I gave in the House on the 28th February, 1888, as reported in *Hansard*, he will see that the offer which I made was to procure the Returns in the event of a proposal being made to Parliament for legislation on the subject of his question—a contingency which has not at present arisen. When the Western Australia Responsible Government Bill comes before Parliament, these Returns, as far as they can be furnished, will be presented.

IRELAND—EVIDENCE OF A POLICE WITNESS.

MR. MC CARTAN (Down, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, whether his attention had been called to the reports in the Belfast Press of the 9th instant of the evidence given by Serjeant Cummins at the trial of Vesey Fitzgerald, R.M., v. the *Friesman's Journal* and Mr. Carew, M.P.; and whether Serjeant Cummins is correctly reported as having sworn, on cross-examination, that "he was asked by Mr. Brown (Mr. Carew's solicitor) to tell him what he knew about the matter, and he (the serjeant) refused. He gave his evidence on the other side;" and, if so, can he state under what authority this officer acted in declining to give evidence impartially to both parties in an action.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I understand that this action is still pending, the jury having disagreed at the recent trial. I am advised that the defendants may, if they please, subpoena the witness in question; and, pending the further trial

of the action, I do not think that I ought to answer any questions relating to the evidence which may be given.

CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ANIMALS) ACTS.

SIR EDWARD BIRKBECK (Norfolk, E.) asked the Vice Chamberlain whether the recommendation of the Report of the Departmental Committee appointed last Session to inquire into the administration of the Contagious Diseases (Animals) Acts have been considered by the Committee of Council for Agriculture; whether the application of the Royal Agricultural Society of England, conveyed in the letter of His Royal Highness the Acting President, has been the subject of deliberation by the Committee; and whether, as the Lord President of the Council on the 5th March last assured an influential deputation from the Central and Associated Chambers of Agriculture, that there would be no delay in coming to a decision upon the prayer of that deputation for an extension of the powers of the central authority in outbreaks of pleuro-pneumonia, and for a transfer of the charge for compensation in cases of slaughter from the local rates to the National Exchequer, he is prepared to announce the determination of Her Majesty's Government as to proposing legislation in the course of the present Session?

DR. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeen-shire, W.) asked whether the Government intended to take any action on the recommendation of the Departmental Committee with regard to tubercule?

THE VICE CHAMBERLAIN (Viscount LEWISHAM, Lewisham): The possibility of the transmission of the contagion of foot-and-mouth disease by means of persons or substances which have come in contact with diseased animals has always been recognized by the veterinary advisers of the Government, and measures are adopted at Deptford and other foreign animal wharves to prevent the carrying of infection by such means. There is no information of the escape of the infection of foot-and-mouth disease from Deptford in 1883 and 1884. The stringent precautions referred to were enforced in 1881. Before the Netherlands Orders were passed, the Privy Council were

satisfied that the most stringent precautions were taken by the Netherlands Government to prevent the introduction of foot-and-mouth disease across their frontier. The efficacy of the means used is proved by the fact of the Netherlands having escaped any outbreak of the disease for several years. The Privy Council have no reason for believing that foot-and-mouth disease exists anywhere in the neighbourhood of the Dutch frontier, and whenever an outbreak occurs in Germany the district is immediately isolated.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT—INLAND REVENUE.

MR. LAWSON asked the Secretary to the Treasury, whether, to cover the cost of collection by Inland Revenue officers, any deduction was to be made from the sum paid over yearly to the London County Council from the Imperial Revenue in respect of local government; and, what is the estimated cost for this special service in respect of the county of London for local taxation licences and for Probate Duty, if any?

MR. JACKSON: In reply, I have to inform the hon. Member that the cost of collection is estimated at $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent, and that the Local Government Act does not authorize any deduction on that account being made from payments to the local taxation account.

KASHMIR.

MR. CAINE: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for India if he intends to lay upon the Table of the House any Papers relating to recent occurrences in Kashmir; and, if so, can he state when?

SIR J. GORST: I stated in reply to a question on the 14th of March that the Government of India attached very little importance to the Cashmir intercepted letters. No official papers have yet arrived in this country, and it is, therefore, impossible to say whether the Secretary of State will lay any on the Table.

WELSH SUNDAY CLOSING ACT.

MR. KENYON (Denbigh) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department if, before the House adjourned, he would state the names of the Commissioners to be appointed to inquire

into the working of the Sunday Closing (Wales) Act?

MR. MATTHEWS: The arrangements for constituting this Commission are not yet complete, and I am unable to give the names of the Commissioners to my hon. Friend.

ENDOWED SCHOOLS ACT.

SIR LYON PLAYFAIR (Leeds, S.) asked the hon. Member for the Penrith Division of Cumberland whether the Charity Commission had any and what information respecting the extent to which scholarships and exhibitions in schools, for which schemes have been made under the Endowed Schools Acts, are held by the children of poor persons?

MR. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith): The information which the Charity Commission possesses upon this matter is contained in those Returns which are to be found at pp. 476, 495 and 525 of the appendix to the Report of the Select Committee on Endowed Schools, 1887. The first Return shows that out of 2,987 scholarships and exhibitions 1,145 were held by children from elementary schools in 1882. The second Return gives the occupation of parents of boys admitted to the United Westminster Schools. The third Return, from 101 secondary endowed schools under scheme, gives particulars of the scholarships, occupation and wages of parents, and subsequent fortunes of the scholars therein, and shows that to a most satisfactory extent the children of the poor, and even of the very poorest, can, and do, benefit by such scholarships and exhibitions.

FOOT-AND-MOUTH DISEASE.

SIR EDWARD BIRKBECK asked the Vice Chamberlain whether the possibility of the transmission of the contagion of foot-and mouth disease by secondary means, such as in the persons or clothes of those coming in contact with animals affected, has been recognized by the veterinary authorities consulted by the Government; whether it has been found needful to take very stringent precautions as regards the disinfection of persons passing out of Deptford Market, or the places where infected foreign animals are now received; whether cases have occurred before such precautions were imposed in

which the disease has been believed to have been conveyed both into and out of Deptford, in 1883 and 1884, by persons thus engaged; and whether the Privy Council have satisfied themselves that precautions sufficiently stringent now exist in the Netherlands to prevent the disease being carried by dealers, drovers, butchers, and others passing from Germany or Belgium to places within the Dutch frontier?

VISCOUNT LEWISHAM: A Departmental Committee was appointed by the Lord President last year to inquire into pleuro-pneumonia and tuberculosis in the United Kingdom, and the Report of that Committee has been considered on several occasions by the Committee of Council for Agriculture. A letter has been received from His Royal Highness the acting President of the Royal Agricultural Society, and has been considered by the Committee. A reply has been forwarded to His Royal Highness. The recommendations of the Committee, except those which are already included in Orders of Council, can only be carried out by further legislative enactment. And this question is still under the consideration of the Government.

SIR E. BIRKBECK: Why was not Professor Brown, or some other Gentleman connected with the Department, sent out instead of asking the Royal Agricultural Society to send a representative?

VISCOUNT LEWISHAM: The Privy Council did not consider it came within their province to send an official over to see how the regulations are enforced by a friendly Government.

MR. CHAPLIN (Lincolnshire, Sleaford): Will the First Lord of the Treasury consider it convenient to answer the question I put to him on Friday—namely, whether any reply has as yet been received from the Royal Society, and whether we are to understand that pending such reply by their emissary, the Order of the 31st of March will not be allowed to come in force?

*THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH, Strand): No reply has yet been received from the Royal Society. The Committee is summoned for to-morrow to receive the communication made to them from the Government. As the rule does not come into operation until the 1st of June, there will, I apprehend, be ample time.

Sir Edward Birkbeck

H.M.S. COSSACK.

ADMIRAL MAYNE (Pembroke and Haverfordwest) asked the First Lord of the Admiralty whether he had received any report on the stability or seaworthiness of H.M.S. *Cossack*, recently arrived at Zanzibar; and, if not, whether he will ask for a report from the captain of the ship?

*THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. FORWOOD, Lancashire, S.W., Ormskirk): On behalf of my noble Friend I have to say that the subject of the stability and seaworthiness of the *Cossack* has not been referred to in any of the reports that have reached the Admiralty, either from the ship herself or from the Admiral under whose orders she is serving, since her arrival at Zanzibar.

"POSTE RESTANTE" LETTERS.

MR. SAMUEL HOARE (Norwich) asked the Postmaster General whether his attention has been called to the inconvenience arising from the present regulations with reference to letters addressed "poste restante" in the London district; and whether he will consider some modification in the system now existing?

*MR. RAIKES: The "Poste Restante" system in London has hitherto been confined to the offices at St. Martin's-le-Grand and Charing Cross, but since the receipt of a complaint, forwarded to me some weeks ago by my hon. Friend, I have been considering whether facilities for obtaining callers' letters should be given at a larger number of offices in the Metropolis, and I hope very shortly to put in operation an experimental extension which, I trust, will be satisfactory.

IRELAND—EVICTIONS IN DONEGAL—THE BATTERING RAM.

MR. GILL (Louth, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the police battering ram in Donegal will be worked by policemen?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The police ram will not be used unless there is illegal and riotous resistance to the process of law. If there is such illegal and riotous resistance, it must be used in such manner as the necessity or con-

venience of the case requires for the purpose of diminishing danger to any of the parties concerned.

MR. GILL: Will it be worked by policemen?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The broader proposition includes the narrower one.

MR. SEXTON: It has always been understood that the police have been present at evictions to protect the Sheriff's officers and for no other purpose. Is the right hon. Gentleman advised that the funds of the State can legally be used to provide machinery for breaking into houses?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have already more than once stated the object for which the ram is to be used; but I must not be taken to assent to the proposition of law laid down by the hon. Gentleman. If he will study the judgment of Chief Baron Palles, he will find he has narrowed and restricted the duty thrown on the police.

MR. CLANCY: As this ram is worked by the police, will the cost of it fall on the Constabulary Vote?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: If there is any cost at all, it will fall on the public funds, and will appear on the Estimates.

THE WOODFORD EVICTIONS.

MR. JAMES STUART: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether Francis Tully, who was sentenced to two consecutive periods of six months each in connection with his defence of his house at the Woodford evictions in August, 1887, has now been over six months in gaol; whether it is the case that his eyesight is becoming impaired owing to his imprisonment; and, whether, inasmuch as the two sentences were practically for the same offence, he would consider the advisability of extending some clemency towards him?

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The Prisons Board informs me that the reply to the inquiry in the first paragraph is in the affirmative. The Medical Officer reports that the prisoner has lately had slight catarrhal ophthalmia, for which he is under treatment and improving daily, but that his general health could not be better. I am advised that the two sentences were not practically for the same offence.

THE KALAT-I-NADIR FORTRESS.

DR. CAMERON: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether any information has been received at the Foreign Office as to the truth of the reported cession by Persia to Russia of the fortress Kalat-I-Nadir, and the conditions on which it has been ceded?

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON, Manchester, E.): Her Majesty's Minister at Teheran has been assured that there is no truth in the reported cession of Kalat I-Nadir by Persia to Russia.

IRELAND—THE LAND COMMISSION.

MR. FLYNN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, if, in view of the grave dissatisfaction expressed at public meetings in Lismore, County Cork, with the recent decisions of the Doyle Sub-Commission, and of the fact that appeals to the Head Commission have been lodged in a large number of cases, he will undertake to communicate with the Land Commissioners so as to ensure an early hearing of these appeals?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The Land Commissioners inform me that the appeals referred to will be taken up by the Appeal Court in their proper turn.

MR. CONWAY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware a great number of originating notices for fair rents have been issued in the Manor Hamilton district of North Leitrim, some as far back as November, 1887; and, whether he will afford facilities for the disposal of the cases as early as possible?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The Land Commissioners inform me that at the sitting for the Union of Manorhamilton, which was held in October, 1888, the list included applications received by the Commission on the 26th of October, 1887. The date of the next sitting has not yet been fixed.

BOUNTIES.

MR. BLUNDELL MAPLE: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will have compiled a Return of the various Foreign Countries giving bounties; the various items upon

which bounties are paid in each country; and the amounts?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: A Return of Foreign Bounties on Navigation and Shipping is in preparation, and will shortly be presented to Parliament. There are not known to be any other considerable bounties except upon the export of sugar; but there are some to French fishermen off Newfoundland.

MR. CAINE: Does it include bounties on shipping?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: Yes.

MR. BLUNDELL MAPLE: In the Argentine Republic is there a bounty on meat?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: I am not sure of the fact, but we are making inquiries.

SIR L. PLAYFAIR: When will the Return be laid on the Table?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: I hope it will be laid on the Table immediately.

MR. J. LOWTHER: Will the Return show the bounties on all articles?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: No, Sir.

MR. J. LOWTHER: Then I shall move to extend it.

IRELAND—EVICTION OF HUGH M'SHARRY.

MR. CLANCY (for Mr. CONWAY): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that Charles Robert Barton, of Waterfoot, Petigo, Fermanagh, obtained a decree of eviction against a tenant named Hugh M'Sharry, Drumacully, Glenade, Leitrim, in April 1888, and issued the decree on the 6th July following; whether he is aware that M'Sharry, on the refusal of the landlord to accept the rent with all costs, 15th October, 1888, lodged the same with Mr. James Faris, the Clerk of the Peace, on 11th December, 1888, and got a receipt for the same; whether, on the 26th February, 1889, Charles Robert Barton obtained a decree for possession at the Kinlough Petty Sessions, notwithstanding the warm protests of M'Sharry's solicitor; and whether, under the circumstances, M'Sharry will be restored to his holding without prejudice?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR replied that the question was one of private right between landlord and tenant, in regard to which he had no power to interfere. If this landlord had acted illegally, the tenant had his legal remedy, and any

evicted tenant could redeem his holding within the statutory term by paying the full amount due.

THE BAND OF THE ROYAL ARTILLERY.

CAPTAIN HEATHCOTE: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether H.R.H. the Commander-in-Chief, when he refused leave to the Royal Artillery Band to attend the *fête* at Madeley, on the ground of its insignificant character, was aware that this *fête* is the principal annual holiday of a large and populous district, and that it is usually attended by upwards of 20,000 people; if he will state on how many of the 23 occasions on which H.R.H. the Commander-in-Chief has, since June, 1888, broken his rule as to this band not playing outside its own district the audience has exceeded 20,000; and if he will bring these facts under the notice of H.R.H. the Commander-in-Chief, in order that he may be induced to reconsider his decision?

*MR. STANHOPE: I am afraid I am not in a position to compare the claims of the various places to which this band has been asked to go. Some care is necessary in order to insure that bands shall always be available for strictly military purposes; but as regards the rule now in force, I have been in communication with the Commander-in-Chief, and he tells me that he proposes to reconsider the whole subject very carefully.

IRELAND.—THE LEINSTER LAWN, DUBLIN.

MR. MURPHY: I beg to ask the Financial Secretary to the Treasury whether, though it is announced upon a notice board in Leinster Lawn, Dublin, that the lawn is open to the public daily, the main entrance gates are always kept locked, and access is only to be had by the initiated through a wicket in a side railing; and whether this fine space will be really made available to the public by keeping the main gates open in future?

*MR. JACKSON: I will bring the suggestion of the hon. Member before the Committee of Public Works.

MR. SEXTON: If this place is to be open to the public, will the hon. Gentleman suggest that the main gate should be open as well?

*MR. JACKSON: I will inquire.

THE CUSTOMS DEPARTMENT.

MR. JOHN KELLY: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether any further progress has been made in the impending application of the seven-hours system to the Statistical Department of Her Majesty's Customs; and whether he will state the nature of the difficulties which have led to the continued delay in the matter?

*MR. JACKSON: Arrangements are still in progress for the application of the seven-hours system in the Statistical Office of the Customs, and that system will shortly be carried into effect as regards the Lower Division clerks and copyists. The delay which has arisen is due to the difficulty of finding places in other Government Departments for certain Lower Division clerks whose services in the Customs must be dispensed with in order to secure the necessary saving of public expense.

MR. CAINE: I beg to ask the Financial Secretary to the Treasury if it is true that a memorial from the wives and children of subscribers to the Customs Fund asking that the matters in dispute between the Treasury and the subscribers may be referred to arbitration, has, by Her Majesty's commands, been forwarded to the Lords of the Treasury; and if he will lay the Papers on the subject upon the Table of the House?

MR. JACKSON: The memorial to which the hon. Member refers has been forwarded to the Treasury by the Home Office and carefully considered; it appears to contain no statements which have not already been considered by successive Boards of Treasury. The view held by the Board was stated in a letter of the Secretary of the Treasury of the 3rd of September, 1884, in reply to a former memorial, and there appears to be nothing to add to the views then expressed. If the hon. Member wishes, I will lay that letter and the memorial to which it refers upon the Table of the House. The whole case is, I think, stated in the memorial and the letter in reply.

THE NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY.

MR. H. KIMBER (Wandsworth): I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works if he has had his attention called to the fact that the Westminster

Aquarium is in the market; and if he will consider whether it would be a suitable place for our National Portrait Gallery, now so unworthily housed.

MR. PLUNKET: I believe that the Westminster Aquarium is in the market; but I am not aware that it has been offered at such a price as could be entertained with a view to converting it into a home for the National Portrait Gallery, even if the building were otherwise suitable for the purpose.

MR. HOWORTH: I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works, whether he has received a communication from Lord Hardinge, the senior trustee of the National Portrait Gallery, in reference to the irreparable injury which the collection of National Portraits has suffered in consequence of their insufficient protection in the building where they are now exhibited; and, if so, whether he sees any objection to publishing the letter in question.

NAVAL DEFENCE BILL.

VISCOUNT CURZON: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury when the second reading of the Naval Defence Bill will be taken?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: It will be taken in the first week after the holidays, on Monday, May the 6th.

VENTILATION OF THE HOUSE.

DR. FARQUHARSON: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, in consequence of recent complaints, he will take into consideration the re-appointment of the Select Committee which sat in 1886 on the ventilation of the House?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: This is a question for the decision of the House; but if hon. Members who are interested in the subject will put themselves in communication with my right hon. Friend the Member for Dublin University, the Government will be quite ready to consider whether sufficient cause is shown for the re-appointment of the Select Committee of 1886.

ROYAL COMMISSION ON MINING ROYALTIES—CROWN ROYALTIES ON GOLD, &c.

MR. KENYON: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether it will be possible to include in the terms of reference to the Royal Commission on

Mining Royalties the question as to Crown royalties on gold and other metals, more especially in Wales?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: The terms of reference to the Royal Commission on Mining Royalties will not exclude from consideration the Crown royalties on gold and other metals in all parts of the United Kingdom.

LOCAL RATING AND TAXATION IN IRELAND.

MR. HOWORTH: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether the Government, in view of the proposed extension of Local Government in Ireland at an early date, intend to introduce any measure during the present Session to alter the incidence of local rating and taxation in Ireland so as to transfer the obligation of paying them from the owners to the occupiers of land?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: No doubt the subject referred to by my hon. Friend will require to be dealt with as soon as we are able to take up the question of local government in Ireland. But I think it probable that any alteration that may be required in the existing system of rating would probably be more conveniently introduced into the Local Government Bill itself rather than into another measure passed in a different Session.

MR. SEXTON: As nearly all local burdens in Ireland now fall upon occupiers, is not the only alternative now to place them on owners?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: The right hon. Gentleman is, no doubt, well-informed on all questions relating to rating in Ireland; but I think it will be found that at all events a portion of the rating falls upon owners, but I think I must ask the House to be good enough to wait until they see our proposals.

ORDER OF BUSINESS.

MR. CHILDERS: Will the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury say what will be the business of the House on the Monday and Tuesday after the holidays?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: The business of the House on the Monday after the holidays will be the Civil Service Estimates in Supply. It is proposed after the holidays to take morning sittings on Fridays as well as on Tuesdays.

Mr. Kenyon

SUGAR BOUNTIES.

SIR L. PLAYFAIR: I should like to ask the President of the Board of Trade if he can furnish the House with an Official Return of Bounties given by foreign States in the production and export of sugar, giving the amounts for each country separately for each of the last ten years?

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: I do not think it will be possible to give the information desired in the form of a Return for a long period of years; and the Board of Trade, in giving such a Return for the present time, might be prejudging the action of the International Commission to be appointed under the Convention for the purpose. The matter, however, is being dealt with in a general manner in a Report now being prepared, which will be laid before Parliament, and such particulars will be given as, I think, will sufficiently explain the circumstances.

THE BRISTOL MURDERER WITHEY.

COLONEL HILL: Will the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary inform the House whether the convict Withey, lately executed at Bristol, made any statement before his death relating to his guilt?

MR. MATTHEWS: I received, on Saturday, a Report from the Chaplain of Bristol Gaol, which contained the following passage—

"John Withey never told me that he murdered his wife, neither did he ever deny it. Nor did he ever accuse any one else. More than once he allowed that he might have done it in drunken anger; but he always added that, if he did, he neither knew nor remembered anything about it."

The Governor of the gaol also informs me that, although Withey was visited since his trial by various relatives and friends, to none of them did he deny the crime. I must leave my hon. Friend to put his own construction on these passages.

MR. HANDEL COSSHAM (Bristol, E.): Is it usual for chaplains to delay the publication of confessions in such cases?

MR. MATTHEWS: The hon. Gentleman may have observed that the statement is of an ambiguous character. The Chaplain did not consider this was a confession.

MR. SOAMES.

MR. SEXTON: I desire to ask the Home Secretary if he is aware that at the Central Criminal Court there is a room reserved for Mr. Soames, and marked "Mr. Soames's room;" whether he enjoys this accommodation as an officer of the Government, or pays rent for it?

MR. MATTHEWS: I must ask for notice of the question.

FACTORIES IN INDIA.

MR. HOYLE (Lancashire, S.E., Heywood): I wish to ask the Under Secretary of State for India a question of which I have given him private notice. It is, whether it is a fact that the operatives in the cotton mills in India are kept at work on Sundays, as well as week days, and if their work ranges over 84 hours a week as compared with 56 hours worked by the operatives of Great Britain, and, if so, has his attention been drawn to a communication from Calcutta which appeared in the *Daily News* of the 13th instant, as follows:—

"Lord Reay has assured the Bombay Chamber of Commerce that the Government agrees with the Chamber that factory legislation on English lines is absolutely uncalled for, and would be as futile as inconvenient."

He further states—

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order. It seems that the question requires more notice than the hon. Gentleman has given. The hon. Gentleman could put it down for to-morrow.

MR. HOYLE: I sent the Under Secretary notice of it on Saturday.

SIR J. GORST: I believe I can answer the question.

MR. HOYLE: I have not quite finished—

"He further states that the Government would co-operate with the Chamber in opposing any such scheme."

And if so, does the Secretary of State endorse the assurance of Lord Reay?

SIR J. GOLDSMID: May I ask you, Sir, whether this is not an infringement of the Standing Order of the House which provides that all questions shall be put on the paper, unless they relate to urgent matters?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member stated he had given notice to the Minister. I said I thought it really evades

the rule, and that notice should be put on the paper. Inasmuch, however, as the right hon. Gentleman is prepared to answer the question, I do not think I need take exception, but I hope this will not be allowed to be drawn into a precedent.

SIR J. GORST: Full information respecting the hours of work in factories in India will be found in papers presented to the House as a Return. The Secretary of State has no information respecting the alleged statement of Lord Reay; and, as I informed the House last week, the despatch from the Government of India on the subject of factory legislation is now under the consideration of the Secretary of State in Council.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

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WAYS AND MEANS.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN, St. George's, Hanover Square): Mr. Courtney, there are two occasions on which the annual statement to be made by the Chancellor of the Exchequer is looked forward to with emotional interest. The one is, when there is a great prospective surplus, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer finds himself surrounded by a crowd of eager expectants, each wondering to whose share the largest proportion of relief may be given. The other occasion is when there is a prospect of a deficit, and expectation turns not on the relief to be afforded, but on the question who are to be the victims of the fresh taxation that must be imposed. I have not had the good fortune to find myself in the former situation. I have not experienced the pleasurable emotion which must fill the breast of the Chancellor of the Exchequer on such occasions. Twice it has fallen to my lot to have a prospective surplus within my grasp; twice it has eluded me. Last year a bill was presented to me which had been accepted by Parliament and endorsed by public opinion for the relief of local taxation. This year I have had to meet new demands for the purpose of national defence; and the worst of it is that I have not yet entirely met

the former demand before I am called upon to deal with the latter. A large slice of public revenue goes in further relief of local taxation this year; and while the cormorants of local taxation reform are still dipping their hands into one of my pockets, the organizers of national defence are now putting their hands into the other. Let me put before the Committee, in the roundest of figures, the effect of these combined attacks. There is nearly a million and a-half additional to be found for local taxation; there is nearly another million and a-half for Naval defence. There is, besides, an increase of about a million and a-quarter on the ordinary Estimates for the Army and Navy; making, roughly speaking, four millions and a-quarter of new demands as compared with last year.

Before I apply myself to the task of seeing how that large sum may be met, the Committee will wish, as usual, to be initiated into the history of the Expenditure and the revenue of the past year. I deal, in the first instance, with the expenditure, and I will read, according to custom, the Exchequer issues for the year 1888-9. The Consolidated Fund charges amounted to £27,854,580, which is £6,420 less than the anticipated expenditure. The issues on account of the Army were £15,920,000, or £780,000 less than the total estimated expenditure; and on account of the Ordnance Factories £38,000, or £8,000 more than the original estimate. The Navy total issues were £13,000,000, or less by £128,000 than the total estimated expenditure, including the Supplementary Estimate of £45,000. The Civil Service issues were £17,873,000, being £23,000 more than the original Estimate, but £333,000 less than the total estimated expenditure, including the Supplementary Estimates. The expenditure of the Customs was £927,000, or less than the Estimate by £11,000. The expenditure of the Inland Revenue was £1,791,000, or less by £16,000 than the estimate. The Post Office expenditure was £5,668,000, or £1,000 more than the estimate. The Telegraph Service was £1,965,000, or £72,000 less than the estimate. The Packet Service was £638,000, or £4,000 less than the estimate. The total expenditure was £85,674,000, which is £941,000 less

than the original Budget Estimate, and £1,350,000 less than the total estimated expenditure, including the Supplementary Estimates.

I am glad to be able to point out to the Committee how often in this list the words "less than the estimate" have occurred. I am grateful to my colleagues for the assistance which they have rendered me in arriving at this result. There is little to be said on the different items. The total for the Consolidated Fund Service is, as the Committee will see, hardly altered, but there are changes within that total which are of some importance. There was a saving on the interest of the Unfunded Debt. The rates of interest on the Unfunded Debt were lower than was anticipated. The average rate for Exchequer bills was £2 7s. 2d. For Treasury bills the average rates were:—For three months' bills, £2 5s. 7d.; for six months' bills, £2 11s. 11d.; and for 12 months' bills, £2 18s. 5d. Thus there was a saving on Exchequer bills of £33,000, and on Treasury bills of £25,000, making a total of £58,000. This saving, which is also affected by the fact that Treasury Bills were dropped when balances were high during a portion of the year, goes to augment the new Sinking Fund.

I shall now say a word or two with regard to the savings on the Supply Services. In speaking of the Supply Services, it is always necessary, unfortunately, to distinguish between the Exchequer issues and the amounts actually spent. Nothing is more complicated and dull; but I must ask the Committee to give this subject their attention for a moment, as otherwise they will not be able to understand the apparent saving which was not a real saving on account of the Army. The amount issued to the War Office was less than the estimated expenditure by £780,000. Now, the greater portion of that sum, was due to the fact that in the year 1887-88 there was issued to the War Office £680,000 more than it actually spent during that year. When the expenditure of any Department in a particular year falls short of the sum granted to it, two things are possible. Either the Department has foreseen that it will not be able to spend the whole of its grants, in which case the Treasury issues so much less, and the

Exchequer issues of the year in question falls short of the Estimate by the amount thus unissued. Or the Department has not foreseen that it will not be able to spend its grants, in which case the Treasury issues the full amount, but that full amount not being spent, the balance is carried over to meet, as far as it will meet, the grants of the following year, and the Exchequer issues of that year are correspondingly reduced. Now in the present case both these things have happened; £100,000 was not issued to the Army. The Committee will naturally ask, if the contractors do not present their bills for payment within a given year, and the money issued to pay those bills is appropriated to meeting the grants of the following year, how are these bills ultimately paid? In reply, I have to inform the Committee that on this occasion the liability was mainly in respect of ordnance and ordnance stores for the Navy. Under the new system adopted last year the Navy now pays for its own ordnance and ordnance stores, and the liability in question has, therefore, been transferred from the Army to the Navy and goes to swell the general mass of naval liabilities for which we are making provision. If I have said so much on this point it is because it has a bearing on the financial arrangements of the Naval Defence Bill, and we trust that, under those arrangements the risk of a disturbance in our finances owing to contractors being behindhand may be reduced. The Committee will, therefore, understand that there is no saving on the Army for which we can take credit, but that the saving is due to the postponement of liabilities, for which, of course, the War Department is not in any way responsible, but which is owing to the bills of the contractors not having been presented in time.

With regard to the Navy, the difference between grants and issues is explained much in the same way. It is due to an over-issue in 1887-8. The Civil Services show a reduction of £333,000 in issues as compared with the Estimates, and of this £200,000 is an actual saving on the year, for which we are entitled to take credit, while the balance is the result of an over-issue in the preceding year. I wish to call attention to several items of this saving of £200,000, which I hope

the Committee will regard as not unsatisfactory. We have spent £5,000 less than the estimate on the Supreme Court of Judicature, owing to a reduction of the staff; we have spent £12,500 less on the special police; and £33,500 less on prisons. There is a steady decrease of the expenditure on Prisons, which is due, firstly, to a reduced number of prisoners, and, secondly, to a consolidation of the prisons. The Committee and the public will, I trust, regard these as very gratifying facts. There is another reduction of which the Committee will be glad to learn—the decrease of £6,000 in the cost of examinations held by the Civil Service Commissioners, due to the policy which the Government are pursuing to the best of their ability—the policy of making as few entries as possible into the already overcrowded Civil Service. We have embarked with energy upon that policy, which we know to be approved not only by this side of the House but by the other and by the country generally.

I have spoken of the over-issues of one year as reducing the issues of the next, and the right hon. Gentleman opposite knows that such over-issues occur to some extent every year; but that frequently their effect is obscured by Supplementary Estimates. In that case the saving does not appear, and it is unnecessary to call so much attention to it. But I must now call the notice of the Committee—and I do so with great satisfaction—to the fact that in the past year, as in that which preceded it, we have been spared to a very great extent, almost to an unprecedented extent, the presentation of Supplementary Estimates. For the Army there were none; for the Revenue Departments, none; and for the Navy only £45,000. That one item was due to an extraordinary incident—to the compensation which had to be paid to the owners of the *Ville de Victoria*, which was run down by the *Sultan*. For Civil Services we had some Supplementary Estimates; but the number and the total amount were again below the average. Taking all the Services together, the Supplementary Estimates were the smallest in amount for any year since 1868-69. Last year we had the smallest in amount up to that date since 1868-9. But the amount this year

is yet smaller, and I hope, at a period when so much is said with regard to mismanagement in the Departments, that the public will learn with satisfaction that, so far from exceeding the limits of the liberal grants made by Parliament, those who administer the Departments have kept well within those limits.

I turn now to the Revenue of the past year, and first I will state the Exchequer receipts. Customs realized £20,067,000, or £142,000 more than the Estimate; Excise brought in £25,600,000, or £95,000 more than the Estimate; Stamps realized £12,270,000, or £490,000 more than the Estimate; the Land Tax realized £1,020,000, or £26,000 less than the Estimate; the House Duty produced £1,940,000, or £50,000 more than the Estimate. The Property and Income Tax brought in £12,700,000, or £450,000 more than the Estimate; the total produce of taxes was £73,597,000, or £1,201,000 more than the Estimate. The Post Office gave £9,100,000, or £300,000 more than the Estimate; the Telegraph Services gave £2,080,000, or £80,000 more than the Estimate; Crown Lands gave £430,000, or £40,000 more than the Estimate; interest on advances gave £241,000, which is what it was expected to give; miscellaneous receipts came to £3,025,000, or £25,000 more than the estimate. The total produce of non-tax Revenue was £14,876,000, or £445,000 more than the estimate. The total Revenue was £88,473,000, or £1,646,000 above the Estimate. While, therefore, I was able to congratulate the Committee in the former list I read that I constantly used the expression "less than the Estimate," I am glad that now, when I am dealing with Revenue, I have in all but one case been able to say "more than the estimate."

But the Committee will wish to know some few details about the various items of Revenue. In giving these, I must refer to the figures of the actual net receipts so far as they are yet known. They differ slightly from the Exchequer receipts, but they supply a truer index to the real value of the taxes and a sounder foundation on which to build expectations for the future. My catalogue of the different heads of Revenue begins with the un-exciting but satisfactory item of

dried fruits. Raisins, figs, plums &c. are up to the Estimate, while currants have exceeded it by £34,000, or more than 10 per cent. This is a case in which the saying is very true that "It is an ill wind that blows no one any good." France, the experts tell me, has been excluding Greek currants, and the consequence is that they come in increasing quantities to the English market. By that they increase the consumption and add greatly to the Revenue. Also there has been a large crop, which of course, has helped in the same direction. Tobacco shows an increase over the receipts of 1887-88 of £145,000, but it falls short of the Estimate by £41,000. The increase is $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent, but we anticipated 2 per cent. This is an item which illustrates the unreliable character of some of these taxes. We thought that with an increase in trade, we might safely estimate for an increasing Revenue. But we have not obtained it, and that chiefly because one particular kind of tobacco is being increasingly used which smokes more slowly than others. Therefore, with the same amount of tobacco, the smoker is able to enjoy himself for a longer time, and to derive a greater amount of satisfaction. Thus the Revenue suffers, although there is no diminution in the enjoyment which is afforded to the consumer.

I now come to an interesting head—the great item of drinks, and I will give the place of honour to the sober beverages. The coffee group maintains its character of dull uniformity. Cocoa has yielded £6,000 more, but coffee £2,000 less than in 1887-88. Coffee will not move. Some of the experts here, again, give an extraordinary and not uninteresting explanation. They say that cocoa has actually been puffed into its more satisfactory position by the energy of ambitious advertisers. The "grateful and comforting" beverage has not been eulogized for nothing. The praises of cocoa are everywhere. Tea, too, has its place, but coffee has not been stimulated by the ambitious system of ubiquitous advertisement. Yet, despite the comparatively flourishing condition of cocoa, the coffee group as a whole is insignificant, when compared with tea. Its total yield is only £328,000, which is as nothing compared with the

£4,628,000 which we get from tea. But large as is this Revenue from tea, it has been very disappointing in the present year. There is an increase of only £15,000 over the year before. This is only one-third per cent, while the population increases about 1 per cent per annum. Consequently there has actually been a decrease per head in the consumption of tea, while we had expected an increase of £80,000. The experts account for this by two circumstances. They suggest, though they do not rest strongly on the point, that a certain amount of tea has been kept back owing to the expectation that the duty might possibly be reduced; there is also a consideration connected with tea analogous to that which I have quoted as regards tobacco. I explained last year that Indian tea is to a great extent superseding China tea, at all events, it is competing with it to a constantly greater extent, and Indian tea is so much stronger than China tea that one pound of it goes further, and a larger number of cups of tea may be drunk, notwithstanding a falling off in the consumption per head. This is the explanation on which those who advise me insist as absolutely correct; and while great benefit has been derived by India from the export of tea, there is little doubt that it has injuriously affected our Revenue.

I have done now with the sober beverages. Although these yield £5,000,000 they fall short, as contributors to Revenue, of spirituous drinks, which yield £27,000,000. But this year again I have good news for the friends of the temperance cause, though it is news of no favourable augury to the Exchequer. This great Revenue does not grow in proportion to the growth of the population. I propose to place some very interesting diagrams before the House which will show how during the last 25 years the consumption of alcoholic drink has varied as compared with the population and as compared with all the other great articles of consumption. While some of the latter keep pace with the growth of population and some of them gain upon it, there is a great, a material, and a striking fall, as has often been pointed out to the Committee before, in the consumption of alcoholic liquors. It might be thought that the revival of trade would again lead to an increase

in the Revenue from drink. But it has not done so. There are other interesting facts which hon. Members will perceive from the diagrams to which I refer. For example, there seems to be a curious relation between the consumption of wine and the consumption of other spirituous beverages. The years which showed the high-water mark of the consumption of spirits were 1875 and 1876; and, curiously enough, that was the time when the wine Revenue reached its highest point. It has continually fallen since. A rush to the spirit bottle on the part of the mass of the population seems always to be accompanied by a keener application to the wine decanter on the part of the more prosperous classes and *vice versa*. Since 1875-6 the decrease in the consumption of wine has been followed by a decrease, though not a proportionate decrease in that of spirits.

Wine yielded last year £1,210,000, as against £1,085,000 in the preceding year. The increase is entirely due to the extra tax on sparkling wine, which produced £163,000. But for this there would have been a decrease on wine of £38,000. Since 1876 the total consumption of wine has sunk from 17,000,000 gallons to 13,000,000 gallons; while the total consumption of the lighter kind of wines has risen from 6,000,000 gallons to 8,000,000 gallons. The whole decrease, it will be seen, has been in the heavier wines. There is some slight confusion in the statistics relating to the lighter kinds of wines, owing to the change of limit of their admission at the lower duty from 26° to 30°, but even making ample allowance for this, more than half the wine now consumed belongs to the lighter kinds, while formerly the lighter kinds were only one-third of the whole. Whether this is due to temperance or to the use of the cigarette immediately after dinner, which arrests the circulation of the bottle, the fact remains that there is an enormous decline in the heavier kinds of wine. The Committee will, however, wish to know how the tax on sparkling wine has answered. I have already stated that it has yielded £163,000, or £38,000 more than the estimate. But then we collected it for three months at 5s. per dozen on all bottled wines. We have had only nine months' experience of the present rate of duty. In several respects this

sparkling wine duty has falsified the predictions of its opponents. When we estimated that two-thirds of the sparkling wine imported would be of the dearer and one-third of the cheaper kind, we were met by the assertion that though these might be the true amounts, the importers would so falsify values that in the collection of the duty the proportions would be exactly reversed. As a matter of fact, the dearer kind of wine has greatly predominated. In the nine months since the differential tax was imposed there have been imported at 2s. 6d. per gallon, 680,000 gallons; at 1s. per gallon, 375,000 gallons. It was said that the traders would be extremely tricky. I am glad to say that the traders have not been so tricky as our critics anticipated, and besides the Customs have been fully up to their work. Owing to these two causes, therefore, we find that the statistics come out remarkably near our expectations. I cannot for a moment admit that this tax has encouraged immorality on the part of the traders. On the contrary, it has had in some ways a beneficial effect. I think it might be argued that it has led to a diminution of the distance which separates the invoice price of the cheaper sorts of sparkling wine from the prices quoted in the circulars of merchants. Again, it was said that the tax would check consumption. Sparkling wine has not been checked in its consumption; it has held its own thoroughly well, and it has held its own while its less exhilarating rivals have been declining. I desire to state distinctly that nothing has occurred to lead me to modify the system which, with the assent of the Committee, I proposed last year; and I hope that nothing will occur to make a modification necessary. The trade has accepted it now, though with some protests; and I trust the Government will not be forced to withdraw that favour which has been extended to the cheaper kind of wines, and which would have to be withdrawn if the present system were rendered unworkable.

And now as to spirits. Foreign spirits have somewhat increased, though the increase is entirely upon "Geneva and other sorts"—that is, principally on German plain spirit. Both rum and brandy have fallen off. Rum is £60,000 below last year's receipt, and £25,000 below the estimate; brandy is £51,000

below the receipt of the previous year, and £43,000 below the estimate. "Geneva and other sorts," on the other hand, are £178,000 above receipt and above estimate, so that taking the three together we are £67,000 above last year's receipt, and £111,000 above our estimate. But this is a little more than balanced by the decline on British spirits. They have yielded £12,877,000, being £151,000 less than the receipts of the previous year, and £113,000 less than the estimate. The last great item of the drink Revenue is beer, which has yielded £8,771,000, being £60,000 more than last year, and £61,000 more than the estimate. The total spirituous drink Revenue, excluding the duty on sparkling wine, has been £26,985,000. In the preceding year it was £27,048,000. There has therefore been a decline of £63,000. Now, let me sum up the Revenue from all articles of general consumption, again excluding the new duty on sparkling wine. It has been £41,455,000; while in the preceding year it was £41,314,000. The whole increase is only £141,000 on a total of £41,000,000, or 0·3 per cent. I would call the attention of the Committee to this fact, to this remarkable elasticity, in a year of improving trade, of much more general and regular employment and, I am happy to think, in many cases also of rising wages.

MR. H. H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton): Does that include beer?

*MR. GOSCHEN: Yes.

MR. H. H. FOWLER: You did not say so.

*MR. GOSCHEN: I hope I am not giving too many details to the Committee. They seem to me to have so important a bearing upon what I may call the general principles of finance upon which we go that I trust the Committee will excuse me for having dwelt upon them. I now turn from indirect to direct taxation; and here we shall soon find a brighter picture. Under direct taxation I include not only taxes on property and income, but also general stamps, which I may call duties on transactions. These are certainly more akin to direct taxes, and they fall not upon the great body of consumers but, almost entirely, on the wealthier and the business classes. One item under this head I pass over with a very few words—I will not linger on it

for a moment. It is the item of licences. They are now passing almost entirely from the grasp of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. There are only some few licences, and those of the least profitable sort, which remain to him. The rest have been entirely swept away, and have gone to my right hon. Friend the President of the Local Government Board and his clients, the County Councils. The House duty and Land tax show little or no variation, though there is an increase of £30,000 over estimate in the house duty. This is due to the quinquennial valuation. I now come to the gloomy but fiscally attractive subject of the Death duties. They show no very striking feature this year, except that they arouse my astonishment, as they must arouse the astonishment of everybody else by the extraordinary evenness of their yield from year to year. Notwithstanding the precariousness of life and the different way in which men leave their fortunes, the Death duties remain at an extraordinarily equal level. Under the head of Probate duties I estimated that I should obtain in the past year £4,260,000. The receipts were £4,225,000, or less than the estimate by £35,000. The amount is £372,000 less than we received in the year before, but in that year some abnormally large estates fell in and I discounted these in making my estimate. In this sum of £4,225,000 a desperate gap has been made by my having to part with one-third of the probate duty to local authorities. This gap will be made half as wide again this year, when I have to part with one-half instead of one-third. The actual receipt into the Exchequer for these duties has been £2,816,000. I cannot help saying that I sincerely trust the ratepayers will benefit by these large grants to the fullest extent. When I consider what remissions of taxation might have been proposed if these grants had remained in the Imperial Exchequer, I confess I can only hope that in their capacity of ratepayers the taxpayers will have occasion to realize that they have had this great relief, and that the new authorities will so administer local affairs that it may not be lost in increased extravagance. The legacy and succession duties yielded the year before last £3,645,000. For last year they were

estimated to yield £3,590,000, or less by £55,000. They have actually yielded £3,737,000, or £92,000 more than in the previous year, and £147,000 more than the estimate. So far I have gone over item after item of Revenue without finding any very encouraging results. But now I come to a point where the first foundation of the large surplus of the past year begins to be seen. I mean the item of general stamps. The Committee may remember that last year I proposed certain clauses in the Budget Bill, by which greater stringency was to be applied to the collection of some of these stamps. My hopes have been entirely realized, and these clauses have helped to swell the Revenue to an appreciable extent. The Committee will wish to know the result of the several duties on transactions which we imposed last year. I put the effect of the stringency clauses, to which I have just referred, though it is very hard to make anything like an estimate, at £50,000. The 6d. stamp on brokers' contracts has realized within £1,000 the exact amount which it was estimated to produce—viz., £50,000. It was thought by the Stock Exchange that it would yield a very much larger sum; but we put it at the sum which it has actually produced. The tax on joint stock companies' capital was expected to bring in £110,000; but I am happy to say, happy, that is, from a fiscal point of view, that the rush for these new companies has been so great that my estimate has been largely exceeded and the proceeds have been £160,000, although the tax only came into force on the 17th of May. The Committee will learn with interest that since that date to the end of the financial year no fewer than 1,743 companies were registered in London alone with a nominal capital of £132,000,000. I confess that I have experienced a momentary feeling of regret that I did not impose a somewhat larger tax. But let me here anticipate a small matter as to which a Resolution will be laid on the Table. There are some joint stock companies which escape this duty, or it is feared will do so, because they obtain limited liability through letters patent or through a special Act of Parliament. It is, therefore, necessary to insert clauses in the Budget Bill to meet the case of these companies and to put them in the same position as those

which come into existence in the ordinary way. This is a small matter, but I call attention to it now so that the Committee may understand the Resolution which will be moved. To pass to another point, the taxation on foreign and colonial share certificates has not realized the amount it was expected to yield. The estimate was £200,000. It has only produced £84,000. It was extremely difficult to estimate the volume of these transactions. There were no *data* for doing so. I do not think there have been any evasions; but the operations have not been so large as was expected. If hon. Members think that this is but a small result to obtain from the new duty, I must remind them that it was not imposed merely for fiscal reasons, but for reasons of equity. I argued last year, with the assent of the public at large, that it was only fair, as there was a heavy transfer duty placed upon British securities of every kind, that these foreign share certificates should be similarly taxed where it was possible to reach them in any form.

But the Committee will consider it satisfactory that the Stamp revenue has been swollen, not only by new taxes. The total receipt from general stamps is £888,000 above that of the previous year, and £350,000 above estimate. If we deduct £344,000 as the product of the new stamp duties from the £888,000 total increase, there remain £544,000 as the increase of the revenue from the duties on transactions, due to the extending business of the country. Here, at last, we reach real and satisfactory proof of growing business and improving prosperity. Trade is on the increase, and I trust I shall be able to show when I come to the Income tax that extending business has not been without leaving some enhanced profits to those who have been engaged in it. This is the most satisfactory feature in the receipts of the year. We have an increase of 12 per cent over the receipts of the previous year, 1887-8, excluding the new duties.

I now approach another satisfactory item of Revenue—namely, the Income tax. It produced £12,450,000, exceeding the Estimate of £12,250,000 by £200,000. In this case it is fallacious to compare the receipts of the late with the receipts of the previous year, because in the former year they were upon the 7d. instead of the 6d. basis. It has

been asserted that efforts were being made and instructions given that by putting on a stronger screw the Inland Revenue Authorities should make up for the loss of the penny. Well, the loss of a penny means about £2,000,000 per annum, and I leave the Committee to judge whether any increased stringency could make up that sum. No such instructions have emanated from the Treasury, and, as right hon. Gentlemen opposite know, no such instructions are ever given by the Treasury. Great latitude is allowed to the Inland Revenue. They improve their collection, I admit, every year. Efforts are made to evade payment of duties, and the Inland Revenue discovers new methods of resisting those efforts. But, apart from this normal improvement in the method of collection no effort has been made to apply greater stringency. The Committee will be glad to learn that each penny of income tax in the year 1888-89, after making all the necessary allowances, yielded £2,020,000, the largest amount ever yet realized per penny. The actual payments into the Exchequer on account of the tax were £12,700,000, or £450,000 over the estimate. I have now gone over all the great items of Revenue.

But before I pass to the question of the general balance, I should wish to be allowed to call the attention of the Committee to what I may call the moral of the figures I have just given. Let me illustrate the contrast between the results of direct and indirect taxation in the past year by comparing these two great sources of Revenue for some little time back. For five years the productiveness of indirect taxation has not increased at all. It is extremely important that this fact should be grasped. Indeed, the proceeds of indirect taxes have actually fallen off during the course of this period of five years by about 1 per cent. During the same period of five years the yield of direct taxation—that is to say, Income tax, Death Duties, and general Stamps—has increased by a little over 5 per cent. But Stamps and Death Duties, irrespective of Income tax, have increased 10 per cent. Of course in these calculations all the necessary adjustments have been made, and the produce of new taxes has been omitted, as it would vitiate the comparison. Well, then,

how remarkable is the contrast between these different sources of Revenue. It seems to me to show that the old policy of relying upon a very small number of articles of general consumption is one which it is questionable whether we can trust to in the present state of things. It was all very well when those taxes on articles of consumption were increasing in productiveness year by year, by leaps and bounds. Those were the times when, to use a phrase that has often been used before, the country drank itself out of the Alabama Indemnity in one year. We have now learnt that there is more precariousness in those sources of revenue than we once believed. They are affected, not only by changes of fashion and of morals, but by physical accidents, such as those to which I alluded in speaking of tea and tobacco, and so, from a variety of causes, we find they are not the same all-sufficient stand-by which we used to consider them in times past. Those were the days of great simplicity of taxation. To trust to a few great articles of consumption was our fiscal ideal. Yet even in these days of expanding consumption and of simplicity of taxation, I do not criticize the policy; it may have been wise in its day. There was something more that was necessary to make both ends meet. At that time, whenever there came an emergency, recourse was had to the income tax. This was the general policy that was followed. But I think I have explained in the last two years that I firmly believe that we are not justified in making such a constant reckless use of the income tax. I think we ought to keep it as a great reserve. Besides, I do not think it just to persons in the position of small and struggling tradesmen and clerks who feel the income tax with such peculiar weight, as compared with the sacrifices calling on others, to continue the system of regarding the income tax as a ready engine for getting the Chancellor of the Exchequer easily out of any and every difficulty in which he may find himself. I admit that the income taxpayers are a quiet people. They do not agitate or demonstrate, they do not parade the streets, they do not choose the hero of the anti-wheel tax agitation to stir the House of Commons. There may be perhaps a few imprecations at the breakfast table

when the income tax payer learns that his burden has been increased, and a few more imprecations when the bill has to be paid, but that is all. No cries arise from him to attempt to move the bowels of compassion of this House. He has few champions, and thus it has happened that on every occasion it is the income tax payer who has had to meet whatever exceptional demands may have arisen. Well, I confess that I differ from that policy. I do not think that it is safe, I do not think that it is just. I do not think that it is expedient in the great interests of the State. I say I do not criticize the past, because the financial situation was different. But under present circumstances, I say, and I say it with some trepidation and knowing the enormous difficulty which the discovery of new taxation involves, that it is better service to the State to increase the number of sources of Revenue than to attempt to find simplicity. ["Oh, oh!"] I hear an expression of dissent, but I say that if some of your great sources of Revenue are breaking down under you, if you see a decline in them, and if on the other hand it is true that the income tax ought not to be used for every emergency, then you must be looking about you for new means of meeting the new demands that are constantly being made. Perhaps hon. Gentlemen opposite will look one way for such means and hon. Members on this side will look another. I will not now lay down any doctrine as to where taxation ought to be imposed, but I say you have pushed simplicity of taxation up to a point beyond which you cannot carry it without danger. I trust the Committee will excuse the general digression which I have made. I feel so strongly on this point as a question of general policy, that I have ventured, I hope with all respect to the Committee and in all humility, to place my view before them with all the emphasis I could command.

Now, let us sum up the Account of last year. The Revenue was in excess of the Estimate by £1,645,000; the Expenditure fell below the Estimate by £941,000. I allowed for a margin of Revenue over Expenditure of £212,000. Thus we get a surplus of £2,798,000, the largest realized surplus since 1873-74. In 1887-8 we had a surplus of

£2,378,000, which was then the largest since 1873-74. In the past year we have attained the yet larger figure I have stated. I have been much found fault with for reducing two years ago the amount regularly set apart for the payment of debt. At that time, it will be remembered, I diminished the Sinking Fund by the sum of £2,000,000. I considered, and I still consider, that course to have been perfectly legitimate. But it will be seen that if I have diminished what may be called the normal payment of debt, I have been enabled by the good administration of my colleagues, who have evaded Supplementary Estimates, as well as by prudence in forecasting Revenue, to obtain surpluses available for the reduction of debt which exceed the £2,000,000 a year that was taken off the fixed charge. The amount available out of surpluses for the reduction of debt has been £2,500,000 a year on the average of two years. The total sum provided out of taxation for the reduction of debt in the last two years has been, in round numbers: £5,000,000 a year within the fixed charge, making £10,000,000, and an average of £2,500,000 a year, out of surplus making £5,000,000—total, £15,000,000, or an average of £7,500,000 a year. Whatever crime I have committed in reducing the Fixed Charge, it will thus be seen that the taxpayer has contributed £15,000,000 in two years to the reduction of National burdens, a larger sum than has ever before, except on two occasions, been devoted to this object in an equal period of time. Of the £15,000,000 which represents the sacrifices of the taxpayer during the last two years, the exact amount which falls to the share of the year just concluded is as follows:—Debt paid off within the fixed charge, £4,993,000; Russo-Dutch loan, £21,000; surplus of the year forming the old sinking fund, £2,798,000—total, £7,812,000. So far I have been looking to the amount provided out of the taxation of the year for reducing debt. Now, I come to the amount of debt actually paid off. The amount paid off within the year is as follows:—The funded debt has been reduced by £2,762,000; the capital value of terminable annuities has been reduced by £3,096,000; the unfunded debt has been

reduced by £1,292,000—total £7,150,000. The capital amount of debt of all kinds stood on the 31st of March, 1888, at £705,575,000, and on the 31st of March last at £698,425,000. We have thus turned the corner of another £100,000,000. It is now 80 years since the debt stood below £700,000,000. To the reduction of debt of £7,150,000 which I have mentioned must be added the diminution of the Russo-Dutch loan by £21,000, and the wiping out of the friendly societies deficiency of £464,000, making a total sum of £7,635,000.

I have submitted the figures to the Committee in two ways. First, I have given the sums applicable to the discharge of debt out of the Revenue of the year, and then the amount actually paid off within the year. But hon. Members will ask, "How about your balances?" They have declined from £7,647,000 to £5,592,000, or by the sum of £2,055,000. But the explanation is simple. On the 31st of March, 1888, the balances included the whole of my surplus of the preceding year. But in the past year £2,000,000 of the surplus has been expended before the close of the financial year. It has been expended on payments connected with the conversion of the debt. Technically, no doubt, it might be said that this is not a diminution of debt; but they are payments made in the reduction of our liabilities and our burdens, and which, considering their object, are far more effective in diminishing those burdens than would have been an ordinary cancellation of two millions of debt. It must be remembered that the conversion involved extra payments of a three-fold character. Speaking in round figures, we had to pay on account of the bonus of 5s. on old Consols and Reduced, £1,000,000; for the commission of 1s. 6d. and remuneration to the Banks of England and Ireland, £300,000; for extra quarter's dividend on so much of New Consols as represented New Three Per Cents and Reduced, £1,700,000; making a total of £3,000,000. The extra quarter's dividend arises in this way. Formerly the dividends were paid half-yearly on the Reduced and Old Consols. Consequently, on the 1st of April, 1888, there was a half-year's dividend, or two quarters, due. Then the dividends were turned into quarterly payments, and a quarter became due in July, another in

October, and another in January, so that we had to pay five quarters instead of four in the year 1888-9. Of course, that was anticipating payments which would otherwise have had to be made on the 5th of April this year, and was not a new expense. It was rather a diminution of our liabilities, though it involved an extra charge on the particular year. The Committee will remember that last year I took power to borrow for the payments connected with the conversion. But when I saw that there was likely to be a large surplus, I thought it better to borrow only £1,000,000, and to take the rest out of the surplus. Had the full extent of the surplus been foreseen, we might have paid up nearly the whole £3,000,000 within the year. As it is, what remains of the surplus will be sufficient to pay off all but £200,000. I think the Committee will be content with the result—namely, that one year gives us a surplus sufficient to discharge the whole payments of a gigantic operation, such as the conversion of some £500,000,000 of debt, which has saved the country £1,450,000 a year at once, and will, in 14 years, save it £2,800,000 a year.

I have explained the reduction of £2,000,000 in balances. There are other small items which swell or reduce the balances, but which, in their joint effect, merely counteract one another. My surplus last year was greater than in 1887-8 by £420,000. There should, therefore, be a corresponding increase of balances. Besides this, we have received £150,000 from the Mint in respect of advances for bullion, and £51,000 in respect of the Sardinian Loan. These items taken together swell the balance by £620,000. On the other hand, it is reduced by £660,000 for advances to the Army and Navy for carrying out the Imperial Defence Act. This sum might have been borrowed. But for the time being it seemed more convenient to take the money out of balances. The net reduction of the balances is thus £2,055,000.

I have now finished with the past year, and shown the results as compared with our Estimates both as regards Expenditure and Revenue, as well as the surplus we have secured, and the manner in which we have applied it. It remains for me to deal

with what must be the most interesting topic to the Committee—namely, prospective finance, and first I will take the estimated Expenditure for 1889-90, as compared with the estimates of 1888-9. The Committee are familiar with the items. We take the charge for Consolidated Fund Services at £29,274,000, an increase of £1,413,000 over last year. The Committee will at once recognize that this is due to the extra provision for Naval defence. Otherwise the Consolidated Fund charges would remain almost precisely as they were. The Army stands at £17,336,000, an increase of £606,000 over the last year. The Navy will cost £13,685,000, or an increase of £602,000, and the Civil Services £15,739,000, a nominal decrease of £2,111,000, which is due, of course, to the cessation of grants to local authorities, and is an apparent gain only as it will be more than balanced by a loss on the other side of the account in respect of licences surrendered to those authorities in order to pay for these grants. The Customs Expenditure will be £923,000, a decrease of £15,000; the Inland Revenue, £1,757,000, or a diminution of £51,000. The Post Office will require £5,453,000, a decrease of £214,000; the Telegraph Service, £2,136,000, or an increase of £98,000; the Packet Service, £664,000, or an increase of £23,000. These sums make a total of £57,692,000 for the supply services, or an apparent diminution of £1,062,000. Taking the Supply services and the Consolidated Fund services together, the total is £86,967,000, an increase of £352,000.

The Committee is familiar with most of these items of expenditure, and it is not necessary that I should say much about them. The total Consolidated Fund services are increased by £1,413,000. This is more than accounted for by the Navy annuity of £1,430,000. The increase on the Army and Navy (ordinary Estimates) has also already been discussed, and requires no comment from me. Then the reduction in Post Office expenditure is apparent and not real. It is due to a change in an item, which before appeared in the miscellaneous receipts, and which is now to be appropriated in aid of the Vote for the Post Office. It is somewhat unfortunate for purposes of comparison that this change

has been made; but it was a change recommended by the Public Accounts Committee. Now, I wish the Committee to look at all these figures for a moment, not in detail, but upon broad lines. They are acquainted with the reasons for the increase on the Army and Navy Votes, but I hope they will observe how, in other branches of the public service where no exceptional effort was demanded of us, economy has been most successfully observed. And here I must pay a well-merited tribute to my hon. Friend the Financial Secretary to the Treasury for the manner in which he has been able to keep down the Civil Service estimates. Hon. Members frequently speak of the extraordinary growth of estimates. But as regards the Civil Service this is an entire mistake. What are the facts in connection with the Civil Service estimates? I beg the attention of the Committee to this matter, and I should be glad if what I am about to say should also be thoroughly understood by the public, as I think it is calculated, to remove a good deal of misconception. In 1886-7 the estimate for the Civil Services was £18,008,000. If we deduct one item—the growth of which is automatic, and an increase of which is always welcomed by the Committee—I refer to the Education charges—and if we deduct further local grants and receipts taken in aid of civil expenditure—the net cost of civil administration in 1886-7 was £8,449,000. Making the same deductions from the Civil Service estimates of 1889-90, which are £15,739,000, we find the net cost to be £8,131,000, or a reduction in three years of £318,000. The totals for the two years compared are—£18,008,000 in 1886-7; £15,739,000 in 1889-90; and the net is £8,449,000 in 1886-7 and £8,131,000 in 1889-90, making this reduction of £318,000. Let me add also that during the same period the cost of collecting Customs and Inland Revenue has declined by £72,000. I trust the Committee will see the full bearing of these figures. In these days when the Civil Service is constantly attacked by Gentlemen who dilate on the vast growth of expenditure, I think it is well to bring the mind of the Committee to bear upon the point and to see that, while much remains to be done and while we trust

that we shall have the assistance of those who desire to diminish the numbers of the Civil Service and to reduce the amounts payable in pensions and superannuations by every legitimate means, nevertheless we have made some progress, supported as we have been by the House and by the public, in reducing the cost of the civil administration of the country, although new and large duties are constantly being imposed upon it. The Committee will admit that if I am in the position of having to find additional expenditure, it is not due to any extravagance on the part of the Administrative Departments of the Civil Service.

Now, I would ask the Committee to put the figures together. The total estimated expenditure for 1889-90 is, as has been stated, £86,967,000, which is £352,000 more than the expenditure for the previous year. But if the comparison were made with the previous year, after deducting the local grants in 1888-9, as they are deducted this year, we should have an excess, speaking in round figures, not of £352,000, but of £2,650,000. And this is as nearly as possible the actual increase due to the Army and Navy. There is the Navy annuity of £1,430,000, and there is the increase on ordinary Army and Navy estimates of £1,210,000, making a total of £2,640,000, which is within a few thousands of the total increase of estimates compared with those of last year.

I now come to the Revenue for the coming year. What is the Revenue to meet this estimated Expenditure of £86,967,000? Customs I put at £20,050,000, being £17,000 less than the Exchequer Receipts of last year; Excise, £22,570,000, being £3,030,000 less, due to the loss of licences; Stamps, £11,780,000, being £490,000 less, due to the loss of another one-sixth of the Probate Duty; Land Tax, £1,035,000, being £15,000 less; House Duty, £1,925,000, being £15,000 less; Property and Income Tax, £12,550,000, being £150,000 less, with regard to which I will say a word presently; total produce of Taxes, £69,910,000, being £3,687,000 less than the Exchequer Receipts of last year. Post Office, £9,350,000, being £250,000 more; Telegraph service, £2,230,000, being £150,000 more; Crown Lands, £430,000,

being the same as last year's receipts; Interest on Advances, £280,000; Miscellaneous, £2,850,000; total of Non-Tax Revenue, £15,110,000, being £264,000 more than last year. Total Revenue of all sorts, £85,050,000, being £3,423,000 less than last year, again I say in consequence of the transfer of licences, and of a further share of Probate Duty. The sum of £2,950,000 in licences is surrendered to local authorities, and the sum of £730,000 additional of probate duty is also surrendered to them, making a total of £3,680,000. If these sums still came in to the Exchequer we should have not a diminution of Revenue of £3,420,000, but an increase of £260,000.

The Committee will, perhaps, be astonished, looking to the soundness of trade at present and to the increase of employment, which, I am glad to think, is becoming general, that I only estimate for a real increase of £260,000 in the Revenue. I hear from all sides that profits are increasing, that men are in more regular work, and that trade is reported better even to the Tax Collector. Still, notwithstanding all this, I should not be justified, in the face of what I have stated to the Committee about the inelasticity of those great items, the dutiable articles of consumption, which form almost half of the total revenue of the country in making a more sanguine estimate. It is just in a period when you are passing from a time of depression to a time of prosperity, or when you are passing from a time of prosperity into a time of depression, that the Chancellor of the Exchequer has the greatest difficulty in correctly forecasting the yield of taxes. I ask myself, how far am I justified in speculating on that increase of business and prosperity of which we see signs, but which, if there were a reaction or a cessation for only a few months, might disappoint my calculations? A prudent Chancellor of the Exchequer, in these circumstances, must frame his estimates with caution, hoping that they may be exceeded, but not speculating upon an increase of revenue which a little reaction or even a little repose from our present great activity might frustrate, and, by frustrating, lead to that which I trust I may never have to submit to the Committee—a deficit instead of a surplus. Therefore I hope

I may be excused from any reproach, and relieved from any pressure to take a more risky view, if I do not attempt to screw up the estimates to the very highest point of reasonable anticipation. The Committee will see that there is a wide gap between the close upon £87,000,000 of Expenditure and the £85,000,000 of Revenue; but that must be filled up by other means than by yielding to the temptation of impaling Estimates beyond what, on a fair consideration of all the contingencies affecting them, they will reasonably bear. I have a few words to say on the principal items. In Customs I anticipate an increase of £79,000 on the actual receipts of last year, there being an increase of £81,000 in tea, and of £51,000 in tobacco, but a decrease of £29,000 in wine, and a decrease of £33,000 in spirits. In Excise, excluding the loss of £2,950,000 by the surrender of licences to Local Authorities, I anticipate an increase of £35,000. The principal items are an increase of £69,000 in beer and a decrease of £27,000 in spirits. Probate duty I have taken at the same figure as it was estimated at last year, being £35,000 more than the actual receipts of that year. The figure is £4,260,000. The legacy duty is taken at £2,885,000, and the succession duty at £925,000, making a total of £3,810,000, as against £3,737,000, the total of the two duties last year. General stamps are taken at £5,800,000, or £140,000 more than the receipts of last year. This figure is £1,000,000 above the receipts of the year before last, and is the most hopeful item in the whole list. The only other point upon which I need touch, but it is a very important point, is the income tax. I have put it at £12,550,000, or £100,000 more than the net receipts of 1888-9. But these receipts included arrears at 7d., and the difference between the average amount of arrears at 7d. and at 6d. is at least £300,000. Therefore I really estimate for an increase of £450,000 on the 6d. of this year as compared with the 6d. of last year. Practically, I put up the yield of a penny from £2,020,000 to very nearly £2,100,000, which is a very considerable increase—an increase which I hope will be realized, but which I do not think I should be entitled to augment. With regard to non-tax Revenue,

I take the receipts of the Post-Office at £250,000 more than last year, and those of the Telegraph Service at £150,000 more. So much for the several items. To return to the general result, my total Estimate, after all deductions are made—is, as I have said, £85,050,000, which, if the loss of Excise Licences and Probate duty be allowed for, is a real increase of £260,000, though it is an apparent decrease of £3,420,000, upon the receipts of last year. My total expenditure I have stated at £86,967,000, leaving a deficiency which I have to meet of £1,917,000, besides the margin which, of course, it is my duty to provide. But before I turn to consider what course we are to take to obtain this sum of £1,917,000, or practically £2,000,000. I am anxious to recall to the mind of the Committee exactly how the deficit has arisen. It arises entirely from the Navy annuity, and from the increases in the Army and Navy Estimates. This is how the account really stands, as compared with last year's Budget. I have more to pay for the Army by £606,000; I have more to pay for the Navy by £602,000; I have to meet increased charges on other Services amounting to £342,000; and there is the naval annuity to provide for of £1,430,000, making a total of £2,980,000. Besides this I have to hand over to the local authorities extra Probate duty to the amount of £730,000, and I lose by the surrender to the local authorities of the excise licences in exchange for the grants in aid which I take back—£645,000. Therefore I am in a worse position by £4,355,000. And after taking credit for the margin of revenue over expenditure which I left last year—£212,000—I am still apparently worse off by £4,143,000. On the other hand, the revenue last year came in better than I expected by £1,646,000, and over and above that I hope this year to get a further sum of £580,000, making in all £2,226,000. Deducting this total, by which I am better off, from the total I have just stated, by which I am worse off, I get the deficit already stated of £1,917,000.

It will thus be seen that I have to find resources to meet the sum of £1,917,000 besides the necessary margin. Under these circumstances, one thing is apparent, and that is that no interest can fairly look for any remission of taxation.

I will frankly admit that there are several directions in which I should have liked to give relief, and some quarters where, for other reasons than relieving the taxpayer, an abolition of duty might have been desirable. I should have wished to adopt a recommendation of the Royal Commission, and to abolish the silver plate duties; but the Committee will remember that this not only involves the loss of the tax, but possibly the payment of a heavy drawback. I have not the means at my command for such an operation, and I am not prepared to impose fresh taxation to carry out the abolition of this tax. I must not indicate the relief I should like to give in some other quarters lest I should excite hopes which I may not be able to fulfil. But I sincerely trust that, having had two years' running to deal with abnormal expenditure—in one year my surplus was destroyed by the proposals of my right hon. Friend the President of the Local Government Board, and this year by the proposals for national defence—I may, in the coming financial year, have the gratification of proceeding to some readjustment of taxation which will give relief where it is due. At present I cannot aggravate my difficulties by increasing the sum which I have to find to make both ends meet.

It will be observed that the sum which I have to meet is in round figures £2,000,000, and by a remarkable coincidence it precisely corresponds to the additional burden imposed upon us by the Naval Defence Bill. The increase in the Revenue would have been sufficient to meet the loss from the relief of local taxation of about £1,400,000, which was carried over to this year, as well as the increase in the Army and other Services, exclusive of the Navy. Now when I spoke last year I stated that I did not consider myself entitled to take into account the probable increase of the revenue, nor the revival of trade which I hoped to see established. I had to contemplate the possibility that the additional sum to be surrendered to local authorities would have to be raised by extra taxation; but the revival in trade and the increased revenue have enabled me to discharge these liabilities without any additional taxation whatever. It is the Naval Defence Bill which has put me in the position of having to arrange to meet a deficit of £2,000,000.

At this point I would remind the Committee that last year I expressly reserved the application of the £1,000,000 to be saved in the present year—viz., the Conversion Scheme, and said that I did not wish to pledge myself or the Government as to whether the whole, or a portion, or none of it should be employed in the remission of taxation, or, on the other hand, in the diminution of public debt. "But there," I said, "it stands—a sum of £1,000,000, which will be added to the National resources in the year 1889-90, and it will be followed by a yet larger sum in the following year." As it has turned out, while the saving in the first year is £1,000,000, it will in subsequent years be £1,500,000. What I propose, therefore, is this. I propose that £1,000,000 of that saving should be annually applied to meet a portion of the deficit due to the Naval Defence Bill, while the £500,000 should be allowed to go to increase the fund available for the diminution of the Debt. If I were to act according to precedent, I should be entitled to take the whole of the saving for the benefit of the taxpayers. In no Conversion Scheme has the saving effected on the interest been applied to increase the sinking fund. In the Conversion Scheme of 1884, my right hon. Friend the Member for South Edinburgh gave the whole net advantage of his Conversion, such as it was, to the taxpayer. By my Conversion operation, on the other hand, if my present proposal is accepted, there will be an amount of something like £500,000 a year added to the sum available for the reduction of the Debt. The only argument which I can imagine may be pressed against this proposal is that I ought to give the whole of the saving to the reduction of the Debt, because two years ago I diminished the amount available for that purpose by £1,500,000.

MR. CHILDERS (Edinburgh): Two millions.

*MR. GOSCHEN: Yes, £2,000,000; I am obliged to my right hon. Friend. But I have explained before that I consider myself perfectly justified in the course then taken, and if, as I held, and hold, £5,000,000 besides the old sinking fund is a sufficient and ample annual provision for the reduction of debt, then I feel that if, out of the £1,500,000 which is saved by my Conversion, I add

£500,000 to that provision I am doing as much as the most rigid financial purist could expect. I believe that a great majority, both in this House and out of it, will think that I have taken a reasonable, fair, and businesslike course in applying this £1,000,000 as I propose to apply it—to meet a portion of the increased charge due to our naval defence plan. The effect will be to diminish the total fixed charge for debt from £26,000,000 to £25,000,000, but out of that £25,000,000 there will be as much devoted to the reduction of debt as is devoted now out of the £26,000,000, and after the present year there will be £500,000 more so devoted. Of the £25,000,000, £19,500,000 in round figures will go in payment of interest and £5,500,000 in reduction of Debt.

The deficit now has reached the more manageable sum of £917,000. How is it to be met? There are not wanting people who will suggest a very easy expedient. One halfpenny on the income tax would cover the whole amount, and such a course would produce no friction, no remonstrances, no agitation, no resistance. The income taxpayers are so accustomed to be made the victims of emergencies and of financial timidity on the part of Chancellors of Exchequers, that they would only be grateful because it was not a penny that had been imposed, and they were only mulcted in a halfpenny. Inventive electioneers have already announced that the shipbuilding proposals would involve a large increase in the income tax, but those who have listened to and followed the exposition of my views as regards the income tax will have felt that I consider myself absolutely precluded from taking this easy and tempting course. I am not prepared to propose additional taxation which will weigh to any extent upon the struggling professional or trading class, the men with incomes from £300 to £600 and £700 a year, whose situation requires them to spend all or nearly all that they earn—the men who have no margin, or only a very small margin, which they can lay by. I would look to the surplus which can be put by rather than to the resources which cannot be diminished without imposing a sacrifice out of proportion to the sacrifices made by other classes of the community. The Death

Duties afford me the means of reaching accumulations such as I have described, and accordingly it is to the Death Duties that I turn, and I look to see whether on this field I can find some constitutional way of meeting the requirements of the national exchequer. I will not impose an additional tax on those whose accumulations only just suffice to produce an income which, under the Income Tax Act, is considered so small as to deserve the application of reductions and exemptions. For on the whole, I think it will be generally recognized that it is the men whose fortunes are considerable who pay least in proportion to their aggregate income and property. I propose, therefore, to look to the estates which amount to £10,000 and upwards, £10,000 representing an income of about £300 or £400 a year, and not more. What I propose is to levy an additional tax of 1 per cent on all estates of more than £10,000, whether they consist of realty or personalty, and to do this by means of a separate duty, partly because I do not wish to mix it up with the Probate Duty, and partly because it is not desirable that the inequalities which attach to the existing Death Duties, and which can be justified in them, should extend to the new tax. In the existing Death Duties real property, even when it passes absolutely, is always charged on the life interest. The new duty will be charged similarly on both realty and personalty—that is to say, on the capital value when the property passes absolutely, and in the case of settled realty or settled personalty on the interest actually taken by a successor. I estimate that the yield of this new duty will be on a full year £1,000,000, but that in the present year it will produce £800,000.

The proposal just stated is, I know, open to many objections. One serious objection which may be urged is this. It may be said, "If you have recourse to the Death Duties at all, why not deal with them as a whole?" I think I can give some excellent reasons why that is impossible. Any Chancellor of the Exchequer who can simplify the Death Duties, and reduce them to a more equitable and simple form will have a great feather in his cap. But I may recall to the Committee that, some years ago, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid

Lothian (Mr. Gladstone) said that to re-arrange the Death Duties would take an entire Session, and this Session, as hon. Members know, is mortgaged for other work. The right hon. Gentleman said it would take an entire Session, and I entirely agree with him. I hope the Committee will allow me, although I have detained them so long already, to say a few words more on the subject of Death Duties, because it is a subject to which the public attention has been constantly drawn, and it is a subject on which great misconception prevails. I know that it will be said that it would be wiser to deal with the whole Death Duties, as a whole, instead of increasing a particular duty, but it is impossible to proceed in that manner. The reconstruction of the Death Duties does not mean simply putting realty and personalty on the same footing. The deeper we go into the question the more insoluble are the problems presented. It is administratively impossible to put realty on the same footing as personalty, if you maintain the present system of duties or the present legal machinery affecting the devolution of land. But that is not the only difficulty. In any complete reconstruction of the Death Duties the relation of Probate and Legacy Duty would have to be revised. The question of dealing with the various interests involved in settlements would have to be considered, and the difficulties of detail would be almost exceeded by the difficulties of coming to a conclusion on two great questions of principle which lie at the very foundation of the system. One is this, "Are you, or are you not, to abolish the scale of consanguinity?" If you do not abolish this scale you will be unable to deal in a simple manner with the Death Duties, but if you do abolish it I believe you will run counter to the general feeling of the country. The next great point which would have to be settled arises in connection with settlements. If you are to tax settled property equally with property passing by will you will have to decide whether you will put the tax on the *corpus* of estates or upon the separate interests arising under the settlement or will. If you put it upon the *corpus* you will in fact be taxing more heavily those who are near than those who are more remote. On the

other hand, if you put it upon the interests, you will find that the loss to the revenue in the first year will be enormous, because it practically amounts to giving up the Probate duty which is paid immediately on death. It must, therefore, be seen what large questions spring up in dealing with the Death Duties, and how right the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian was when he said that it was a matter which would occupy an entire Session. But from the point of view from which I regard it, the problem assumes even greater difficulties than those which the right hon. Gentleman pointed out. The Committee will remember how I left the matter last year, when I raised the Succession Duty until it stood on a par with that portion of the Probate Duty which still comes into the Imperial Exchequer together with the Legacy Duty. They will remember that personalty now pays $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent to the Exchequer, and that a corresponding addition has been made to the Succession Duty, so that whether for lineals, collaterals or strangers the rates of duty are now equal to Probate and Legacy Duty combined. But, although the amount of the tax on realty and personalty is, therefore, now the same, yet there is one important difference in the incidence of taxation on the two classes of property, namely that realty always pays on the value of the life interest while unsettled personalty pays on the capital value. But it must be borne in mind that, if realty still derives benefit from the system of Death Duties, realty pays towards income tax on its gross income, while personalty only pays on the net income. The landowner, therefore, pays income tax on a much larger sum than he actually receives, the excess amounting, I believe, to as much as 20 per cent; in fact, the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian once said that the land paid 9d. income tax, when personalty paid only 7d. As against the benefit that land and houses may obtain from the Death Duties, there is, therefore, the punishment they receive from the Income Tax. Any revision of the system by which the benefit land now receives from the system of Death Duties was taken away must be accompanied by an alteration of the incidence of the income tax upon it. In point of fact, we are in this position—that the alteration of Death Duties would have

to be considered *pari passu* with a revision of the income tax, the Inhabited House Duty, and the system of valuation all over the country. I trust it will not be felt that I am shirking my duty by not undertaking this gigantic task in the present year, already so heavily mortgaged for other work.

I do not think it necessary to apologize for having gone into topics which, though not absolutely necessary for the purpose of explaining this Budget to the Committee, are supremely important for the consideration of questions connected with it. But if in the present year I am unable to deal with the Death Duties as a whole, there is no reason why I should not ask hon. Members to permit of such Amendments as will tend to prevent several evasions of the duties as they now stand. I trust I shall have the concurrence and sympathy of hon. Members in several proposals which I have to submit for preventing ingenious evasions of the duties imposed when property changes hands at death. The Committee is probably aware that death-bed gifts are caught and taxed by what is called the account duty, and not only death-bed gifts, but gifts or voluntary dispositions made within three months of death. I am sorry to say that the experience of Somerset House has proved that the three months fixed in the Act is insufficient to protect the Revenue, and I propose to extend the period to 12. If the State expects that accumulations are to pay tribute to the State when transferred in the natural course of events from one person to another, I think there will be no sympathy with devices by which the State loses what the Legislature intended it to gain. But there is another and a more fruitful form of evasion. A father makes over his property to his son during the latter portion of his life, reserving to himself an annuity, or making a condition that the son should pay him an annuity during his (the father's) lifetime. By this means a large amount of property is sometimes passed over, and the effect is that the bulk of the property does not pay succession duty at all. No doubt such a step involves considerable confidence on the part of the father, but that confidence appears to be stimulated by the large saving which is thereby secured to the family at the expense of the State,

which suffers accordingly. We propose that such transfers shall be taxable when discovered; whenever the transfer has not been an absolute free gift, but when the donor has reserved some benefit to himself. If the gift is *bona fide* then it would not be taxed, but if there is consideration for the transfer, direct or indirect, then the ordinary Death Duties should be paid.

But I have not yet exhausted the forms of evasion. Another method is practised sometimes by partners in a firm and sometimes by members of a family. This is done by partners agreeing that they will put their separate properties together into a kind of pool, under which, according to the present law, the survivors would not pay on the benefit which they derive from the death of their partners in such pool. Here is an illustration of the same thing in a family:—There are three sisters, Mary, Jane, and Rebecca, each owning £3,000. In the natural course, if one dies and leaves her £3,000 to the second and third they will pay upon the £3,000 which she leaves to them; but if all three make an arrangement under which they agree to put their property together so that whoever survives receives the benefit from the death of the other, then the property is held by some not to be liable to Death Duty. I have stated the matter in a popular form which lawyers may not recognize as absolutely correct, but this is in substance the mode of evasion. Legal opinions have differed as to the precise effect of existing Statutes, but I am advised that a clear declaration of the law is very necessary for the defence of the Revenue. This may not be so important in the case of relatives, but in the case of partners I believe that, owing to the doubtful state of the law, very large sums escape the payment of Death Duty. There is still another mode of evasion which I think we are bound to meet. If a man insures his life and bequeaths his policy with the rest of his property, of course the proceeds of that policy pay duty like everything else. But when a man during his life assigns his policy to his son, though he himself continues to pay the premiums upon it, in this case the proceeds of the policy pay no duty, though obviously such an assignment of the policy while the

burden of paying the premiums is retained is simply made with the object of escaping from paying toll to the State.

There is one further change which I propose, not to check evasion, but to do away with an exemption at present recognized by law. The point arises in connection with settlements. The whole theory of the Death Duties is that the State claims a share in all property passing on death. If I may use a phrase of legitimate exaggeration, a portion of the Death Duty is practically evaded by settlements. From my point of view, every settlement, if not a fraud upon the Death Duty, at all events makes a serious inroad upon what I may term the rights of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. If there is a man with a property of £100,000 and five children, I should look upon him as a man who, at his death, will transfer £100,000, and who will consequently pay Probate Duty to the extent of £3,000. If he settles during his lifetime £10,000 upon each child, he diminishes the property which will pass at death to £50,000, and it will only pay £1,500 Probate Duty. Settlements, it is true, pay a small duty, but nothing as compared with the toll to the State which the property comprised in them escapes. I do not feel sure that equity and analogy do not require that a higher duty should be put upon settlements to compensate for the heavy loss to Death Duties which they bring about. But I am not prepared to submit a proposal in that direction to the House except in the following case, where, I think, there is a distinct infraction of the principle of the duties even in their present form:—As the law stands, if a man settles £10,000 on his daughter after his death and promises at the same time to pay her £200 a year for her life, she is allowed to deduct the value of that which she received during the lifetime of the settlor on receiving the £10,000 at his death. I think that that is an inequitable arrangement. We have to look, not so much to the amount of benefit which may be received at a given moment, as to the share of the State in property transferred by death. If the property passes away from the donor during lifetime, well and good, but if he purposely makes arrangements by which he retains the property in his hands till his death, and the property only

passes at his death, analogy and equity seem to me to require that the whole property should be subject to Death duties. I propose, therefore, that such a deduction should no longer be allowed.

The result of the abolition of these exemptions and restraints on evasion will ultimately, I have no doubt, have a considerable influence on the Revenue. But their operation will be gradual, and I am not justified in adding largely to my Estimate of the Revenue of the year on their account. I took them into consideration in fixing the Death duties at the amount which I have already stated to the House. What I gain from the Death duties this year, over and above my original estimate, I consider to be limited to the £800,000 derived from the new estate duty.

Now I look with pleasure at the fact that I am approaching the end of my task. But I have still to find £300,000. This I propose to effect by doing an act of justice and reparation to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. Gladstone). I must ask the Committee to carry its mind back to the year 1880, when the right hon. Gentleman substituted a beer duty for the duty on malt and certain other duties connected with the manufacture of beer which had previously existed. The problem he had to solve was to place such a tax upon beer as would be a full equivalent for the Duties which were abolished, and give a slight advantage to the Revenue. He did this by assuming that two bushels of malt would yield 36 gallons of beer of a specific gravity of 1,055, and by imposing a tax of 6s. 3d. either on the two bushels of malt or on the 36 gallons of beer of a specific gravity of 1,055, which were supposed to correspond to them. A great resistance was offered by the representatives of the brewers' interests, who asserted that the imposition of 6s. 3d. on 36 gallons of beer of the specific gravity of 1,055 would yield a great deal more than the right hon. Gentleman estimated would give, in fact, a duty £800,000 in excess of his Estimate. In the long run it has been proved that my right hon. Friend was entirely right. There was no such increase of £800,000; but the right hon. Gentleman yielded to the brewers' contention, and raised

the standard of specific gravity from 1,055 to 1,057. What I propose to do is to revert to the original proposal of the right hon. Gentleman to take the duty of 6s. 3d. on 36 gallons of beer of the specific gravity of 1,055, instead of, as now on 36 gallons of the specific gravity of 1,057. In doing so, I shall obtain the £300,000 which I want, while adding something perfectly imperceptible to the cost of a barrel of beer. The duty on beer is at present 2d. per gallon, and the addition proposed, if it could be thrown on the consumer, would only increase the cost of beer, on the average, by about 1-14th part of a penny per gallon. The fact is, the addition is so extremely small it will be felt in no quarter whatever.

I beg the Committee to observe that, while obtaining my Revenue by an addition to the tax which cannot be felt by the consumer, I am also doing an act of justice as between different classes of brewers. I have stated that the Beer duty can either be levied upon the amount of material used—*i.e.*, 6s. 3d. upon every two bushels of malt, or a corresponding quantity of other material, or it can be levied upon the amount of unfinished beer, commonly known as worts, which is produced from that material—*i.e.*, 6s. 3d. on 36 gallons of worts at a specific gravity of 1,057. Now the duty is levied either upon the malt or upon the specific gravity of the worts, according as the one or the other method of levying it is more advantageous to the Exchequer. Where the brewer gets less than 36 gallons of beer of the given specific gravity out of his two bushels of malt, the duty is levied on the malt—*i.e.*, on the material; where he gets more, it is levied on the worts—*i.e.*, on the produce. Now, out of the 13,000 brewers at present existing in this country, 11,000, being small and unskilled men, fail to produce 36 gallons of worts of a specific gravity of 1,057 from two bushels of malt. They produce, on an average, only 34 gallons, yet they pay as if they produced 36 gallons, with a deduction of only 4 per cent. The larger and skilled brewers, with their great capital and highly-developed methods, obtain 36, or a larger number of gallons of worts of the specific gravity named from their two bushels of malt. But they never pay on more than they actually produce. They pay on the

worts themselves, after their specific gravity has been measured by the saccharometer. The skilled brewers on a great scale are entitled to the advantage which their capital and skill give them, but they are not entitled to have that advantage heightened by the action of the Revenue laws. This inequality will by our proposal be remedied. There were two courses open to me. I might either level down and reduce the payment made by the smaller brewers, or I might level up and put a slightly higher duty upon the skilled brewers. As I am still short of the necessary revenue, I propose to level up, and in this manner to obtain the £300,000 required to balance the account. The expenditure, as previously given, is £86,967,000, or, deducting the saving on debt charge, £1,000,000, it is £85,967,000. The revenue, as previously given, is £85,050,000. Add the £300,000 obtained by the readjustment of the beer duty and £800,000 obtained by the new estate duty, and we get a total of £86,150,000, leaving a margin of revenue of £183,000.

I have now finished my long story as regards both the past and the present year. There is one other topic with regard to which I am aware that there is much public expectation, which the Committee will notice I have not thus far touched upon in my speech—I mean the question of the rehabilitation of the gold coinage—a matter, I admit, of extreme and urgent importance. It must not be inferred from the fact that my Budget proposals do not embody a plan for dealing with light gold that I in any degree recede from the position which I have taken up with regard to it, or from the announcement in the Queen's Speech that we should deal with it. But to my mind any scheme dealing with light gold involves matters of such complexity that it must be embodied in a separate measure. It would be a simple matter to provide for the restoration of the gold coinage to its full weight if it were legitimate to treat that subject by itself, and if it were right to throw the whole burden of such a restoration on the taxpayer. But I am not prepared to throw this burden on the taxpayer without some compensation. If it be the duty of the State to take upon itself the cost of maintaining

the metallic currency—and I am inclined to admit it—then I say that the State is entitled to inquire whether it is in receipt of its fair share of profits from the paper currency. The two questions are bound up together, and I am reluctant to deal with that branch of the business which involves expense to the State without touching that other branch where we may hope to some extent to reimburse ourselves. But if I am right in regarding the question of the currency as involving both these considerations, then it is no longer a simple matter to deal with. Merely to restore the gold coinage is simple, though expensive; but to propose, side by side with the restoration of the gold coinage, important changes as regards some of the conditions and forms of fiduciary issues, is a delicate and intricate task. I hope shortly to lay proposals before the House; but I am not prepared to complicate my Budget with these proposals, which are sufficiently important to form the subject of a separate measure, and here it is right that I should add one word of caution. I see it is expected that I may cheapen money and set free a considerable amount of gold by the proposals which I am expected to make. I wish to state in the most emphatic manner that whatever scheme I may bring forward I should be most reluctant to weaken the reserve of gold which exists in this country to any appreciable extent. I do not say that the lines drawn by Sir Robert Peel are absolutely immutable; I do not say that they may not be a certain economy of gold; but, anxious as I naturally should be to increase the profit of the State by the utmost economy of gold which prudence permits, prudence in such a measure seems to me bound to play a primary part, and to forbid the temptation to add largely to our available resources by the issue of paper unrepresented by gold.

And now, I have come to the end of my long story; but before I sit down, I would wish to be permitted to present to the Committee in the fewest possible words the broad results of the several Budgets which I have had the honour to introduce. I have been charged with proposing “finicking” measures, with a want of breadth in my finance, with harassing various interests by the imposition of some small new taxes. But let me recapitu-

late the main features of the last three Budgets. Allow me to present a balance-sheet of my deeds and misdeeds, assuming that the House is pleased to assent to the measures which I have proposed to-night. I will take my misdeeds first. I have diminished the Sinking Fund by a million and a-half—originally by two millions, but I replace half a million. I have increased the Death duties on fortunes above ten thousand pounds by 1 per cent. I have added to the succession duty the equivalent of what remains of the Probate duty as an Imperial tax. I have imposed a duty of some £150,000 on sparkling wines. I have put £300,000 on beer. I have increased the Stamp duties by about £500,000. I have caught in the net of Transfer duties some foreign securities which before were exempt. These are my misdeeds. On the other hand I have reduced the Tobacco duty by £600,000. I have reduced the income tax by £4,000,000. I have given £2,500,000 in relief of local taxation. I have provided £2,000,000 extra for national defence. I have converted upwards of £500,000,000 of Consols, securing an annual saving in interest of £1,400,000 at once, and £2,800,000 by-and-bye; and I have been able to pay off more Debt during my two financial years than has ever been paid off before in the same time, save on one occasion. Surely, the scale of these operations is no petty scale. I have been favoured by fortune in some respects. I claim no exclusive merit for what I have been able to perform, but whatever may be said of my stewardship, I do not think the charge can fairly be brought against me that I have not dealt in a broad spirit with the national finances, or that, in the two years during which it has been my fortune to preside at the Exchequer, I have not carried out some measures which will redound to the lasting benefit of the country.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

“That, towards raising the Supply granted to Her Majesty, the duties of Customs now chargeable on tea shall continue to be levied and charged on and after the 1st day of August, 1889, until the 1st day of August, 1890, on the importation thereof into Great Britain or Ireland (that is to say): on tea sixpence per pound.”

*MR. CHILDERS (Edinburgh, S.): The Committee will gladly recognize the clearness which has distinguished my right hon. Friend's statement. Following the course usually adopted on these occasions by those who sit on this Bench, I will abstain from further criticism than is involved in putting some questions as to details. I could have wished my right hon. Friend had said a little more about the light gold question; but I am rejoiced to hear the taxpayer is not to be called upon to make good the large prospective charge which has now accumulated if our gold currency is to be permanently rehabilitated. What the right hon. Gentleman has said as to the source from whence this change is to be met is probably satisfactory far as it goes. But when he speaks of dealing with fiduciary issues, by which I presume he really means paper money, what he is to propose may be something very small or something very considerable; and it will be for the right hon. Gentleman to consider whether he cannot a little further take the House into his confidence. In the early part of his speech my right hon. Friend said that he received last year an additional sum from currants, because the French Government had taken steps for restraining the import of Greek currants into France. May we not, I would ask, expect precisely the converse of that result to follow from the proposal of Her Majesty's Government to restrain the import of French and other sugar into this country, and will not this country suffer disadvantage from that proposal? Then as to the Death duties. I need not go back to the debates of 1885 on that subject, or discuss to what extent the fortunes of the two political parties were affected by what took place on that matter. But my right hon. Friend is now proposing a new duty, to which may be given the name of an Estate duty. This fresh Death duty is to be levied equally on all estates, real or personal, which are worth more than £10,000. The introduction of such a proposal sounds the knell of Differential Death duties; because, if we add to the Death duties a tax which for the first time absolutely falls equally on real and personal property, it will be impossible in future to maintain the Differential duties in other respects on

those two classes of property. Without expressing any opinion on the details of the plan—of which we cannot judge without seeing the Bill—I am bound to say that the admission which my right hon. Friend has made is worth five or six years of debate on this subject; and, so far, we have gained what we fought so hard for in the time of the late Government. Of course, there are some omissions from the Budget which we all deplore. I am under the impression—although it may be wrong—that my right hon. Friend distinctly promised that he would this year remit the Silver duty. [*The Chancellor of the Exchequer indicated dissent.*] At all events, I am sorry that when there is an opportunity, as there is now, of settling the question of the drawback without any excessive charge on the present year, my right hon. Friend could not find it in his heart to put an end to that most objectionable duty which produces a very small sum, and is not only disadvantageous to this country, but also to India, where great disappointment will be caused by its retention. With regard to the Beer duty, I hope that the Chancellor of the Exchequer has convinced the brewers that they are wrong as to their objections, both to the original plan of my right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. Gladstone), and even to the concession which my right hon. Friend made before his Bill passed through Parliament. That part of the Budget will, I hope, receive unanimous support from this side of the House. I am sorry to find that my right hon. Friend adheres to his plan relating to the Sparkling Wine duty. Of course, in a year of deficit there may be a difficulty in dealing with the matter; but I am afraid my right hon. Friend will find that there is, on the part of the trade, an undiminished objection to the present arrangement. In conclusion, I desire to know how soon the necessary Bill will be put down for a Second Reading. I presume that to-night the Tea duty and the Income tax resolutions will be proposed; and that beyond that we shall not go on this occasion. When the country has had full notice of the proposals of my right hon. Friend, which, although complicated, have been very fairly and clearly stated, the House will be able to enter upon their due discussion.

Mr. Childers

*SIR W. BARTELOT (Sussex, North West): I must most sincerely congratulate my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer on the clear and able statement he has made; and I believe the Committee and the country will admit that the right hon. Gentleman has not dealt with finance in a niggardly spirit, and that he has done some great things, which will redound to his credit as a financier. With regard to his proposals as to the Death duties, I do not think that they will be particularly popular in the country, because my right hon. Friend who has just spoken hit the right nail on the head when he said they might lead to an equality of taxation in respect to Death duties without reference to the degree of relationship which individuals might bear towards the testator. That I do not think would be a wise course, nor do I think it would commend itself to the public generally, who would consider that affinity ought to be regarded, and that the tax ought to bear a proportion to the relationship in which those to whom he leaves his money stand to the testator. I wish to obtain some information in regard to local taxation. Last year my right hon. Friend (Mr. Goschen) said he had arrived at the conclusion that personal property ought to pay a fair share of local taxation as against real property, and he gave us half the Probate duty. I have never been able to see the great difference between a subvention and a definite tax, excepting that from the latter a benefit or a loss may result, while by the former a clear and definite sum may be reckoned upon. The Chancellor of the Exchequer stated as clearly as possible that there was to be £5,500,000 in relief of local taxation, as against the £2,500,000 previously provided. Has the right hon. Gentleman, in his Budget, made up that £840,000 which he failed to provide last year, owing to the withdrawal of the horse, van, and wheel tax? He has pledged himself that the withdrawal of these proposals should not make any difference to the additional £3,000,000 promised in aid of local taxation. The Local Government Bill brought in by my right hon. Friend the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) was not a very popular proposal, but as an Act it has been accepted, and all have endeavoured

to make it work successfully; but now it is expected that the promised relief will be given. The proposed van and wheel tax was a reasonable tax, and if the Chancellor of the Exchequer had had the courage to persist with it, without making any exemptions, he would have been successful; for he would have received the support not only of all those who do not own carts and horses, but who have to contribute to the maintenance of the roads, but of, as I believe, a majority of those who do not own carts. Nothing more than the subvention due up to September of last year has been received, though there was another half-year's subvention due up to April 1. It was understood that the subvention was to continue till the 1st of April, and that the new taxation was to take effect from that date. Will my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer say whether any loss, and if so what loss, will be sustained by this arrangement? There is one other question I should like to touch upon. The payment for the compulsory slaughtering of diseased cattle falls entirely upon the districts into which the cattle are introduced, although the local authorities may have done all they can to obviate the introduction of diseased cattle. I think that in such cases some compensation should be afforded from the Consolidated Fund. I will not go any further into my right hon. Friend's Budget, which, on the whole, is a fair and reasonable one.

*MR. S. BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar): I desire to follow the example of my right hon. Friend (Mr. Childers), and not do more on the present occasion than ask a few questions. One of the most remarkable features of the Budget is that the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer proposes to reduce the annual payment devoted to the National Debt to the lowest point reached during this century—namely, to 25 millions. I understand that the right hon. Gentleman proposes to use £1,000,000 of interest which has been saved on the concession of the Debt, and which, under the arrangement of 1876, ought to remain within the Sinking Fund to meet the present deficit. The right hon. Gentleman also proposes to devote the further saving of £500,000 (which, by the way,

will not be available till next year), towards the Sinking Fund. How does the right hon. Gentleman propose to give effect to and guarantee this plan, because this was the second time in three years that he has robbed the Sinking Fund?

*MR. GOSCHEN: I beg my hon. Friend's pardon. I do not rob the Sinking Fund. The diminution of interest leaves it precisely at the same amount as before.

*MR. BUXTON: The right hon. Gentleman will admit that in 1887 he robbed—using the word without offence—the Sinking Fund of two millions a year; and now instead of allowing this £1,000,000 to remain within the Sinking Fund, he proposes to take it out and apply it to certain other purposes. This to my mind is again to rob it. When the Sinking Fund was instituted by Sir S. Northcote in 1876 its object was that instead of applying varying annual sums to the interest and redemption of the Debt, a fixed sum should be taken every year for the purpose, and that any saving effected within that amount should go to the further redemption of the Debt. The right hon. Gentleman must surely allow that his proposition is an invasion of the principle on which the Sinking Fund was instituted; and I should like some guarantee that the £500,000 which the right hon. Gentleman proposes to restore to the Fund next year will actually be so restored. Passing from the question of the treatment of the Debt; the greater part of the Budget will probably meet with approval from the Opposition side of the House, because to a large extent it is the Budget of 1885, on which the Liberal Government were defeated—for it increases the Death duties and the duty on beer. The increase of the Beer duties is advantageous; and all sides agree that if the Death duties can be further raised it would be well to take that course. In this process the right hon. Gentleman is about to institute a system of graduated taxation in regard to the Death duties, for he taxes additionally only estates of £10,000 and over. He is thus, in another direction extending the system of graduated taxation carried far by Sir S. Northcote in regard to the income tax. I, for one, wish him all success in the attempt. We congratulate the right hon. Gentleman

on the very interesting financial statement he has laid before the House and on the very satisfactory progress which he has been able to point to in respect of the general, financial, and trade prospects of the country. I think, however, that the right hon. Gentleman was hardly sanguine enough in taking the Revenue at such a low figure, though that was a fault on the right side.

*MR. BARTLEY (Islington, N.): There are two points which I wish to place before the Committee for their consideration—the question of the Debt and the question of how the Budget will affect the different classes of the community. It is gratifying to know that we have during the last two years been enabled to pay off so large a sum of our Debt. While this has been accomplished, however, we have on the other hand, been very largely increasing the local debt of the country. During the last 15 years we have paid off something like £67,000,000 of our Imperial Debt, and if that stood alone it would be a satisfactory condition of affairs; but we have increased our local debt during the same period by £100,000,000. We are now paying, in spite of our increased wealth, larger population and national income, a proportionately very much smaller sum towards the extinction of the National Debt than we were paying 15 or 20 years ago. I think it is a pity that we did not get rid more rapidly of this incubus, especially when it is borne in mind that we are about the lowest taxed nation in Europe. Considering the great increase in our wealth of late years, I think it is desirable, looking to the future, with its emergencies and contingencies, to emulate in some degree the speed of the Americans in getting rid of such a burden. But there is another matter I wish to refer to, and that is how this Budget is going to influence the great mass of the people. It seems to me this question has hardly been considered enough in connection with the Budget, whether everybody pays the proportionate share that may be fairly claimed, or whether we have a system of taxation which falls harder upon one class than upon another. The taxation of the country seems to me, under the Budget we have just heard explained, to amount to something like £73,000,000—that is to say, the Customs,

Excise, land tax, income tax, Stamp Duty, and Probate duty, amount to something like that, leaving out, of course, such matters as Post Office revenue and such matters as may not properly be considered taxes, but are the result of certain businesses carried on by the country. Now, the indirect taxes are, of course, paid by all classes of the community, while other taxes, such as the Stamp duty and the income tax are paid by the richer classes. What I want to inquire is, how does the burden of Imperial taxation really affect the poorer classes, and especially the poorest of the poor? Do they contribute fairly towards the amount, and does the present Budget really relieve or aggravate the hardships of the poor? There is some idea that the poorest of the working classes do not contribute their fair share to the Imperial Exchequer and if that is so I think we should know it; we should understand whether it is so, and what seems to me a very reasonable way of inquiring into the matter is to ascertain distinctly what the national income is, and what the National Revenue is, and then what the income tax would be if everyone paid in proportion to his earnings. Those who have studied the history of the national income vary in the amounts they arrive at, but all put it down at something like 1,200 or 1,300 millions sterling. Mr. Giffen and the late Professor Leoni Levi, with others, came to the conclusion that 1,250 millions sterling is about the National Income. Now, if we take the gross income of the country, and the gross amount the Chancellor of the Exchequer requires for his Revenue we should find that if everybody paid exactly according to his earnings, so much in the pound, all would have to pay 1s. 2d. in the pound all round. Now, the question I want answered is whether, under the Budget, the poorer people pay more or less than this. There is no question of Party politics involved, but it is a matter of enormous importance, and those who have worked among the poorer classes and know their difficulties and trials have a right to know whether their payments to Imperial taxation are more or less than this proportion. It has always been held that those who earn very small wages should not pay quite as much in the £ as

richer men. I think that is a system of finance that has been established over and over again, and it has been established again in the Budget of to-day in regard to the Death duties, and in regard to the income tax it is acknowledged, smaller incomes being allowed a rebate up to £400 a year. Now, as a matter of fact, taking the outside earnings of the poorer classes, do they contribute more or less than this normal amount of taxation I have mentioned? It is a question of very great importance that we have to face fairly. I have gone into the question, and I cannot help thinking from the statistical investigation I have made that the classes who pay most taxation in proportion to their incomes are the poorer of the working classes, and the poorest of the richer classes who just come within the income tax. If that is so, then our fiscal system is not quite as it should be. Of course it is obvious that those who earn very small wages from £20 to £40 a year would, if they paid in equal proportion to richer classes, have a heavier burden, because the necessities of life are the same on both sides. It is true that the very poor who drink no alcoholic liquor and smoke no tobacco and consume no tea or dried fruits, &c., pay very little to the Exchequer; but what I want to find out is not what a small number of people might pay, but what they do, with their known habits, pay on the various items of consumption. I am sorry the Chancellor of the Exchequer has run away for the moment, for I am sure, though my inquiries may seem microscopic, they are very important as bearing on the proportion of taxation borne by the working classes. For instance, take the case of a family earning 15s. a week, or £39 a year, that family, under the present Budget, would contribute £2 19s. 5d. in taxation, and this amount, we may suppose, made up in the following manner: say 8oz. of dried fruits (figs, raisins, &c.) each week, that would be equal to a duty of 1s. 9d. in the year; 8oz. tea per week equals 13s.; 1oz. tobacco, 10s. 6d.; a moderate amount of beer each day, say half-pint at dinner and again at supper, duty 20s.; a glass of spirits each week, for medical or other purposes, duty 10s. 4d.; and, say, the proportion of rent that goes to pay the land tax, 1d. per week, or 4s. 4d. a

year. I think I am right in saying that there are hundreds of thousands of families who pay, at least, this amount in consuming taxable articles. The relief that brewing licences may be said to afford may be left out of view, for the number is very small—only 7,000 for the whole country. What I want to press home is this, that this abstemious yet typical family pays £2 19s. 5d. to the Revenue Returns. If it paid what I may call the normal rate of income tax above described—the rate of 14d. in the £—the amount contributed to taxation would be £2 7s. Thus these families pay 12s. 5d. more than if income tax were the basis of the whole taxation, and everybody paid an equal proportion, by 25 per cent. Take another illustration: Suppose a widow and children earning £20 a year; their contribution to the normal income tax would be £1 3s. 4d., but, taking the fair estimate that they pay in indirect taxation on dried fruits, 1s. 9d. in the course of the year; on tea, 14s.; on beer, 9s.; and in land tax in the form of rent, 2s. 1d.; or in all, £1 6s. 10d. So I might go on through various small incomes, and although it may be said that the amounts might be considerably reduced by the non-consumption of beer and tobacco, yet we know it is the habit of Englishmen to drink beer. Further, in the proportion I have estimated it cannot be called a vicious habit, and as a matter of fact if my figures are right, and I do not see how they can be shown to be wrong, the poorer class does pay a much larger amount than they would pay *pro rata* if everyone paid according to earnings. It follows, if this is so, that the richer classes pay proportionately less. If this be so then a case is made out for the re-adjustment of Imperial taxation. It is true that the better-to-do classes, those with incomes of from £2 to £4 a week, and with abstemious habits, living chiefly in the way I have described, do not pay so large an amount as if an equal income tax were enforced. I am quite aware that Chancellors of the Exchequers have done something to amend this state of things, and looking back over 15 years we find a spirit to amend these anomalies has been abroad. When we compare the proportion of Customs and Excise duties to population then and now I find that not only have Customs and Excise duties been reduced some

two millions since 1876, but stamps and property taxes have been increased from 14 to 27 millions, that while on Customs and Excise there has been a reduction from £1 10s. 2d. to £1 5s. 8d., the increase on stamps and property has been from £1 15s. 5d. to £2 18s. 6d. per head, while at the same time there have been reductions on sugar and other transfers in the form of taxation. At the same time I think it is clear that an unfair pressure is placed upon the poorest and upon those at the bottom of the richer classes who just come within the imposition of the income tax and who pay an equal amount to the Customs duties with those just below them. It must be borne in mind, too, that the poorer classes have to pay the Customs duties to the uttermost farthing, for there is no smuggling now, and no possible means of evading the impost, whereas it is notorious—and the Chancellor of the Exchequer has told us as much to-night—that the richer classes do manage to evade a good many of the taxes imposed upon property. There is another branch of the subject closely allied to the consideration of the whole, in this fact, that of the 1,250 millions of which the national income consists, 400 millions are due to the revenue from past savings, and this constitutes an important part of the wealth of the country. It is obvious that to tax at the same rate incomes from past savings and absolute earnings is an anomaly. If accumulated wealth paid its full quota in proportion to that paid by the artisan class, there would be a relief to the taxation on earnings, and I cannot see myself that there would be any extreme hardship. The Chancellor of the Exchequer congratulates himself every year that the revenue from income tax is increasing, but he must bear in mind there is another phase to this, because it indicates that more and more is drawn from the class at the bottom of those who pay the tax. It is obvious that the increase does not come from the richer classes, because during the last few years the extremely rich classes have diminished, and larger incomes have certainly not been made. A great deal of it certainly comes from those just brought within the tax. That is to say, the Chancellor of the Exchequer and his officials—very properly, no doubt, but, still, very hardly—do manage to get into their net

a larger number of those upon whom the pinch of taxation is felt most acutely. But I do not wish to dwell on this at any length, and perhaps this is hardly the proper occasion to do so. Our opportunities, however, are rare, and the incidences of Imperial taxation are so important that we are bound to consider it, having in view the fact that it is extremely probable that the burdens of local taxation are likely to increase. I think I have made out my case that smaller incomes of 10s. or 20s. a week pay a larger amount per £ earned to Imperial taxation than larger incomes, and I think I have indicated anomalies that seem to require a revision of our whole fiscal system.

*MR. SHAW LEFEVRE (Bradford, Central): I will not follow the hon. Member into a discussion which, however interesting, is scarcely, I think, appropriate to the ordinary Budget for the year. I desire to say a few words on the proposals of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Assuming that it is necessary to raise taxation by the amount he has mentioned, I have no objection to his two main proposals to raise £800,000 from a revision of the Death Duties and an additional sum—£250,000—from modifications in the Beer duty. With regard to the Death duties, however, I am sorry the right hon. Gentleman has not gone somewhat further, and has not taken the opportunity of doing something to rectify the very great, the serious, the most unjust anomaly that exists in the treatment of leasehold as compared with freehold property. The more it is looked into the more unjust does it appear to owners of leasehold property. I made a comparison some little time ago as to the taxation imposed on leasehold property as compared with ground rents, and assuming that two men have interests in either property to the same amount, and both die, the successor to the leasehold property would have to pay Probate duty and Succession duty, but in the other case Succession duty only would be paid. Even after the changes made last year leasehold property has to pay 14 or 15 times more in the shape of Death duties than the owner of freehold house property does. I say in any alteration of the Death duties this

anomaly should be rectified. But what I want particularly to call attention to is the real increase of military expenditure included in the Budget. This is practically the only opportunity we have for reviewing that expenditure as a whole. I do not propose to occupy much time, but briefly I will state the figures showing the increase and how far it is included in the Budget. If I understand the Chancellor of the Exchequer rightly, the Army and Navy Estimates are increased together by £1,200,000, and there is a further item of £1,450,000 taken from the Consolidated Fund for the Naval Defence proposal, a total of £2,650,000 provided for in the Budget. But there is a further increase not provided for in the Budget. Under the Naval Defence Bill of the 10 millions to be expended in building something like 50 vessels other than for which provision is made in the Estimates, the amount to be expended in the year being £2,800,000.

*MR. GOSCHEN: Not extra?

*MR. SHAW-LEFEVRE: Including the £1,400,000. That is to say under the Naval Defence proposals out of £10,000,000, the sum over and above the Normal Estimates and spread over a period of seven years, the actual amount to be expended in the year is £2,800,000.

*MR. GOSCHEN: Will the right hon. Gentleman explain how he arrives at that result.

*MR. SHAW-LEFEVRE: From the details laid before the House.

*MR. GOSCHEN: There is no such figure as £2,800,000. That is the ordinary Estimates, but no one can say what the amount will be; it will depend on how soon the contracts are put out.

*MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: There is a Return before the House showing how much of this amount of £10,000,000 is to be expended in each year over and above the ordinary Estimates of the year, and as I understand it, £2,800,000 will be spent in the coming year, £4,100,000 in the next year, £2,200,000 in the next, £750,000 in the next, and the remainder in the fifth year.

*MR. GOSCHEN: Will the right hon. Gentleman give me figures; it is rather difficult to follow him?

*MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: I am certain I am right, but my right hon. Friend near me will get the Return

from which I am quoting. Assuming that my figures are right, that £1,450,000 is taken from the Consolidated Fund in the year, there is a further sum of £1,350,000 which will be spread over 10 years under the National Defence Act. Then there is a further sum which will be expended under the Act of last year for the provision of ships of the Australian Squadron, no less than £600,000 having to be expended in the year, the proportion of the payment to be spread over 12 years. But I have not yet got to the end of the actual Military expenditure of the year, because, under the Act of last year, provision must be made for the fortification of ports and coaling stations, to the extent of £3,500,000; and I believe I am right in saying that something like £1,000,000 will be spent within the year, although the money will be raised by loan, and spread over a considerable time. Adding these various sums, I find the actual expenditure on Naval and Military affairs will amount to £35,466,000, of which £32,400,000 is provided for in the Budget, and £3,000,000 is postponed. We have a prospect of yet further expenditure, for the Secretary for War has alluded to the probability of his having to make a demand upon the House for barracks, and evidently contemplates that a considerable sum of money will be expended in the year, although not provided out of the revenue of the year, but raised by way of loan. I have now got the Return to which I referred, and I find that the sum of £10,000,000 which is to be raised is to be repaid by equal annual instalments spread over seven years; but the actual expenditure within the present year is £2,845,000; in the following year, £4,415,000; in the third year, £1,900,000; in the fourth year, £740,000; and in the fifth, £100,000. I was, therefore, perfectly accurate in saying that out of the £10,000,000, the repayment of which will be spread over seven years, the actual expenditure within the present year will be £2,845,000. I ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if I am not right in that?

*MR. GOSCHEN: It is right according to the Paper.

*MR. SHAW-LEFEVRE: I must assume that the printed statement is cor-

rect. It is signed, I see, by the Secretary to the Admiralty. I am therefore right in saying that the actual expenditure is £35,466,000 for this year, or £5,000,000 more than this country has ever expended in any one year before in time of peace. Comparing it with the expenditure of the great Powers of Europe, I undertake to say that the expenditure of this country during the last 20 years has risen in a greater proportion than that of three, at least, of the four great military Powers — namely, France, Russia and Austria. I have not been able to compare it with the expenditure of Germany 20 years ago, because the German Empire was not then constituted, and it is almost impossible to make out what the expenditure of the various component parts was. As I understand it, the additional expenditure is provided for in part by an increase of taxation to the amount of £1,000,000, and in part by sacrificing the benefit we derive from the conversion of debt. The remaining £750,000 comes from the ordinary increase of Revenue. The Chancellor of the Exchequer not very long ago, speaking on some platform in the country, told us he had sacrificed his Budget to his sense of patriotism, it being necessary to increase the Military Expenditure of the country; but he has sacrificed a great deal more than his Budget, for he has destroyed his power of reducing the taxation of the country. Irrespective of the items to which I have alluded, and but for this enormous expenditure, we might have done away altogether with school fees in this country, or reduced the tax upon tea by more than one half, or done many other things for the benefit of the people. All these opportunities the Chancellor of the Exchequer has sacrificed; he has also sacrificed the Budgets of six possible Chancellors of the Exchequer who may come after him, and three of them will be sacrificed without any benefit to them, simply because he is going to spread the payment of this £10,000,000 over 7 years, while the expenditure will be incurred in 4 years. I can only say upon this point that it seems to me a most serious matter that in time of peace and prosperity, when the country had every reason to hope that there might be a reduction of taxation, we are practically increasing our Military Expenditure by £5,000,000 with the possible

additional expenditure for barracks suggested by the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for War (Mr. E. Stanhope). There is another point I would allude to, and that is the increased amount it is proposed to draw from the Revenue of the Post Office. I would point out how largely increased is this surplus to be drawn from the Post Office as compared with what it was a few years ago. Taking the ordinary Post Office receipts and expenditure, I find that in the year 1883-4, the surplus was £2,885,000; in 1884-5, it was £2,802,000; in 1885-6, £2,920,000; in 1886-7, £2,809,000; in 1887-8, £2,965,000; in 1888-9, £3,434,000, and in the coming year it will be £3,577,000, or nearly £700,000 in excess of net revenue in the earlier years I have referred to. I do not include telegraphs in the amount. I confess I think the increased surplus revenue delivered from the Post Office must be looked at with great care and consideration. My own belief is that it is not wise to be continually drawing an increased surplus revenue from the Post Office and treating the Post Office as an always increasing source of revenue. I know that there are a great number of ways of expending the surplus, and I know also from experience how rigidly the Treasury endeavours to get as large a surplus from the Post Office as it possibly can lay hold of. I cannot but think that that policy may possibly be carried too far, and it may be wiser for the Post Office to expend a larger amount in improving the service; of course, always subject to the control of the Treasury. I will have another opportunity of raising the question at a greater length. I cannot but repeat my regret that in a time of peace and great prosperity it is found necessary to impose greater taxation, and also to forego to a very large extent the benefit which we had every right to expect we might obtain from the conversion of the debt.

*SIR E. BIRKBECK (Norfolk, E.): I wish, on behalf of the tenant-farmers of the Eastern Counties, to enter my protest against one of the most important products of the land in the Eastern Counties, viz., our barley crop being further taxed. I refer to the further imposts it is proposed to place upon beer, and, therefore, upon barley. I can assure my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer that his announcement

will be received with dismay, especially coming this year, which has been the worst year for the tenant-farmers with regard to the barley crop since 1860. I only hope the Chancellor of the Exchequer, as a set off against this most objectionable proposal, will consider favourably the suggestion to give compensation out of the National Exchequer in respect of cattle slaughtered for pleuro-pneumonia and other cattle diseases. I am sorry no allusion was made by my right hon. Friend to the loss local taxation has suffered of nearly £800,000 promised last year in respect of the Van and Wheel Tax by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. We have not heard the slightest explanation from my right hon. Friend this evening with regard to that matter, and we certainly shall expect this amount to be made good to us from some source.

MR. H. COSSHAM (Bristol, E.): I desire to emphasize the remarks made by the right hon. Gentleman near me (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) as to the extravagance of the Budget. It seems to me as though our taxation was growing much more rapidly than the prosperity of the country, and, I believe, the burdens we are called upon to bear are pressing so hardly upon the industry and commerce of the country that they are becoming really a source of danger. I will also point out to what an extent the Budget favours real property. I believe it to be a dangerous experiment to make these grants from the taxation of the country towards the removal of local burdens. The national taxes are raised to a large extent from trade and industry, the £47,000,000 arising from Customs and Excise mainly coming out of the commerce and industry of the country. To devote that money to the lightening of county burdens is, I believe, very unwise, and may result in extravagance on the part of the Local Government bodies. If we are to adequately meet the burdens of the country I think we shall have to increase the taxation upon real property. The £5,000,000 now raised upon articles connected with our breakfast table presses with very great hardship upon the poor, and the poor pay a much larger proportion of the taxation of the country than the rich. I hope the Chancellor of the Exchequer will yet review his position and will impose greater burdens upon real property

rather than look in the direction he has announced to-night. The land tax is a most anomalous thing. I hope when the proper occasion comes to show the Committee that if the land tax were now paid on the scale on which it was intended to be paid we should at this moment be realizing by it, not £1,000,000, but £3,000,000. I am rather surprised at the selfishness shown by some of the landed proprietors with regard to the grants made to the counties. The county expenditure goes very largely in maintaining roads, and we all know that such expenditure gives value to the property in the neighbourhood of the roads. The voting of money from the National Exchequer towards the expenses of County Government is therefore certainly the voting of money to increase the value of real property. The chief point in connection with this Budget is that we have to provide a naval expenditure, which I cannot but regard as unnecessary. It is an expenditure which has never been justified, and the justification of which has never been attempted. I trust that at a further stage of the Bill we shall be able to strike such a blow at the Government proposals as will induce them to modify them considerably.

*MR. C. W. GRAY (Essex, Maldon): When the Chancellor of the Exchequer introduced his Budget last year I had the satisfaction of congratulating him on showing that he was anxious, if possible, to extend a helping hand to the agricultural interest. I was exceedingly sorry that one of the most important proposals in that Budget fell through, but I had hoped that this year we might have heard from the right hon. Gentleman some proposal by way of compensating for the loss which the agricultural interest sustained by the failure to carry the Van and Wheel Tax. I fancy the House can hardly realize how important a measure that was and how much benefit it would have given to the agricultural interest, as well as to the rate-payers generally. The hon. Member for West Southwark, who did all he could to prevent that measure fructifying, knew perfectly well the position in which agriculturists stood as connected with the provision of the necessary funds for maintaining the roads in the country. When that hon. Member was President of an Agricultural Association in the

county of Essex he heard over and over again of the grievances of agriculturists in connection with this matter. I am afraid this is a subject which will be laid on that shelf on which so many measures are laid, and from which so few are brought back again to daylight. But I wish to take this opportunity of confirming what was said by the hon. Baronet the Member for East Norfolk, when he begged the Chancellor of the Exchequer at any rate to keep in his mind the importance of the question, and if possible to see what can be done in the way of giving some compensation to the agricultural interest for the loss which it sustained by the failure to pass the Van and Wheel Tax. There was another point touched upon by the hon. Member in connection with the Cattle Disease Regulations, and the source from which the compensation money for animals slaughtered is to be obtained. I wish briefly, but very earnestly, to impress upon the Chancellor of the Exchequer and upon the Government that as the slaughtering of diseased animals is really in the interests of the whole community, it is only fair that the whole community should pay the expenses. If we were to be overrun with disease the English consumers of meat would certainly find to their cost that a saving of a few pence would cost them many pounds. In these times, when we depend so very largely upon the foreigner for the people's food, I think we have a right to ask—even if we may not under our breath allude to Protection, in the way of imposing duties on imports—I say I think we have a right to ask for protection against the importation of disease from abroad. My hon. Friend alluded to the proposal of the Chancellor of the Exchequer in relation to the Beer duties. I think, however, he was under a slight misconception as to the effect of the right hon. Gentleman's proposal. He seemed to fear that the slight increase proposed would fall on English agricultural productions. But I do not think that that would be the result. If the additional duty had touched, say the agricultural labourer, I should certainly have strenuously opposed it, for I think we should do all we can to encourage brewing by agricultural labourers. I even go farther. I think the farmer ought to be allowed to brew the pro-

duce of his fields with as little restriction as possible. Now, Sir, if I understand aright the proposal of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, it will rather catch the scientific brewers who brew—I am sorry to say too frequently, from materials which have never grown in an English field. I am not, therefore, anxious to say very much against a proposal which would affect these scientific brewers, because, in the first place, I am sure they are quite able to take care of themselves, and, secondly, they use a great deal of material which has no connection with English barley. I may just point out to the House before I sit down that there are two ways in which the beer duty is levied—one is on the basis that two bushels of malt will make a barrel of beer, which is subjected to a duty of 6s. 3d., and on the other hand the brewer, if he prefers it, can have the wort gauged in the mash tun and pay on its specific gravity. The proposal of the Chancellor of the Exchequer only affects the latter. That being the case, I think my hon. Friend the Member for East Norfolk rather misrepresented the right hon. Gentleman's proposal when he stated that the increased duty would fall on English agricultural productions. I believe, on the contrary, that it will fall to a very great extent on saccharine and various other foreign commodities which compete in the larger brewers' mash tub with English barley malt. The grievance, if any, is one for the large brewers themselves to deal with. In conclusion, I can only appeal to every Member of this House to support—whenever the opportunity arises—measures that will benefit the agricultural industry.

MR. PICTON (Leicester): It appears to me, Sir, that hitherto the statement of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer has met with more appreciation on this side of the House than on the other. I am happy to say that his Budget has proved more attractive to me than the one he brought forward last year. The hon. Member for the Maldon Division of Essex has supported some of the complaints made by previous speakers, but I think that those complaints arise from a confused opinion of national progress. Hon. Members seem anxious to delude the ratepayers and taxpayers into the opinion that it makes a great deal of

difference to them whether they take money out of the one pocket or out of the other. If the funds are advanced from the national finances to which they have to contribute themselves as taxpayers in order to relieve them as ratepayers, they are led to believe that a great advantage is conferred on them. Of course, in some special districts there may be such advantages, but as a general rule, I believe it has been found that whether the money comes from the rates or from the taxes it amounts to pretty much the same thing. But, Sir, it occurred to me, while listening to the statement of the right hon. Gentleman, that if it had not been for the needless, extravagant, and reckless proposals made to increase our expenses for armaments in a period of profound peace, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, instead of having a deficit to make up, would have had a surplus to distribute among various suffering interests. I hope that the brewers and publicans, who have to pay an increased duty on their beer will take note of this fact, and I also hope that those who have to pay 1 per cent more on the Succession and Legacy duty will likewise bear it in mind. Now, Sir, with regard to this increase of 1 per cent on the Succession and Legacy duty, I do heartily rejoice that the Chancellor of the Exchequer has seen his way to lay the additional burdens, since they must be imposed, upon accumulations. I noted with pleasure the expression he used: he emphasized the word accumulations, and I repeat that I heartily rejoice he has decided to lay the additional burden upon accumulated wealth rather than to impose it on incomes earned by industry. I believe that this will lead to a sounder system of finance than we have reached at present. I rejoice, likewise, that the Chancellor of the Exchequer has seen his way to introduce a system of differential duties, that is, the imposing of heavier burdens upon larger accumulations than are imposed on smaller accumulations of property. He has stated that the extra duty will only be charged on properties of the value of more than £10,000. I should like to know how this amount of £10,000 is to be arrived at. Does he mean that a property of £10,000, however it may be divided, will pay the additional 1 per cent, or only that those who receive more than

£10,000 shall pay it? This makes a great deal of difference, for a man owning £9,000 may leave it to his child free of this extra duty, while a man leaving £45,000 may equally divide that between five children, each of whom may have to pay the additional 1 per cent. Surely that would be an injustice. But, Sir, as the right hon. Gentleman has seen his way to levying these additional duties on larger properties, why should he not have levied a differential income tax? He said, with very great truth, that the income tax presses heavily on small tradesmen, clerks, and others who are just above the level of the income tax payments. Why should he not have charged an additional tax on incomes, say of over £1,000, £2,000, and even £10,000 a year? I know it has been said that this is an idea like the "Will o' the Wisp," and that people may be led away by bogus speculations; but surely the right hon. Gentleman could devise a scheme by which a differential income tax might be charged. There is another matter as to which I feel it my duty to raise a protest, and I shall continue to raise my protest at the various stages of this financial measure. I regret that the right hon. Gentleman had not a single word to say with regard to what I may call the iniquitous Tea duty. I am sorry that he has not seen his way to remove it. Remember that you have to pay 6d. per pound on all tea, whatever may be its value—whether it fetches 4d. a pound in bond, or 1s., 1s. 6d., or 2s. Surely, Sir, there is no justice in an imposition of this kind, and when we remember how entirely tea has become a necessity of life, and how much its use has contributed to promote the sobriety of this country, I do regret most profoundly that we have not had any relief given to us in this matter. I feel it my duty to give notice that I shall at the proper stage of the financial measures oppose the continuance of this duty as it is at present levied. I feel very much sympathy, Sir, with the remarks which were made by the hon. Member for Islington, concerning the burdens that press upon the poorer classes of the community. I understood him to say that they contributed more than their fair share to the expenses of the nation. With that view I entirely

sympathize, but I would go further than that, and I contend that the poorer classes should not, below a certain limit, be called upon to contribute towards the expenses of the nation. I think they should be entirely free for taxation on articles which constitute the necessities of life—that any man who earns, say, an income of under £100 a year should not be required to pay taxes, either directly or indirectly except upon say, alcoholic drinks, or tobacco, which are indulgencies that he can dispense with. Remember that, although these classes may not contribute directly towards the Imperial Exchequer, they do so indirectly, and if there occurs a war in which say, 10 or 20 millions is expended, the result is that that amount of money is taken out of trade channels, and they are prevented from reaping the benefits of the expenditure of this money. I hope that the poorer classes will, in the future, become more and more alive to this fact, and that it will assist to stop any tendency on the part of Parliament to sanction extravagant expenditure of this kind.

***BARON DIMSDALE** (Herts, Hitchin): I always think that the occasion of the introduction of a Budget affords a very fair opportunity of criticizing in a fair and candid spirit the details of the Chancellor of the Exchequer's proposals. Personally, I am one of those who entertain a very strong opinion that the agriculturists have not received fair and just treatment at the hands of the Finance Minister. Last year the Chancellor of the Exchequer proposed to impose the Horse Tax, and the Van and Wheel Tax, and when he was questioned at the close of last Session as to whether he would persist in imposing these taxes he replied that, in consequence of the pressure of business, it had become perfectly impossible for him to entertain the hope that he would be able to proceed with those measures, and that they would therefore be withdrawn; but that the best course to be pursued by the County Councils which were to be established, would be to give expression to their opinion as to these measures, and that the Government would take those expressions of opinion into their consideration. Well, Sir, in obedience to the suggestion of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, not a few County Councils have passed resolutions

bearing out the views expressed by the right hon. Gentleman last year. Remember that we lost £540,000 a-year by the Horse Tax, and a probable £300,000 by the Van and Wheel Tax. We have been disappointed in this respect and we think it is not unreasonable that there should be an expression of opinion on our part with a view of inducing the Chancellor of the Exchequer to provide some means to recompense us for the loss. I do not believe that it is the fault of the right hon. Gentleman that these Bills were not passed. I believe no one was more anxious than he was to pass the measures, but I think we are bound to enter into these considerations—that, the measures not having been passed, we are entitled, and not unreasonably, to ask the Government how they mean to compensate us for the loss to be sustained. Remember, further, that £250,000 subvention to the roads has been taken away from us; it has been taken away from us in accordance with the general principle of the Local Government Bill, and I ask is it fair, is it right, or is it just, that we should have no amount allotted to us out of the Exchequer to supply the loss which we incurred when we gave our cordial support to the Local Government Act of last year on the faith that we were to be recompensed? It may be suggested that the Chancellor of the Exchequer intends still to do something for the agricultural interest; but what is he doing? He is increasing the beer tax; and I do not think that that is an increase upon which the agricultural interest is likely to look with favour. I remember when the beer tax was originally brought forward in the Liberal Budget of 1885, we, on this side of the House, did our best to defeat that particular scheme, because we thought it imposed an unfair burden on the agricultural industry, and dealt unfairly with the differential rates on Succession duty. On that occasion we defeated, by a narrow majority, the Liberal Administration of that day, and yet we have the unreasonable and absurd proposition included in the Liberal Budget of 1885—to wit, the dealing in a peacemeal and in an inequitable spirit with the Death duties, and the imposition of additional burdens on the consumers of beer and the growers of barley are brought for-

ward by a Conservative Government in contradiction to all the financial principles by the assertion of which, in opposition, they obtained Office and power four years ago. We shall be certainly in great difficulty when we go down to our constituencies if we are asked to explain the measures of relief the Government propose.

*MR. GOSCHEN: Perhaps I may be allowed to answer the observations made up to this point, lest I should seem to be guilty of discourtesy in forgetting some of them. Though I appreciate the tone of the remarks of the last speaker, I think he has hardly done justice to the Government or to himself. If I did not introduce into my Budget speech anything relating to local finance it must not be thought that the subject has been overlooked. I had intended to point out that the severance of local from Imperial finance prevented my dealing with local finance, but I omitted doing so because my statement was so long. But I can assure hon. Gentlemen behind me that the question of local finance will continue to occupy the attention of the Government, though they must understand that the Chancellor of the Exchequer is no longer responsible for local finance. And here I may answer the observations of the hon. Member for Bristol. In lieu of the grants formerly made to local authorities, they now have Licence duties and half the Probate duties. From this time local finance is separated from Imperial finance: and it is rather to the President of the Local Government Board that hon. Members must look for the development of the resources of local authorities. Some hon. Members have put strong pressure upon me to stand by the Horse tax and the Wheel tax, but I am bound to say they have not been so active in the country as they are in this House. One would not have thought, from the apathy the ratepayers of the country generally manifested in the defence of them, that these taxes were regarded with that satisfaction with which, I am glad to think, some people present regard them. I thought at the time when these taxes were proposed that there were so many people who had not horses or carts and who did pay rates, that the feeling of the ratepayers would have overborne the interest of the

carmen and horse owners; but it was not so, and the activity of the opponents of these taxes made it extremely difficult to carry my proposals without sacrificing too much time in discussing them. My hon. Friend (Baron Dimsdale) says that the proposal ought to be revived, but let me point out that now it is for the Municipal and County Councils to say whether they wish for the revival of these taxes. A certain number of County Councils have signified their adhesion to these taxes, but the expression of opinion is by no means universal, and I do not know whether it extends to a majority of those Councils. Then there is a further question: Are these taxes to be treated separately? Would the landed and agricultural interest be content to see the Horse Tax enforced, and not the Wheel Tax. [An hon. MEMBER: No.] That is my own impression. I believe that to revive the Horse Tax without the Wheel Tax would not be satisfactory to those who are anxious that both should be revived at the same time. Still I believe there is a difference of opinion, and that there are many quarters in which it is desired that the Horse Tax should be revived. The Government will continue to give their serious attention to the matter; and I stand by the declaration I have made that when the County Councils and local authorities express a desire sufficiently pronounced to give promise of adequate support, it will be the duty of the Government to see that this resource for local taxation should be realized and secured to the great interests which are concerned. But it will be for the local bodies to take the initiative. If their resources are insufficient through their not having these taxes, I do not think I should be justified in the present state of our finance, in making good the deficiency from Imperial resources. We must devise local means for assisting the rates. There is not a Member in the House who has a stronger opinion on the subject than I have. I think it is monstrous that no other means of raising revenue locally should have been discovered than that of rating; but it requires considerable support to make it possible to introduce a fresh tax. A new tax is like a new shoe—it pinches at the moment it is put on, and people will rather pay a pound in an old way

than a shilling in the form of a new tax. That is a tendency which must be got over if we are to put local finance on a sound basis. The matter will be considered by the President of the Local Government Board and the Government, and if local finance no longer finds a place in the Imperial Budget hon. Members must not think that it is in any way neglected by the Government. Then there is another point which has been urged with considerable energy, namely, the question of putting the compensation for the slaughter of cattle upon the Imperial Exchequer. That is a matter which does not really come within the limits of a Budget statement. A Budget statement is a statement which shows how to find the Ways and Means to meet the expenditure which is upon the Estimates, and therefore this is not an occasion upon which I can enter upon the question of the expediency or otherwise, or the justice, or otherwise, of dealing with this most important question. I may say, however, that the Government are engaged in considering to what extent, if any, the views of our Friends in this respect may be met. In the next place, let me say a word as to the criticisms made upon the proposed increase of the duty on beer. It is not proposed to increase the duty on the quantity of malt employed, but to alter the standard of specific gravity, on which the tax is calculated. I was very glad to hear the reply which my hon. Friend the Member for the Maldon Division of Essex (Mr. Gray) made in answer to some suggestions put forth by the hon. Baronet the Member for the Horsham Division (Sir W. Barttelot). The hon. Baronet suggested that the growers of barley would hear with dismay that this tax had been increased. But that increase is so small, and it is imposed in such a form that I cannot conceive it will have any effect whatever upon the growers of barley, and in that I am confirmed by the observation of my hon. Friend (Mr. Gray) that it is not only from barley that beer is brewed. Even if it were, the margin of brewers' profit, if one may judge from published statistics as regards breweries and the value of their goodwill, is sufficiently large to justify the hope that this increase, which only comes to 1-14th part of a

penny per gallon of beer, will not in its operation injure agricultural interests. It is entirely against our wish and contrary to our expectations that the tax should fall in the slightest degree on the growers of barley. I will not answer at any length the observations of the hon. Member for Leicester (Mr. Pictou) and the hon. Member for Islington (Mr. Bartley) who have opened up questions of such vast importance that I cannot follow them into the broad issues which they have raised. The hon. Member for Leicester complained that I did not allude to the Tea duty, or hold out any hope of its reduction or abolition. If there is one duty that is imposed absolutely on a Chancellor of the Exchequer it is that, if he cannot reduce or abolish a tax at a particular time, he should be absolutely silent as to whether that tax should be reduced or abolished at a future period. By holding out hopes of that kind he may diminish the Revenue of the year, and may raise expectations that cannot be realized in his attempt to secure popularity by an abstract expression of opinion. I must therefore observe absolute neutrality on the views which the hon. Member for Leicester has put forward on the subject of the Tea duty. Certainly I am not prepared, in a year in which I am compelled by the exigencies of the case to impose taxation—it would be wrong if I attempted it—to remit the duty as the hon. Gentleman desires. The hon. Member has enunciated a very broad doctrine, that persons who form a large proportion of the community should pay nothing whatever towards the taxation of the country; that they should be absolutely free from any contribution to the State; and that their only interest in the country should be the indirect interest they might have if its trade were severely smitten by taxation. I have always thought, and we have been brought up in the belief—which I should be very reluctant to abandon—that taxation and representation went together, and that it was desirable that all those who took part in the government of the country, as the great body of the people now do more largely than ever before, should in some small measure, according to their ability—and I do not wish them to do it beyond their ability—contribute towards the expenses of

the State. Beer, tobacco, and spirits have been spoken of as luxuries—[“Oh!”]—at all events, they are optional expenditure. The Tea duty, I admit, is a poll tax on a very low scale. If we abolish the Tea duty we shall have this result, which, I think, is unconstitutional—that a large proportion of the population will pay nothing whatever to the public revenue. [An hon. MEMBER: “Except on alcohol.”] The hon. Member says, “Except on alcohol.” Is it to be only those who take alcohol who are to be regarded as having a stake in the State? I do not want to put the consumers of alcohol so much higher than the consumers of tea as to enable them to say that they are contributing something towards the support of the State, while the tea-drinkers pay nothing. I admit that, as the hon. Member for Islington has suggested, we should examine with the greatest anxiety the proportion in which different classes contribute to the public expenditure. The hon. Member has spoken of the struggling middle-class and the poorer section of the community not actually belonging to the working class. I should have thought that the hon. Gentleman would have recognized in his statements, made both this evening and on other occasions, that if there is one class to which I have particularly directed my attention, so that they might be free from the continual oppression of the income tax, it is precisely the class to which the hon. Gentleman refers. I sympathize with the hon. Member on this point, and it is for that reason that I have rejected, and am anxious that the Government should continue to reject, the plan of constantly having recourse to the income tax, in order to save trouble to any Chancellor of the Exchequer who may be too timid to resort, when necessary, to any other source of taxation. It has also been suggested that we should apply the income tax only to the richer classes, and adopt a graduated scale. There are the greatest administrative difficulties in the way, difficulties which have baffled every man who has ever attempted to frame a plan in that direction. There is not only the principle to be settled, but also the problem to be solved how, with the greatest care and the greatest stringency, and without giving rise to the

development of fraud, we can raise the required revenue. There are other methods than ours in force in the United States, but, judging from what I have read, the amount of perjury and fraud which attends the collection of the revenue in the United States, and the valuation of the property and income of individuals, is stupendous and enough to make one stand aghast. I have endeavoured in my proposals as to the new Estate duty to exempt the class that excites the interest of the hon. Member for Islington, those with incomes of £300 or £400 a year. £10,000 represents an income of about that amount; and that is the income we should spare in life, and also at death. In aiming at this end I have proceeded on lines which have been previously accepted by both sides of the House. As regards the new Estate duty, it will be collected as regards personalty like the Probate duty, it will be collected as regards realty like the Succession Duty, but with this important difference—that in the case of realty the duty will not be charged, as Succession duty is charged, on the life interest only, but on the capital value of the whole estate wherever the successor takes an absolute interest. In the case of settled property, both personal and real, it will be paid upon the interest accruing. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Edinburgh (Mr. Childers) has raised the question of light gold. What I said, or meant to say, on this subject was that the question of light gold and the question of paper money generally, of the profit derived from it, and the maintenance or curtailment of certain monopolies in respect of paper issues, would have to be considered side by side. These issues are sufficiently large to give the question some importance. I cannot say how large the measure will be, as the perspective of the matter depends very much on the mind of the person who proposes the question. I believe it will be a considerable measure, and to carry it out I may have to invoke the cordial support of both sides of the House, because interests are touched in such matters which make themselves felt. The main point of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) lay rather outside the scope of this discussion. The right hon. Gentle-

man dwelt upon the aggregate amount that is provided for naval and military defence. The hon. Member for Bristol has emphasized the point, but has expressed some sympathy with a Chancellor of the Exchequer who, instead of being able to remit taxation, has to provide for a largely increased expenditure for naval and military purposes. These Gentlemen, however, will not see that if there is one person more interested than another in the security of the country, in the credit of the country, in the maintenance of trade, and in the absence of scares, it is the Chancellor of the Exchequer himself. The scares, and the reactions, and the depressions which follow scares, may vitally affect the Revenue. But there are not only scares and foolish fears to be provided against. I have before alluded to what I consider to be the really grave state of European politics; and, looking at the question from the merely fiscal point of view, and with an exclusive eye to the preservation of the sources of the country's revenue, the insurance provided by this expenditure appears to me indispensable. It would, indeed, be taking a narrow view of our duties if the Government were to shrink from that expenditure which they think to be imperatively demanded. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford was perfectly right from his point of view. The right hon. Gentleman believes that there is no danger, and that Great Britain never excited the envy of other Powers; and he looks upon all money spent upon the Army and Navy as practically thrown away.

*MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: I never said anything of the kind.

*MR. GOSCHEN: Of course, the right hon. Gentleman has never said anything of the kind. He would not like to commit himself to such a view; but that was his argument. It would be criminal upon our part to increase the expenditure unless we thought it absolutely necessary. Do hon. Members not think that the Government would be anxious, if they could, to take up the position of remitting taxation? We should like to remit taxation, we should like to spend our surplus in relieving the burdens of the people, and earn popularity in that way if we could. But we point to the situation in Europe and

say it absolutely demands this expenditure. We know our responsibility and feel that we cannot escape it. Then the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford (Mr. Shaw-Lefevre) having dealt with the Colonial Defence Bill and other matters, alluded to barrack accommodation, and treated that as if it were a wanton expenditure; but is that a wanton expenditure which provides for the health and well-being of the British soldier? Well, having denounced this expenditure, the right hon. Gentleman then appeared in a different capacity and addressed the Committee as an ex-Postmaster General. He dealt with the Post Office Revenue, stated how it was increasing, and how he desired to appropriate the surplus to Post Office purposes irrespective of the demands of the Exchequer.

*MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: In improving the Service.

*MR. GOSCHEN: In improving the Post Office Service. On that point I will make a declaration which may not be entirely palatable to all hon. Members, but which is straightforward and frank—I intend to hang on to the surplus of the Post Office to the best of my ability. The surplus has increased and is increasing, and no doubt there is a tendency on the part of the Department, perfectly natural and legitimate as a critical ex-Postmaster General will be aware, to make demands upon the Treasury. But we have here an annual source of Revenue of some £3,000,000, and I would ask those who have listened to me whether we can afford to part with this surplus? By what other tax is it to be replaced? Where are we to find, with less friction, less injustice to all classes, the three millions which a light-headed ex-Postmaster General would wish us to part with.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: I never suggested that the Government should part with it, or anything like it; what I pointed out was the growing increase in the surplus Revenue, and what I suggested was that we should revert to the arrangement of some eight or ten years ago, when the surplus was £2,500,000, and was well spent in improving the Service and giving the public greater facilities.

*MR. GOSCHEN: I am sorry to have excited the remonstrance of the right

hon. Gentleman; and perhaps in replying to him I should also have said that I have in mind what has been said by hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway, who attempt to make inroads on the Post Office surplus, showing how it could be appropriated to the improvement of the Service. I do not think that the percentage of the increase of the Revenue of the Post Office over the increase of the expenditure is so large as to allow the Chancellor of the Exchequer to sacrifice such Revenue, and I will go further and say that even if this indirect revenue from the Post Office means that one-third of a penny is pocketed by the State for every postage stamp sold, that constitutes a form of taxation which is as good and sound and provocative of as little friction and injustice as any tax which could possibly be imposed. I have burnt my boats. I have made my reactionary declaration. So far as I can exercise any influence over the Post Office, I will encourage every attempt to improve the Service. Assuredly, I should be sorry to take a churlish view of the great efforts of one of the best Departments that ever existed, a Department full of go and energy, an ambitious Department that would carry on the whole business of the country if it could. The thanks of the country are due for the magnificent way in which a most complicated service is conducted. I am sorry whenever there is a controversy between the Post Office and the Treasury, but I say again, looking at the want of elasticity in many branches of revenue, we should be blind to the interests of the country if we did not cling to the Post Office surplus with tenacity, though not in any miserly spirit. I think I have answered most of the points raised. Some remarks were made by the hon. Member for Poplar (Mr. Sydney Buxton) and others in regard to what were called inroads on the Sinking Fund. Well, of course, the whole of these criticisms were founded on a fallacy. The Sinking Fund is not a fixed charge; but the balance which remains over after the interest on the debt has been paid. The hon. Member for Poplar (Mr. Buxton) thinks it is a very improper thing that, after having largely reduced the interest, the country should not continue to pay

precisely the same sum as when the debt and the interest were larger, but I do not see the matter in that light. I have made no inroads whatever on the Sinking Fund, but, on the contrary, the Sinking Fund will be strengthened by the addition of the £500,000 which will fall to it after the current year. The Bill which we shall introduce will reduce the amount of the fixed charge from £26,000,000 to £25,000,000; but when that has been done and the additional £500,000 arising from the reduction of interest will go to the Sinking Fund by an automatic process and no further action will be necessary. There will be so much less interest paid, and that will swell the Sinking Fund by the corresponding amount. We have been accused of crushing the trade of the country by the taxation imposed, but I do not think as a fact that the trade of the country is crushed, but that it is expanding. I might set off against such remarks the complaint of my hon. Friend the Member for Islington that we are not paying so many taxes as are paid by other countries on the Continent.

*MR. BARTLEY: Excuse me, I made no complaint. I was discussing the rate of the repayments of our National Debt, and I said our taxation, local and Imperial, was, as compared with income, less than in other countries. That is rather matter for congratulation than complaint.

*MR. GOSCHEN: It was simply a rhetorical exaggeration to say that my hon. Friend complained of our reduced taxation towards the repayment of Debt. I accept his correction. But what he meant was that we, being less taxed, ought to pay largely for the reduction of Debt. I trust, therefore, he will not object to becoming a witness on my side, as opposed to those who complain that the country is crushed by taxation. I cordially hope, as I said before, that the time may come when I shall not have to stand here to advocate increased duties, and explain how they will fall on this interest or on that, but that it may be my happier task in future to give relief in some definite form, a task which must be infinitely more satisfactory to the Chancellor of the Exchequer than that which I have had the honour to perform to-night.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): The course of this debate leads me to think that this Budget is a good one. I have been delighted to hear the groanings and the moanings of hon. Gentlemen opposite, who claim to represent the landed interest—whether they really do so I do not know. The hon. Member for Hertfordshire anticipates great difficulty with his constituents owing to this Budget; but I have not the slightest objection to that—indeed, I hope the difficulties may become insuperable. The hon. Gentleman complained of his Chancellor of the Exchequer; but he had better be thankful for what he has got, for if he fell into our hands, we can assure him that we should treat him and those he represents infinitely worse than the present Chancellor of the Exchequer has. But it is always the case whatever Budget is proposed, whether from this side or that, we have gentlemen who represent the so-called landed interest complaining that they do not get what they are pleased to call relief. The hon. baronet the Member for Sussex, and the hon. Member for Hertfordshire sitting together up there, raise their voices like the two daughters of the horseleech and cry “Give!” “Give!” “Give!” What does the hon. Member for Hertfordshire want? He says that because the landed interest did not get the Wheel tax last year, therefore they are entitled to some sort of *quid pro quo* this year. I can assure him that most of us think that when a considerable portion of public Revenue was handed over to localities as against grants in aid, those localities gained largely by the change, and there is not the slightest chance that the House of Commons will vote any more. Another subject of complaint has been that the Exchequer does not pay for all the cattle destroyed to put down disease. But why should the whole public be called upon to pay? We know that these cattle are destroyed in the interests of owners of cattle. The only fair and reasonable thing, if you want to distribute the burden, is to have a tax on every animal, and pay for those that must be destroyed. That would be equal to insuring yourselves, but I see no claim to asking the country to share your losses with you. One hon. Gentleman actually raised a

complaint on behalf of the poor brewers, but it is really a little too absurd, in view of recent transactions by which shares in brewing companies have risen to 200 premium, that brewers should complain because a trifle of taxation is put upon them. The fact is no class is more unfair to the public than brewers. I have always thought drinkers of beer are the most foolish people in the United Kingdom, not because they drink beer, but because they pay too much for it. The brewers charge the same amount to the publicans, whatever the price of malt and hops may be. We know perfectly well that if the price of malt goes down the difference finds its way into the pockets of the brewers. Gentlemen who grow barley should fight out the dispute with the brewers, not come here for relief. I certainly think that brewers have no claim upon our sympathy, for I have always understood their profits are excessive, considering the amount of capital they put into their business. It is my misfortune to disagree with the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Shaw-Lefevre) in reference to the Post Office revenue. I was delighted to hear the Chancellor of the Exchequer’s statement that he means to hold fast to the Post Office and Telegraph surplus. I hope he will stick to it, for no tax falls so lightly. We often hear a great deal of praise of Rowland Hill; and I suppose we do owe to his memory a debt of gratitude, but I am sure many hon. Members must have felt the feeling of antagonism I often feel when we find the huge increase in our letters since the reduction of the postage. I hope to goodness the postage will never be reduced below its present rate, increasing our burden of daily letters. I cannot say I agree with my hon. Friend the Member for Leicester in his extraordinary theory that nobody with an income under £100 a-year should pay taxes. I can understand how many men with large families and scarcely able to find the necessities of life cannot pay taxes, but to abolish taxation on incomes under £100 would mean that the majority of electors would not pay a farthing. My hon. Friend says that these people would still thoroughly realize the evils of war, because of the effects on trade and industry. But I should like it to be brought home to

every one by means of taxation what an evil war is. I would have a proportion of the burden fall on everyone who is above the position of wanting the necessities of life. But I can agree with my hon. Friend in what he says about the Tea duty. The objection to indirect taxation is, of course, that it presses unequally, the poor man paying much more in proportion to his income than the rich man. With a sixpenny Tea duty the rich man who gives 2s. a pound for his tea, pays 25 per cent in taxation, and the poor man who buys tea at 1s. pays 50 per cent. Rich or poor, I imagine a man's consumption of tea will be about the same. The Chancellor of the Exchequer asks us to sympathize with him, because he has had to meet so many heavy demands on account of naval and military expenditure, but I cannot allow that he deserves any sympathy. He should have realized what it was to take his place as Chancellor of the Exchequer among the Tories. The right hon. Gentleman says it is preposterous to suppose that he is not actuated by a sense of patriotism, because this expenditure from an electioneering point of view is not popular. I am not so sure that it is not a good election dodge. We remember how this promise of expenditure was used as a bribe to influence an election. The Jingo policy has always a certain amount of popularity, and it draws off attention from the home policy of the Government, which hon. Members must acknowledge has not been very successful. If I were a Tory I do not know that I could recommend a better policy than to beat the Jingo drum, call for large expenditure on the Navy, and denounce everybody who did not agree with me as utterly unpatriotic. That has been done many times before; but as the Chancellor of the Exchequer is not responsible for the expenditure, I think we have nothing to complain of. It has been suggested that we ought to increase the Sinking Fund with the profit which accrues from the Conversion scheme; I, for my part, shall be always sorry to hear of one single penny being paid off the National Debt. I know that there are Members on this side of the House who do not agree with me. But, Sir, our grandparents incurred a very large amount of expenditure which

they ought to have paid off, and surely all that our grandchildren can ask is that we should pay our own way. I have not the slightest notion of being taxed a single farthing for the benefit of our grandchildren. I can only say we must leave our grandchildren to settle with our grandparents. Now, I must congratulate the right hon. Gentleman on having introduced a graduated scale into the system of Death duties. As far as I can gather from the explanations which the right hon. Gentleman has given, the additional duty will be imposed on the amount the legatee leaves, however the money may be distributed. I should have thought it would have been infinitely better not to impose the additional duty in cases where the legacy was under £10,000, because the effect would be that men would divide their property among numerous people. Amongst the Romans it was the custom for men to leave their money to their children and to their acquaintances, and it seems to me most desirable to put an end to a system which is one of the greatest curses of this country, and which enables great fortunes to accumulate from generation to generation. I want to see a large number of persons of moderate means, and fewer who are exceedingly poor or exceedingly rich. I, therefore, hope that in times to come we shall be able to drive home the wedge, the thin edge of which the Chancellor of the Exchequer has introduced. This is not a really Democratic Budget, and I suppose we must wait until a Liberal Ministry is in power to get what we want. We have had, of course, Liberal Ministries, and, although they have not done all we wanted, they have done a good deal; but now we believe the Radical element has become sufficiently strong to enable us to have our own way in these matters in the future. I observe that the right hon. Gentleman rather under-estimated the revenue for next year; and that leads me to suppose he expects to remain in power for another twelve months. I am perfectly certain that if he thought a Liberal Chancellor of the Exchequer would have been in power he would not have given him the advantage. I do not complain of that—indeed, I hope that the revenue may greatly exceed his estimates. On

the whole, I am bound to say, I think we have very little to find fault with in the present Budget. There is one point on which I should like a little explanation. The right hon. Gentleman pointed to a large saving in the Civil Service Estimates. I am sorry he did not explain to us more definitely how that saving had been brought about, but I think that his remarks were intended as an encouragement to those who sit on this side of the House to look after the Estimates. It appears that although during the last three years we ourselves have not been able to carry any reductions, yet the effect of our protests has been that the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Treasury have been strengthened to hold their hands against the different Public Departments, and a considerable reduction has been effected. That, Sir, will encourage us to persevere in our efforts. We shall know in the future that we have the sympathy of the right hon. Gentleman. I know that he is not generally in the House when the Estimates come on, but I can assure him that those who sit on this side of the House will bear in mind the observations he has made, and will do their best to receive his continued approval in the future.

*MR. JAMES LOWTHER (Kent, Thanet): I trust my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer will duly note the quarter of the Committee from whence comes the most cordial eulogy on his Budget. The hon. Member for Northampton has, it is true, twitted the right hon. Gentleman with not having vied with some of his Predecessors in regard to the amount of the expenditure, and I think we must remember that the Government which the hon. Gentleman supports once brought in a Budget of 100 millions, and the present Chancellor of the Exchequer has fallen short of that sum by several millions.

MR. CHILDERS: I may be allowed to say that the right hon. Gentleman is entirely mistaken. The statement that the Budget was for 100 millions was due to the fact that certain figures had been added up twice over.

*MR. LOWTHER: Of course I am not responsible for the accuracy of the calculating machine which compared the Budget, but I think I am not alone

in sharing the opinion which, however, I have now afforded the right hon. Gentleman an opportunity of correcting. The hon. Member for Leicester has spoken in favour of a system of taxation under which no taxes whatever are to be paid by persons having an income of less than £100 a year, but who are to have the entire control of the national expenditure? The hon. Member for Northampton cannot bring himself to endorse such a doctrine as that, and says that he is anxious to bring home to all classes in the country the horrors of war, which no doubt accounts for the persistence with which the hon. Gentleman opposes all defensive measures for the protection of our shores. But there is one point in the Budget against which I wish to enter my humble protest, and that is against the dealing with what are popularly known as the Death duties. The principle of those duties has always been opposed by Members sitting on this side of the House. They have been especially denounced from the point of view of the landed interest, for it has been pointed out that land is heavily enough taxed without recourse being had to these special and exceptional imposts which press so heavily upon those who are called into the possession of the land. Again, the impost has been objected to because it is levied at a time and in a manner which is, perhaps, the most inconvenient and unfair towards those who have to contribute towards it. Now, if I understand my right hon. Friend aright, he proposes to introduce an entirely novel feature into this most objectionable impost. Hitherto, so far as landed estates are concerned, it has been levied upon the actual life interest which the inheritor takes. I understand the right hon. Gentleman now proposes to levy it on the actual cost of the estate.

MR. GOSCHEN: The tax will be levied like the Succession duty, and will not be exacted in a lump sum.

*MR. LOWTHER: I quite understand that my right hon. Friend only proposes to levy it in the half-yearly instalments with which we are too painfully familiar, but I question whether he is levying it in a fair and judicious manner. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Edinburgh in one of his

Budgets proposed to levy an additional sum on the holders of corporate estate as an equivalent for the Death duties, from which they were, of course, exempt, and that surely would be a more fair and equitable manner of raising money than that which the Chancellor of the Exchequer now proposes. The Chancellor of the Exchequer proposes, in the shape of the Death duties, to raise additional sums from the owners of real estates, and to this subject I will for a moment address myself. I say that if he is desirous of raising further sums from owners of real estate, it would be more equitable to make the charges payable year by year in a regular manner, rather than to do it in the haphazard method which is now proposed. I have said this because there has been a disposition to assume that the Conservative Party has run away from its former opinions with regard to the injustice and iniquity of this tax. My right hon. Friend knows that I make these remarks in no unfriendly disposition towards him or towards the Treasury Bench. The hon. Gentleman the Member for Leicester mentioned just now that he would have been glad to see the abolition of the duty upon tea. Well, now Sir, at the risk of following the example of the Chancellor of the Exchequer and endeavouring to gain plaudits from hon. Gentlemen opposite, I will say at once that I am strongly in favour of abolishing the duty on tea, and, in fact, of abolishing the duties on all articles which do not come into competition with the native products of this country. I think if my right hon. Friend had saved his friends a little more and had got something further from those outside the limits of Her Majesty's dominions, he would have produced a much better Budget than that which he has brought forward on this occasion. Something was said just now by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Northampton, and also by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Leicester, about the Tea Duty being in the nature of a Poll Tax levied upon all taxpayers at large throughout the country. I believe that a *bond fide* Poll Tax in the shape of a tax on imported foreign labour in lieu of it would have been intensely popular, and I hold that some such tax is necessary to mit-

gate the evils of the sweating system, which is grinding down the working classes of this country. Now Sir, I shall not any longer detain the House, beyond saying this, that I fear I cannot associate myself with some of the remarks which have been made from this side of the House, and notably by my hon. Friend the Member for Islington. Nothing more unconstitutional and less Conservative in all senses of the word can be imagined than a graduated income tax. I fear that my right hon. Friend has not held himself entirely from these pernicious principles. He has, I am afraid, shown an example, which is already too prevalent, of laying down the principle, that "he who pays the piper is to have no share practically in calling the tune." The right hon. Gentleman talks of the Constitutional doctrine of taxation and representation being co-extensive; but what becomes of that doctrine when the right hon. Gentleman proposes that a large mass of the taxpayers should contribute nothing practically towards these additional imposts? These are most dangerous doctrines which he is adopting, and I trust that the Committee will withhold its sanction. I hope my right hon. Friend will reconsider his decision to charge the Death Duties on the corpus of the estate, and that he will relieve an already over-burdened interest of the additional impost which he proposes to put on.

Mr. R. K. CAUSTON (Southwark, West): If, Sir, I had been fortunate enough to catch your eye before the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer replied, I should have congratulated the right hon. Gentleman on the fact that he had not yielded to the persuasive eloquence of agricultural Members who desired him to renew his efforts in regard to the imposition of a Van and Wheel Tax, but after the remarks of the right hon. Gentleman I must rejoice that in future he will have nothing to do with local finance, and that the duties in connection with this branch will have to be discharged by my right hon. Friend the President of the Local Government Board. This change having taken place, I think we are entitled to make an appeal to the President of the Local Government Board to-night for some informa-

tion with regard to his future intentions. The hon. Member for the Malden Division of Essex has reminded me that when I was the president of the Essex Chamber of Agriculture I knew how enlightened the agriculturists of Essex were, and I rejoice to know that they still show great common sense. I have noticed that the Essex County Council has not joined in those resolutions which have been passed by other County Councils in reference to this matter, but have rejected by a large majority a proposal urging the Chancellor of the Exchequer to re-introduce his Van and Wheel tax. I do not desire to do any in justice to agriculturists, but I feel it would be a great hardship to impose on the towns taxes which would only benefit agricultural districts. I understand, from the Chancellor of the Exchequer, that in future the taxes derived from the money which has been handed over to the County Councils are not to be interfered with in any shape or way, unless the County Councils agitate on the subject. I was sorry to notice, Sir, that the Chancellor of the Exchequer said nothing about one tax upon an industry which was referred to last year—I mean the Carriage tax. This is a tax upon labour, and I had hoped that the agitation which had taken place in regard to it might have had some effect upon the mind of the right hon. Gentleman, and as he did not renew his proposals with regard to the Van and Wheel Tax, he would, at any rate, show some sympathy for a similar branch of trade. This tax is undoubtedly injurious to the carriage industry. It is proved that the warehouses are crowded with second-hand carriages, which ought to be in the possession of innkeepers in the country and of jobmasters. But these men cannot afford to keep surplus carriages because of the impost. The right hon. Gentleman has spread his net wide in order to secure a surplus next year, and we can look with almost certainty that this expectation will be realized.

*MR. BONSOR (Surrey, Wimbledon): Sir, the statement that the Beer duty was originally based on the supposition that two bushels of malt were equivalent to thirty-six gallons of beer, and that the specific gravity of the beer was altered from 1,057 to 1,055 for duty

purposes, in consequence of representations made by the brewers, is absolutely correct. But the right hon. Gentleman when he said that the figures of the brewers were proved in the long run to be incorrect, was, I think, inaccurate. I stand by the figures which were brought out in 1880. In 1882 I was a member of a deputation of brewers, which waited on the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian, when he admitted that the figures we had placed before him in the preceding year were absolutely correct, although he could not at that time give us the relief we asked for. I have only risen to ask the right hon. Gentleman to give us an opportunity of meeting him in any public place so as to prove that the figures we produced in 1880 were correct. If the right hon. Gentleman wishes to increase the duty on beer, let him not do so on the supposition that there was an error in the original figures, but let him base his proposal upon a national issue.

*MR. N. P. SINCLAIR (Falkirk): I may be allowed to say that, in my opinion, the Budget presented by the Chancellor of the Exchequer is one that, as a whole, will give great satisfaction to the nation at large, and in nothing more than in the fact that it will prevent those who, in the past, have been claiming exemptions in matters relating to the Death duties from being able to retain those exemptions in the future. Those persons will, in future, have to bear their fair and reasonable share in the taxation of the country. The matter is a small one, but I have no doubt it will receive due attention.

*SIR R. FOWLER (London): It seems to me that the future Chancellor of the Exchequer, whoever he may be, will be puzzled to accommodate his friends in the different views they express. In reference to what has been said by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford with regard to the increase of the Navy, I desire to state that my constituents heartily approve of the scheme of the Government—especially in respect to that part of their proposals, and that being the case they will cordially support the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer in the course he is pursuing. I do not propose

to go into the question opened up by my hon. Friend near me, but I would say that if an increase of taxation be found necessary it is quite right that the taxation should, as far as possible, be drawn from the class best able to bear it. So far I agree with the hon. Gentleman the Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere), with whom I am not very often in agreement; and I can only offer my congratulations to my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer on his very successful Budget and on the statesmanlike manner in which he has met the difficulties by which he has been surrounded.

MR. BIGGAR (Cavan): Seeing that the right hon. Gentleman requires an increase of the taxation of the country, I would ask why is it that we are asked for a large increase on the expenditure of the Army and Navy? Of course the right hon. Gentleman has not a free hand with regard to the provision he is called on to make; but for my part I cannot agree with the conclusions arrived at by hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite with regard to the Budget which has just been presented by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The hon. Gentleman the Member for Wimbledon (Mr. Bonsor) complains of the small increase of taxation proposed to be put upon beer. I think the hon. Gentleman very indiscreet in raising a discussion on this question, because he ought to be aware that the taxation on that commodity is, in proportion to its alcoholic strength, much less than that which is put upon whisky. Therefore, the less said on that subject the more discreet will the advocates of the beer interest be. So far, I think the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer is entitled to credit, and I think the only mistake the right hon. Gentleman has made is that he has not laid a heavier tax on that beverage. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Thanet (Mr. Lowther) complains very much that extra taxation is to be placed on the class which is best able to bear it; but in my opinion those who are most able to pay increased taxation are those from whom it ought to be exacted. The people who are hardly able to live on the income they earn ought to be taxed as lightly as possible, and one of the disadvantages of the

system of indirect taxation is, that under it the poorer classes are called on to contribute more than their fair share of the taxation of the country. This being so, I think that those who are the owners of large properties should be slow to place difficulties in the way of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The only objection I have to the scheme of the right hon. Gentleman is that it does not go far enough with regard to the main items on which he proposes to lay extra taxation; but, under the circumstances, so far as the taxation is concerned, I think there is very little cause to complain.

*MR. DIXON HARTLAND (Uxbridge): I believe the proposals of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer will receive the approval of the commercial classes; but I am very sorry that he has not introduced the question of light gold into his Budget. As it is, he has given us either too much or too little. He stated—and it was also repeated by the right hon. Gentleman the ex-Chancellor of the Exchequer—that it was quite right that the taxpayer should not be called upon to bear the loss of light gold. I do not see any reason why the general taxpayer should not bear that loss. The general taxpayers use the light gold, and the whole of them should contribute to the loss. I do not think it is fair that those who happen to have the light gold last should pay for the whole of the loss in weight. Whenever the question is brought forward, I think it should be regarded as affecting the whole of the taxpayers. Now, the Chancellor of the Exchequer held out a sort of threat that the tax to provide for the loss is to be paid partly at the expense of the paper issues at present used in this country; and I think we cannot regard that in any other way than that it is an attempt to do away with the private issues of various banks.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Gentleman is now transgressing beyond the limits of debate.

MR. DIXON HARTLAND: I was only following the remarks of the Chancellor of the Exchequer with view of asking him certain questions. Of course, after what he has said, the banking community will feel a great interest

in the subject he has brought forward, with reference to light gold, and I want to know whether he can give us any more information as to the plans he proposes. He has already said so much that there will be a great feeling of uneasiness and discomfort in banking circles, and I do think the question of where the loss for light gold will fall, to which the right hon. Gentleman alluded, will have to be discussed in the country before it comes up again.

*MR. GOSCHEN: I will reply in a very few words to one or two of my hon. Friends. In answer to my hon. Friend the Member for Wimbledon I can assure him that nothing is further from my intention than to throw any doubt upon the *bona fides* of the representations made by the brewers to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian in 1881. I have stated to the House the history of the subject. The brewers maintained that an extra revenue of £800,000 would be obtained from his scheme, while the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian estimated it at £300,000. At all events I will give my hon. Friend, and any of those associated with him, a full opportunity of sketching their views to me, and of correcting any false impressions that may have been derived from the history I have heard and repeated. But the point, of course, to which he and his Friends will have to direct attention is whether the 1055 or the 1057 limit is the correct limit to take. I cannot complain in the slightest degree of the observations of my hon. Friend, who is perfectly entitled to call the attention of the Committee to the point; but I trust that, whatever course the controversy may take, he and his friends will be assured that I intended to put no slight whatever upon the representations of the great interest with which he is associated to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian, in 1881.

MR. BONSOR: The whole question was, what was the equivalent of the quartern of malt in 1881? And the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian in 1881 actually admitted that the figures of the brewers were absolutely correct.

Mr. Dixon Hartland

*MR. GOSCHEN: Very well; I will give my hon. Friends every opportunity to represent their case, but, at all events, my hon. Friend will feel that I can fairly make the brewing interest pay £300,000. Nor do I understand that my hon. Friend so much objects to the taxation of that splendid industry, of which he is an ornament, as to the expressions I have used in submitting my proposal. Well, then, by way of compromise, I would wish to withdraw every single argument I have used, provided I can get his assent to the payment of the £300,000. My hon. Friend the Member for Uxbridge spoke of the question of light gold, and wished me to say something more upon the matter. But, in saying anything further I feel that I am treading upon very delicate ground, because our proposals are not yet fully matured. But as he has asked me to say something, I am bound to remind him that many years ago proposals were made to the private bankers by the Member for Mid Lothian which gave the monopoly they enjoyed an additional life of 15 years. The matter fell through, however, and the right hon. Gentleman was defeated. I must say that I do not think that the private bankers can claim that the monopoly which they hold should be a permanent monopoly. At the same time, I do not wish the words that I used to be pushed too far, because I adjusted them carefully to cover other matters in my mind. There are a great many questions floating in the air, among them those relating to silver, on which there are recommendations by the Royal Commission—questions on which there may be a difference of opinion, and questions which have been under my consideration, but in regard to which I should hope to be excused from making any premature statement. I was sorry to hear the observations of my right hon. Friend, who stated that perhaps in my position I had not been able sufficiently to understand that the Conservative Party were opposed to the Death duties altogether. I had understood that the Conservatives were only opposed to the Death duties on realty being put on the same footing as the Death duties on personalty, as long as no allowance was made for the additional burdens which are borne by the

land. That is a contention I have always supported, and I think that in any increase of the Death Duties, a great deal is to be said on the side of those who argue that the land is under certain disadvantages as regards the income tax, and that it is unfair to treat it equally with personalty as regards the Death Duties, without giving it some relief in respect of income tax. I consider, however, that I have dealt by no means unfairly, either with lands or houses, in the proposals I have made. It is very difficult to adjust taxation equally on the various interests, but I have done my best.

MR. CRAIG (Newcastle): I should like to call the attention of the Chancellor of the Exchequer to the fact that, in his proposals about the Death Duties, he has entirely forgotten those who live. He has fallen very much into the same error he fell into last year in connection with his proposals as to the duties on bottled wines—he has taxed the poor as much as the rich. I ask the right hon. Gentleman to consider this between now and the time when he frames his Bill, and brings it into the House. Let me give an illustration. Take the case of ten children, inheriting £10,000—£1,000 each, and then take the case of two children, inheriting £5,000 each. How would the right hon. Gentleman work that out so as to make the burden approximate to the capacity to bear it?

Question put, and agreed to.

*MR. GOSCHEN: I do not know whether the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Childers) would object to the other Resolutions being moved now. It would be a convenience to pass them as I would then put them into the Bill. If we do not pass the Resolutions it will be impossible for me to introduce the Bill between now and the Easter Holidays, and clearly it would be an advantage to hon. Members to have the Measure in a complete form in their hands by the holidays.

*MR. CHILDERS: I should be glad to do anything I can to expedite business, but there is a definite rule in these matters which has been observed for a long time. When it is a question of dealing with an existing duty, such as the renewal of the tea duty, or the income tax, or the increase of a Customs

or Excise duty, no doubt it is wise to pass the Resolution on the first night, but it is not so in regard to other new duties. When a new duty in connection with stamps, for instance, is proposed, it is not customary to pass the Resolution relating to that duty the first night. It is taken afterwards. The right hon. Gentleman knows that the Resolutions can be reported to-morrow, and the Bill brought in, and that he can bring in the other Resolutions afterwards, and incorporate them in the Bill.

*MR. GOSCHEN: I cannot, of course, force the matter, but I thought it would have been convenient to pass the Resolutions dealing with the Death Duties and the other matters to-night.

*MR. CHILDERS: It is our duty in these matters to have some regard to precedent, and as the plan I propose will not really lead to delay, I think we should not depart from the usual custom.

INCOME TAX.

(2.) Resolved, That towards raising the Supply granted Her Majesty, there shall be charged, collected, and paid for the year which commenced on the sixth day of April, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-nine, in respect of all Property, Profits, and Gains mentioned or described as chargeable in the Act of the sixteenth and seventeenth years of Her Majesty's reign, chapter thirty-four, the following Duties of Income Tax (that is to say):—

For every twenty shillings of the annual value or amount of property, profits, and gains chargeable under Schedules (A), (C), (D), or (E) of the said Act, the duty of six pence;

And for every twenty shillings of the annual value of the occupation of lands, tenements, hereditaments, and heritages chargeable under Schedule (B) of the said Act—

In England the duty of three pence;

In Scotland and Ireland respectively, the duty of two pence farthing;

Subject to the provisions contained in section one hundred and sixty-three of the Act of the fifth and sixth years of Her Majesty's reign, chapter thirty-five, for the exemption of persons whose income is less than one hundred and fifty pounds, and in section eight of "The Customs and Inland Revenue Act, 1876," for the relief of persons whose income is less than four hundred pounds.

BEER DUTY.

(3.) Resolved, That the Duty of Excise imposed by section eleven of "The Inland Revenue Act, 1880," and the duty of Customs imposed by section three of "The Customs and Inland

Revenue Act, 1881," in respect of Beer by relation to Worts of a specific gravity of one thousand and fifty-seven degrees, shall be charged, collected, levied, and paid in respect of Beer by relation to Worts of a specific gravity of one thousand and fifty-five degrees, and that the said Acts shall be read and construed as if the gravity of one thousand and fifty-five degrees were therein substituted for the gravity of one thousand and fifty-seven degrees wherever such last-mentioned gravity is therein referred to.

And that the charge of Duty in respect of Beer shall extend to Berlin White Beer and other preparations, whether fermented or not fermented, of a character similar to Rum, Spruce or Black Beer.

Amendment of Law of Customs and Inland

REVENUE.

(4.) Resolved, that it is expedient to amend the Law relating to the Customs and Inland Revenue."

Resolutions to be reported to-morrow.

Committee to sit again upon Monday 29th April.

SUPPLY—CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES.

SUPPLY—Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

CLASS II.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £38,244, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1890, for the salaries and expenses of the offices of the House of Lords."

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): I would ask the Representatives of the Government whether at 20 minutes to 12 o'clock they seriously think of going on with Supply? They have only 20 minutes before them, and as this is a controversial vote, I do not think they will gain anything by going on with Supply. As the Secretary to the Treasury will see, there are four or five Amendments on different points on the Paper, so that if we were to discuss the vote the discussion could lead to nothing. I do not wish to Move to report Progress, as I am not speaking with a view to obstruction or anything of that kind.

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (MR. JACKSON, Leeds, N.): I thought it our duty under the circumstances to attempt to obtain Supply, but

if the hon. Gentleman thinks it would be useless to proceed with the Votes, we will not insist on the matter. I move to report Progress.

Question "That the Chairman report Progress and ask leave to sit again," [Mr. Jackson,] put, and agreed to.

Committee report Progress, to sit again to-morrow.

OFFICIAL SECRETS BILL. (No. 47).

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

On Clause 3.

MR. KENNY (Tyrone Mid): I notice that to these clauses the hon. Member for Kirkcubly (Sir G. Campbell) and another hon. Member have Amendments, and as these hon. Gentlemen are not in their places it would be as well to postpone the Bill.

*THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir R. WEBSTER, Isle of Wight): The Amendments referred to are Amendments I would not accept if they were moved. Hon. Members will have an opportunity of bringing them on on the Report stage of the Bill.

Bill reported without amendment; to be read third time to-morrow.

OCCUPIERS DISQUALIFICATION

REMOVAL BILL. (No. 52).

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

MR. BIGGAR (Cavan, W.): The hon. Member who moved the Second Reading of this Bill should, I think, have given us some explanation of its object. He has moved his Motion a great many times, but, so far as I know, he has never given any explanation of the measure, which may be of a very objectionable character. I think that all these Bills dealing with the Registration and the Franchise should be in the hands of the Government of the day. The law as to registration is in a most anomalous state; but if we were to have every private Member of this House coming forward with Bills in favour of their pet

theories, we should be occupied for the whole Session with these questions. The Government of the day should take the matter up, and introduce the necessary reforms. This Bill may or may not be of a desirable nature, but it seems to me to be one liable to very great abuse. There is little doubt that at no distant date the County Councils will have control of the police. Under the present law they have not that control, and the police are, therefore, independent of the Local Authority. When they take over that control, however, if the police have votes the County Council would be able to command those votes, and thus give the majority on the Council an unfair advantage over minorities. It would be well to decide that the Bill shall be read a second time this day six months; but, seeing that it has not been explained, and that no reason has been given for acceptance, I beg to move that the debate be now adjourned.

Motion made and Question proposed,
 "That the Debate be now adjourned."
 —(*Mr. Biggar.*)

*THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: I hope the hon. Gentleman will not persist in his Motion. As he has moved the adjournment of the debate, it is impossible to explain the object of the Bill. It is a very simple measure, and if the hon. Member will withdraw his Motion I will explain it.

MR. COURTNEY (Cornwall, Bodmin): I hope the hon. Member for Cavan will withdraw his Motion. He asked for an explanation of the Bill last year, which he received, and now he allows the measure to be read a second time—although it is true he opposed it on every other occasion.

MR. KENNY (Tyrone, Mid): I do not think that in the 10 minutes allowed to us it is possible to consider this important question of the franchise law. The Bill would place certain persons in the service of the Crown in a better position for voting purposes than everybody else. ["No, no!"] Yes, that is so, and, under the circumstances, I ask whether the Bill is not one for the Attorney General himself to bring in. When the Liberal Government dealt with the subject of the election law the Attorney General the Member for Bury (Sir Henry James) himself took

charge of the Bill. It was not left for four private Members to deal with it.

MR. BLANE (Armagh, S.): The Bill seems to me one for the enfranchisement of 14,000 voters, and, consequently, one of great importance. I have no hesitation, under the circumstances, in supporting the Motion of my hon. Friend.

MR. NOLAN (Louth, N.): I beg to support the Motion of my hon. Friend, if only as a protest against the attempt to rush such a measure through at this late hour.

MR. J. O'CONNOR (Tipperary, S.): I certainly think the House is entitled to more time to consider the measure than can be afforded to-night. I believe it to be a most objectionable measure. ["Order, order!"] I do not wish to discuss the merits of the Bill, but I should like to have time to consider it. It is becoming too much the practice with hon. Members on the opposite side of the House to spring these Bills, like mines, upon the House, and I must protest against such a slipshod method of legislation. The hon. Member for Cavan has done excellent service in objecting to the passage of the measure.

MR. BYRON REED (Bradford, E.) rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put;" but Mr. Speaker withheld his assent, and declined then to put that Question. Debate resumed.

It being midnight, the Motion for the Adjournment of the Debate lapsed without Question put; and the Debate on the Second Reading stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed upon Thursday, 2nd May.

HERRING FISHERY (SCOTLAND) BILL. [BILL No. 16.]

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clauses 1, 2, and 3 agreed to.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 15, after the word "direct," to leave out the word "hooped," and insert the words "and shall be made."—(*Mr. Attorney General.*)

Question, "That the word 'hooped' stand part of the Clause," put, and negatived.

Question proposed, "That the words 'and shall be made' be there inserted."

DR. CAMERON (Glasgow, College Division): I would point out that this is a matter on which those whose interests will be affected by the measure have hardly had sufficient time to consider the Lord Advocate's proposals.

MR. ESSLEMONT (Aberdeen, E.): This Bill has been before the House for the past few months and the Amendments for some weeks. It is a very important Bill, and largely affects the constituency I represent; but I think that on its general principles all parties are agreed. I hope it will be allowed to pass through Committee, and if necessary it can be further digested on Report.

Objection being taken to further proceeding, the Chairman left the Chair to make his report to the House.

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon Monday, 6th May.

REMOVAL OF WRECKS ACT (1877)

AMENDMENT BILL. (BILL No. 3.)

As amended, considered; read the third time, and passed.

PRISONERS (IRELAND) BILL.

[BILL No. 2.]

Order read for resuming Proceeding on Amendment to Question [13th March], "That the Bill be now read a second time."

And which Amendment was—

After the word "That" in the Main Question, to add the words "in the opinion of this House, it is inexpedient to proceed with the consideration of a measure which proposes to modify the prison treatment of a certain class of prisoners in Ireland, and leaves to the ordinary law other prisoners whose offences are not of the character usually associated with crime."—(*Mr. T. W. Russell.*)

Question again proposed, "That those words be there added."

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: I beg to ask leave to withdraw the Amendment.

Motion made and Question put, "That the Amendment be withdrawn," agreed to.

MR. SEXTON: Will the Solicitor General for Ireland state the effect of the measure as to prisoners in Ireland?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (MR. MADDEN): I will answer that question to-morrow.

Motion made, and Question put, "That the Order be discharged, and the Bill withdrawn"; agreed to.

MOTIONS.

—o—

EDUCATIONAL ENDOWMENTS (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1832, (BLAIR'S CHARITY).

MR. HUGH ELLIOT (Ayrshire): I beg to move—

"That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, praying Her Majesty to withhold her consent from the scheme for the management of the endowments of Blair's Charity, in the parish of Galston, Mair's Free School, in the parish of Loudoun, and Brown of Waterhaugh's Charitable Foundation, in the parishes of Galston and Loudoun, approved by the Scotch Education Department (by Act), and now lying upon the Table of the House, in so far as regards the provisions relating to Mair's Free School, in the parish of Loudoun."

The scheme to which this Motion relates concerns three endowments, with regard to two of which I have no objection to make, and have nothing to say. My objection relates to the third scheme only—namely, that which is applicable to Mair's Free School, in the parish of Loudoun. That endowment was intended for the benefit of the people in the vicinity of the village of Darvel, and was distinctly left for the purposes of free education. There can be no doubt whatever in regard to the intention of the founder in that respect, as he clearly and explicitly declared that the endowment was left in favour of establishing a charitable free school at Darvel, though he ought also to have declared that it was for the purpose of educating children free of all expense. Up to the present time the endowment has been carried out in many respects in accordance with the wishes of the founder, and the net income is £150. The recipients of it are children of the working classes residing in the village of Darvel, to whom it has given free education. Why should the Education Commissioners step in and interfere with this happy state of things? They find the endowment carried out according to the wish of the founder, and yet they come forward and pass the scheme which now lies on the Table of this House, and under which

they divert the money intended for free education to the purposes of secondary education. Out of 418 householders at Darvel 412 petition against this scheme, and it is in their name that I now object to it. The endowment, under its former condition, worked well, and I think in a question of this sort the feeling of the district ought to be considered. I object to it, because I think it is an attempt to change the class of beneficiaries and alter the intentions of the founder. When the Educational Endowments Act was passed it was distinctly stated that the class of beneficiaries intended by the founders should not be changed. I believe these promises had an enormous effect in passing the Bill, which was carried after most inadequate discussion. I do not believe it would ever have passed at all had not these promises been made to the House. I object to this scheme also because it introduces competition among children of tender years in elementary schools. Children under 10 years of age may compete for bursaries. I think it is the very worst way to confer benefits on these poor children, by causing them to compete for £5 to £10 bursaries. I have had considerable experience of elementary schools, having been Chairman for a length of time of the School Board in a rural parish, and I have no hesitation in saying that these £5 and £10 bursaries are simply money thrown away. I am perfectly certain that it would be infinitely better if the money were applied to the giving of free education to poor children in elementary schools. That was the intention of the founder, and I believe the very best thing that could be done. I should like to protest, as far as I am able, against the Education Act of 1882. I object most strongly to the many schemes which have floated from that Act, and I object to the procedure under it. I think that procedure is partial and ignorant. I think it deceives the people, who think that this House is a sort of Court of Appeal from the Education Department and from the Endowments Commissioners. It is no Court of Appeal; it is the Education Department over again stating their own case in this House; and I believe I am representing the feeling of a number of people when I say that it is a perfect farce for these Bills to be brought

before the House. I protest against these schemes in general, and this one in particular.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, praying Her Majesty to withhold Her consent from the Scheme for the Management of the Endowments of Blair's Charity, in the parish of Galston; Mair's Free School, in the parish of Loudoun, and Brown of Waterhaugh's Charitable Foundation, in the parishes of Galston and Loudoun, approved by the Scotch Education Department (by Act), and now lying upon the Table of the House, in so far as regards the provisions relating to Mair's Free School, in the parish of Loudoun."—(*Mr. Hugh Elliot.*)

*MR. JAMES CAMPBELL (Glasgow and Aberdeen Universities): I hope, without encroaching too much upon the time of the House, that I shall be able to show that this Scheme is not open to the objections which my hon. Friend has brought against it. The people of Darvel, whose memorial he has referred to, cannot, I think, have known what the provisions of the scheme were, or they would not have memorialized as they have done. I must say that the trustees of the fund have never shown unpromising hostility to the scheme. On the contrary, they have shown that while they preferred to have their Trust left as it was, yet they were ready to meet the Commissioners in a reasonable way, and suggest amendments of the scheme. Their suggestions were considered, and, to a certain extent, were adopted. And the memorial to which my hon. Friend has referred was drawn up at a time when the scheme had not been published in its final form—the memorial being dated Christmas, 1887, and the scheme not being submitted until the following year. The bequest of Mr. Mair was for free education, but only to a limited extent. His intention was that from 80 to 100 children only should receive free primary education. The school has been attended by about 120, and it was stated in evidence to the Commissioners that this provision of free education in Darvel was rather in excess of the requirements of the place. In proof of that, I may state that for some years past there has been no selection of applicants. According to Mr. Mair's instructions, certain classes of the poor were to have a preference, but for some time past all who have applied have been admitted. It must also be remembered that although Mr. Mair

gave particular instructions as to the kind of education to be given—and his views on education were not particularly advanced—he also said that if there was any surplus it should be applied to the education of promising children, evidently pointing to something better than that indicated in his instructions to the trustees with regard to the free school. The Commissioners have proposed in this scheme to throw together the endowments of two parishes—Galston and Loudoun—which are very much of the same nature. They propose under this scheme to give as much in free scholarships as they believe is needed by the parishes, and certainly quite as much as was contemplated by the founders of these endowments. In regard to the parish of Loudoun, it has only one-third of the whole endowments, and in order that it may not suffer—for Galston has necessarily the larger representation upon the governing body—it is stipulated in this scheme that a proportion of at least one-third of these free scholarships shall be reserved for Loudoun and two-thirds of that third at least shall be reserved for the parish of Darvel. In this way the village of Darvel will get as much in free scholarships as Mr. Mair originally intended, and its chance of several bursaries in addition. It is rather wide of the mark to speak of changing the character of the endowments. In the scheme it is expressly stipulated that these bursaries shall only be given to promising children of the character indicated by the founder—children whose parents require assistance to give them education. But there are other benefits under this scheme. There is £100 to be given to the School Board of Loudoun for the express purpose of improving the education in the public school of this same village of Darvel, and, at the same time, there is the share of £100 for the clothing and maintenance of the free scholars. In other words, the poor children of Darvel will receive as much free education as the benevolent Mr. Mair intended, and, in addition, provision is made for the higher education of promising children. The whole question is this—whether these endowments are to be used for the purpose of saving the school rates of the parish, or whether they are to be used for the better education of promising and poor chil-

dren. The question is whether this is the property of the ratepayers, or the property of poor children, and, if the latter, I hope the House will have no difficulty in rejecting the motion of my hon. Friend.

Mr. HUGH ELLIOT: All these schemes are very often criticized in the same way and on the same lines, and, therefore, I ask the leave of the House to withdraw my Motion.

Motion by leave, withdrawn.

LEASEHOLDERS (IRELAND) (NO. 2) BILL.

On motion of Mr. M'Cartan, Bill to amend the Law relating to Leaseholds in Ireland, ordered to be brought in by Mr. M'Cartan, Mr. Sexton, Mr. Clancy, Mr. Carew, and Mr. Pinkerton.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 198.]

PAUPERISM (ENGLAND AND WALES).

Copy ordered—

Of Return of monthly comparative Statements of the number of Paupers of all classes (except Lunatics in Asylums and Vagrants) in receipt of relief in England and Wales on the last day of every week in each month of the several years from 1857 to 1889, both inclusive.

“Statement of the number of Paupers (Lunatics and Vagrants included), distinguishing the number of adult able-bodied Paupers relieved on the 1st day of January, 1889.”

“And, similar Statement for the 1st day of July 1889 respectively,” (*Mr Long.*)

Return presented accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 115.]

LUNACY ACTS AMENDMENT BILL [LORDS].

Read the first time; to be read a second time upon Monday 29th April, and to be printed. [Bill 199.]

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 179.]

FINANCIAL STATEMENT (1889-90).

Copy ordered—

Of Statement of Reserve and expenditure, as laid before the House by the Chancellor of the Exchequer when opening the Budget.” [*Mr. Jackson.*]

Copy presented accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 116.]

House adjourned at half after
Twelve o'clock.

HANSARD'S PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES.

No. 6.]

THIRD VOLUME OF SESSION 1889.

[MAY 3.]

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Tuesday, 16th April, 1889.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDER (No. 1) BILL.

Read a second time, and committed.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 3) BILL.

Read a second time, and committed.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 4) BILL.

Read a second time, and committed.

MOTIONS.

COMMONS REGULATION PROVISIONAL ORDER [AMBERSWOOD].

On Motion of Mr. Stuart Wortley, Bill to confirm a Provisional Order for the regulation of certain lands forming part of Amberswood Common, situate in the Township of Ince-in-Makerfield, in the Parish of Wigan, in the County of Lancaster, in pursuance of a report from the Land Commissioners for England, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Stuart Wortley and Mr. Secretary Matthews.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 200.]

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 6).

On Motion of Mr. Long, Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to the Boroughs of Calne and Chippenham, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Long and Mr. Ritchie.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 201.]

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 7).

On Motion of Mr. Long, Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to the Boroughs of Aberavon and Kingston-upon-Hull, the Local Government Districts of Bingley and Cuckfield, and the Faversham Joint Hospital District, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Long and Mr. Ritchie.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 202.]

PRISON RULES INQUIRY.

Copy ordered,

“Of a Letter to Lord Aberdare relating to the inquiry into a certain portion of the Prison Rules.”—(Mr. Arthur Balfour.)

Copy presented accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.—[No. 117.]

COUNTY COUNCIL ELECTIONS (1889) COST.

Ordered, That there be laid before the House—

“Return showing, with respect to each administrative County in England and Wales,—

(1.) The total number of electoral Divisions;

(2.) The names of the Electoral Divisions in which the Elections of County Councillors were contested, and with respect to each of those Divisions, the number of County Electors on the Register and the total number of Votes polled. The Elections to supply vacancies caused by the election of Councillors Aldermen to be separately shown;

(3.) The total number of County Electors on the Register for the County;

(4.) The total cost of the elections chargeable on the County Rate.—(Mr. T. Ellis.)

BOUNTIES.

Ordered, That there be laid before the House—

“Address for Return showing the various Countries giving Bounties, the various items upon which Bounties are paid in each country, and the amounts.”—(Mr. Blundell Maple.)

QUESTIONS.

ZULULAND—MR. FANNIN.

MR. WALTER M'LAREN (Cheshire, Crewe) asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether Mr. Fannin, one of the three members of the Special Court of Inquiry in Zululand, has had any legal training whatever; and whether he was employed as a Government surveyor in laying off the area of Zibebu's location in 1883?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Baron H. de Worms, Liverpool, Toxteth): Mr. Fannin does not appear to have been a professional lawyer, but he has had six years' experience as a magistrate and administrator of native law. He was employed in 1883 as stated in the hon. Member's question.

ZIBEBU.

MR. WALTER M'LAREN asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the officials at Etshowe have refused to arrest Zibebu, who is now recovered from his accident; and whether the Government are aware that, while Ndabuko and Dinuzulu have throughout been kept in close imprisonment, Zibebu has been, and still is, left perfectly free to ride about the country, and consort with the officials at Etshowe as a favoured person, although charged with the murder of the Chief Msutshwana, in a raid which the Zulu Chiefs now on trial point to as the cause of their taking up arms against Zibebu?

BARON H. DE WORMS: The Governor, on the 4th of February, reported that Zibebu was kept in arrest at Etshowe. The Secretary of State has no information confirmatory of the suggestions contained in the hon. Member's question.

IRELAND—EVICTIONS IN DONEGAL—THE BATTERING RAM.

MR. HENRY J. WILSON (York, W. R. Holmfirth) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state the cost of the battering ram recently obtained from Alexander Brown, of Derry, by the Donegal Constabulary; of the shields made at Patterson's in Derry; and of the pickaxes and other eviction apparatus obtained at Crockett's in that city?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. MADDEN, University of Dublin): There would appear to be some inaccuracies in the question in regard to the firms from whom the articles were obtained. But I am informed that the total cost of the articles required was £48 18s. 2½d.

MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): I wish to know if any reply has been sent to the telegram sent yesterday to the Irish Office by certain Members of Parliament who had been visiting the scene of the evictions at Falcarragh; and, who asked to be permitted to inspect the battering ram, in order to see that full value was given for the money expended upon it?

MR. MADDEN: That does not arise out of the question upon the paper; but I have no information upon the subject.

Subsequently,

MR. SEXTON: As I see the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary in his place I wish to put a question to him which the Solicitor General for Ireland was unable to answer. I wish to know whether any reply has been sent to the telegrams of certain Members of Parliament requesting permission to inspect the battering ram at Falcarragh?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): I did receive a telegram, but I did not think that it required any answer. It was not in the terms suggested by the right hon. Gentleman.

SIR W. LAWSON (Cumberland, Cockermouth): Will the right hon. Gentleman give instructions to enable Members of Parliament to see this engine?

MR. SEXTON: Will the right hon. Gentleman be kind enough to allow us to look at this battering ram during the holidays?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not think there is any objection to allow hon. Members to see it, but I should not like to answer the question off-hand.

MITIGATION OF SENTENCE.

MR. HENRY PEASE (York, N. R., Cleveland) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if he had received a numerous signed petition, asking for a mitigation of the sentence passed upon James Wotton, of Skelton, in Cleveland, aged about 16 years, for

an assault upon a girl aged 13; and whether he is prepared to mitigate his term of imprisonment?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. MATTHEWS, Birmingham, E.): Yes, Sir; I have received such a petition. I have examined the depositions in this case, and am unable to discover any grounds which would justify me in advising interference with the sentence, which is not, in my opinion, too severe.

RAILWAY RATES.

MR. TOMLINSON (Preston) asked the President of the Board of Trade whether he was prepared to give a list of railway companies to which an extension of time has been given to put in their schedules of maximum rates, with the period in each case for which such extension has been allowed?

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Sir M. HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): Yes, Sir; I will lay it on the Table.

THE WELSH SUNDAY CLOSING COMMISSION.

MR. BOWEN ROWLANDS (Cardiganshire) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he would give an assurance that at least one member of the Royal Commission to inquire into the Welsh Sunday Closing Act, as well as the secretary to such Commission, should be persons conversant with the Welsh language?

MR. MATTHEWS: I am not prepared to give any such definite assurance. Acquaintance with the Welsh language is no doubt desirable, but does not appear to me an essential accomplishment for the members of the Commission.

MR. H. J. WILSON: If not necessary, is it not desirable?

MR. MATTHEWS: Probably it may be desirable, and I have no doubt that it will be done.

WRITERS IN THE LIVERPOOL CUSTOMS.

MR. JOHN KELLY (Camberwell, N.) asked the Secretary to the Treasury whether a petition had recently been received by the Treasury for the writers in the Liverpool Customs asking for the application in their case of the special

rate of 1s. per hour instead of 10d., the present rate; whether this concession was recommended by the Liverpool Custom House Authorities; whether the petition had been refused; whether, since it was presented, steps had been taken to withdraw the writers from the more important seats at Liverpool, and in one case a writer of 16 years' service had been superseded by a clerk with 10 years' less service; and whether the Treasury would re-consider the claims advanced in the cases of all the applicants of long and approved service?

*THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. J. L. JACKSON, Leeds, N.): The matter is under consideration, but I prefer not to enter into details.

MERTHYR TYDVIL COUNTY COURT.

MR. D. A. THOMAS (Merthyr Tydvil) asked the First Commissioner of Works if he was aware of the great pecuniary loss suffered by suitors, and the inconvenience caused to Judge, Registrar, and legal profession, in consequence of the deficient public accommodation for the transaction of County Court business at Merthyr Tydvil; whether he had received a copy of resolutions, passed unanimously at a public meeting held at Merthyr on 20th March last, presided over by the High Constable, and at which the Registrar was present, condemning the inadequacy of the County Court accommodation in that town; whether he had received a memorial bearing on the same matter from the Merthyr Chamber of Trade; whether his attention had been called to the strong opinion expressed by Judge Williams on the subject while sitting in the place now used for the transaction of County Court business (as reported in the *Merthyr Express* newspaper); and, whether he could give an assurance that a suitable hall and offices would be provided for the Judge and Registrar to fulfil their respective duties, as has been provided in other towns of less importance?

THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (Mr. PLUNKET, University of Dublin): As to the four first paragraphs of the hon. Member's question, I am aware that complaints have been made of the deficient accommodation for the public in Merthyr Tydvil. I have received various communications on the subject, and the matter is now under

the consideration of the Government. I may, however, point out that for many years it has not been the policy of the Government to supply special buildings for County Courts, but that advantage is taken of such public buildings as exist in a town. This we are entitled to do under the County Court Acts of 1851 and 1888.

MR. D. A. THOMAS: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that in Merthyr Tydvil there is no public building suitable for the purpose?

MR. PLUNKET: I have said that the matter is under consideration. If there is no public building in the town to a certain extent, it would be our duty to provide accommodation.

THE LOSS OF THE *SULTAN*.

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.) asked the First Lord of the Admiralty whether he would lay upon the Table the notes of the evidence given at the recent court martial on Captain Rice, in connection with the loss of the *Sultan*; and whether the Lords of the Admiralty had telegraphed to the Duke of Edinburgh, requesting him to return from Malta to England overland, in order that a Court of Inquiry respecting the salvage operations after the *Sultan* was stranded might be opened as soon as possible?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Lord G. HAMILTON, Middlesex, Ealing): I do not propose to depart from the usual procedure by laying the minutes of the recent *Sultan* court martial on the Table of the House. The statement referred to in the latter part of the question is quite unfounded.

MR. PICKERSGILL: May I ask the noble Lord whether, if I move for the evidence given at the court martial, he will oppose the Motion?

LORD G. HAMILTON: Certainly.

THE CONVICT ELIZABETH NUTT.

MR. PICKERSGILL asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been drawn to the sentence of five years' penal servitude passed upon Elizabeth Nutt as an accomplice after the fact in the crime of John Withey; and whether, having regard to the woman's age and other circumstances, especially that she apparently acted from no corrupt or interested motive in trying to screen

the criminal, he will take the case into his favourable consideration with a view to a material reduction of the sentence?

MR. MATTHEWS: Yes, Sir. My attention has been called to this case. The woman Nutt did her best to screen a cruel murder and prevent detection, and it is much too soon to take her sentence into consideration.

IRELAND — RESIDENT MAGISTRATES.

MR. CHANNING (Northamptonshire, E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether a new rule had been made that Resident Magistrates were only to remain for five years at one station; whether this rule would be applied universally; and, if not, on what grounds exceptions would be made; how many magistrates had served for more than five years at one station, and had not been removed; and how many, under the same circumstances, had been removed?

MR. MADDEN: There is no rule which implies that Resident Magistrates are to remain for any fixed period at one station. But the fact of a Resident Magistrate having been more than five years at one station renders his case liable for consideration for transfer.

MR. CHANNING: The hon. and learned Gentleman has not answered the last paragraph of the question.

MR. MADDEN: I have already stated that there is no rule of the kind. I have not yet had time to obtain special information; but if, after my statement that there is no such rule the hon. Member asks for further information, I shall be glad to get it.

SCARLATINA.

MR. FOLEY (Galway, Connemara) asked the Solicitor General for Ireland whether the Inspector of National Schools in the district of Roundstone had reported to the Commissioners of National Education the severe outbreak of scarlatina from which the school children of that district were now suffering; and if any steps would be taken by the Local Government Board to authorise the Clifden Board of Guardians to import pure lime from the Arran Islands to be distributed amongst the poor for the purpose of disinfecting their dwellings?

MR. MADDEN: The Commissioners of National Education report that they

understand that there have been some cases of scarlatina in some of the villages in the district of Roundstone. The Local Government Board have up to the present not received any notification in the matter; but will make inquiry. The Guardians of the Union, however, have, as the sanitary authority, full power in themselves to have houses disinfected, and to obtain lime for the purpose from any place which the necessities of the case may require.

RATHMORE PETTY SESSIONS.

ALLEGED EXCESSIVE SENTENCE.

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.) asked the Solicitor General for Ireland whether he was aware that at Rathmore, County Kerry, Petty Sessions, on Thursday, 11th instant, before Mr. Leonard, J.P., who was agent to the Kenmare Estate, and Mr. M'Dermott, R.M., two men, Daniel O'Keefe and John Moyuahan, were charged "with forming part of a disorderly crowd and cheering the Plan of Campaign," and were sent to gaol for six months in default of giving bail; was there any evidence of disorder other than cheering as above mentioned; had his attention been called to the evidence of the two police witnesses, to the effect that the defendants called for "cheers for the Plan of Campaign and William O'Brien," and to the evidence of the witnesses for the defendants to the effect that these men were members of the Rathmore Football Club, calling themselves "Blackwater Campaigners," and that having won a football match there were cheers called for and given for the "Blackwall Campaigners"; and, whether, taking the circumstances into account, he would cause inquiry to be made into the case, with a view to the remission or reduction of this sentence?

MR. MADDEN: This question has been put down upon the Paper without sufficient notice. I must request, therefore, that it be postponed.

MR. SEXTON: Is it not possible to communicate by telegraph? This man has been sent to prison for six months for simply cheering on his return from a football match, and am I to understand —

MR. MADDEN: With every assistance of the telegraph it is absolutely impossible to obtain information in detail in a matter of this kind within a

short time. It is a matter over which I have no control.

MR. SEXTON: Then, in the course of the next fortnight, will nothing be done to reverse the extraordinary judgment in this case?

MR. MADDEN: As no information has yet been received, I cannot answer the question.

LORD ASHBOURNE'S ACT.

MR. BLANE (Armagh, S.) asked the Solicitor General for Ireland whether he was aware that after Mr. John Heaney, a tenant on the estate of Lord Lurgan, had signed an agreement for purchase under Lord Ashbourne's Act, Lord Lurgan proceeded against him for arrears of rent, and obtained a decree from Judge Kisbey at Lurgan; that Mr. Heaney appealed from this decision, and got the decree altered by reduction of the amount in the Superior Court, but that Lord Lurgan proceeded to evict the tenant under the original County Court decree which the learned Baron had set aside on appeal; and that Mr. John Heaney resisted the execution of the decree appealed against and set aside by Superior Court; whether the County Court Judge, Mr. Kisbey, whose decree was set aside, sentenced Mr. Heaney, and others found in his house, to a term of imprisonment, under the Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, for resisting the decree set aside; and if the Government would consider whether, under the circumstances, they would terminate the imprisonment of the tenant and others sentenced?

MR. MADDEN: In this case, also the Notice of the question given has been insufficient. It has been absolutely impossible to obtain in a satisfactory manner the information necessary to enable me to answer the question.

THE LEICESTER TEMPERANCE SOCIETY AND THE INCOME TAX.

MR. PICTON (Leicester) asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether his attention had been called to a memorial addressed by the Leicester Temperance and General Permanent Building Society, in January last, to the Commissioners of Inland Revenue; whether he was aware that, while 95 per cent of the members of this society were in humble circumstances and not liable to income tax, the Board of Inland

Revenue insist either on charging the tax, in order to return it, or on making the society collect the tax from the five per cent of members who were liable; whether he had considered the amount of trouble, expense, and friction that must be caused in either case to a society promotive of thrift among the poor; and whether, in view of his statement in the analogous case of co-operative stores, that, "when the shareholders in any such stores are notoriously all, or almost all, persons of an income less than £150, it would not only not be a gain, but would be a positive loss to the Revenue to levy a tax nearly all of which has to be returned," he would cause the memorial of the Leicester Society to be re-considered, with a view to a more favourable answer than had yet been received?

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN, St. George's Hanover Square): I must ask the hon. Gentleman to give me time to obtain information upon the matter, so as to enable me to answer the question.

SUGAR BOUNTIES.

Mr. HOYLE (Lancashire, S.E., Heywood) asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies if, where Foreign Governments give bounties on the export of sugar, the article has at some point in its passage from the fields to the port of shipment paid Excise Duty; and, if so, is the bounty a drawback on its leaving the country of origin, or does the bounty exceed in amount the sum which the owner is out of pocket; and, if so, what is the percentage of excess, and does it arise from new processes in sugar refining since the Excise Duties were originally fixed?

BARON H. DE WORMS: In answer to the hon. Member I have to say that one form of bounty is the repayment of duty on the exportation of sugar in the nature of drawback. The other is the bonification of the actual duty paid, *plus* the amount which has not been paid by the exporter, but which is calculated on the difference between the actual and the legal yield of beet. The percentage of excess of the actual over the legal yield varies in different countries and in different circumstances, and may, in part, arise from new processes in sugar refining.

Mr. Picton

THE ORDINANCE SURVEY.

Mr. D. A. THOMAS asked the First Commissioner of Works whether the practice and rule of the Ordinance Survey Department was to survey districts with a town population of not less than 4,000 on the 1-500 scale; whether he was aware that the Mountain Ash Local Board district, now containing a town population of over 12,000, had only been surveyed on the 1-2,500 scale; and if he could state when the survey of that district upon the larger scale would be undertaken?

Mr. PLUNKET: The question only appeared on the paper this morning, and I have not had time to obtain information. If the hon. Member will be good enough to repeat the question after the holidays I shall be glad to answer it.

IRELAND—THE COMMISSION ON PRISON RULES.

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE (Bradford Central) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will state the terms of the reference to the Royal Commission on the subject of the Prison Rules?

Mr. SEXTON also asked the Chief Secretary if he would name the fifth Member of the Prison Treatment Commission, and state precisely the terms of the instructions to the Commission, and indicate its procedure, as to time and place of sittings, and examination of witnesses?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR said he proposed to lay on the Table, and to circulate at once, a copy of a letter to Lord Aberdare, stating the terms of reference to the Royal Commission on the subject of prison rules. Besides Lord Aberdare, he had asked Mr. William Wyatt, the well-known Essex magistrate, to join the Commission. He believed the names of Lord Aberdare and Mr. Wyatt were well calculated to command confidence in Ireland and Scotland, and also to give effect to the wish that the Commission should be, as far as possible, removed from the domain of controversial politics.

Mr. SEXTON: Is Mr. Wyatt a gentleman in whom the people of Ireland will have confidence? I certainly never heard of him before.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: If we had chosen some well-known public man who had been actively engaged in controversy, the conditions under which the Commission was to be appointed would hardly have been fulfilled.

THE EDUCATION CODE, 1889.

MR. SCHWANN (Manchester, N.) asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education whether he would publish the instructions to the inspectors before asking the House to pass the New Code?

*THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL ON EDUCATION (SIR W. HART DYKE, Kent, Dartford): I can only repeat the reply which I gave a few days ago to the hon. Gentleman's colleague, that I have considered the subject with great care, and see no reason to depart from what has been the uniform practice of the Department on previous occasions, to submit the Code for the consideration of Parliament, and when it has passed to frame the instructions upon it.

LAKE NYASSA.

DR. CAMERON (Glasgow, College) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he had any information as to the truth of a Reuter's telegram from Lisbon, which asserted that, as the result of Lieutenant Cardosa's mission, nine Native chiefs on the banks of Lake Nyassa had placed themselves under Portuguese protection; and, if it be true, whether the Government had taken steps to protest against the extension of the Portuguese sphere of influence towards the centre of Africa over regions discovered and opened up by British enterprise?

MR. BUCHANAN (Edinburgh, W.) also asked whether it is a fact that Lieutenant Cardosa's expedition had returned to Quilimane from Lake Nyassa; whether it was a fact, as officially announced in Lisbon, that nine native chiefs on the shores of Lake Nyassa had placed themselves under Portuguese rule; and whether Her Majesty's Government would continue to decline to recognize any such assumption of territorial sovereignty by Portugal beyond the Ruu River or in the region of Lake Nyassa?

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS

(SIR J. FERGUSSON, Manchester, N.W.): We have no official information to the effect stated. I cannot add anything to the statements I have already made of the attitude of Her Majesty's Government in regard to British interests in the Nyassa region.

DR. CAMERON: I beg to give notice that on the earliest opportunity I will call attention to the subject.

IRELAND—FATHER M'FADDEN.

MR. JOHN O'CONNOR (Tipperary, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether during the month of March two telegrams were addressed to Father M'Fadden while he was in the custody of the Government; whether one of these telegrams was from Father Collins, P.P., Rathmullan, and written in the Latin language, and the other from Father O'Donnell, C.C., Rathmullan, and written in the Irish language; and whether these telegrams were delivered to Father M'Fadden; and, if not, why they were retained by the officials?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have not received the information that will enable me to answer the question. I may add that there are three or four questions which only appeared on the Paper to-day.

MR. J. O'CONNOR: Is it possible to obtain the information before the close of the proceedings to-day?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: It is possible. I have telegraphed to Dublin for information in all these cases; but I have not yet received it.

EVICTED FARMS.

DR. KENNY (Cork, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he was aware that Patrick Donovan, of Castleventry, Rosscarberry, county Cork, was recently evicted from his farm; that since Donovan's eviction the farm had been in charge of an emergency man guarded by two policemen; that on the morning of Tuesday, the 2nd instant the emergency man in charge left Donovan's farm with his police guard; that the latter returned that evening without the emergency man, or any substitute for him, and took sole charge of farm till the night of Thursday, the 4th instant, when they were relieved by two other

policemen, who then remained in sole charge till the night of Friday, the 5th instant, when an emergency-man, guarded as before by two policemen, was again placed in charge of farm; whether it was the custom to allow policemen to take sole charge of evicted farms as in this case; and whether he would inquire into the matter; and, if he finds the facts are as above stated, he will give directions that policemen shall not in future be so employed?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The answer to this question must also remain over.

SMALL-POX AT SHEFFIELD.

MR. ROWNTREE (Scarborough) asked the President of the Local Government Board if, in view of the great importance of the subject treated of, the Government would furnish a copy of Dr. Barry's Report on the outbreak of small-pox at Sheffield to the Medical Officers of Health throughout the country?

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (MR. RITCHIE, Tower Hamlets, St. George's, East): The Board cannot undertake to supply all the Medical Officers of Health throughout the country with copies of the Report referred to; but they are in communication with the Treasury with a view to a number of copies being placed at the Board's disposal for the purpose of distributing them among those persons who have rendered assistance in the inquiry, or to whom the Report will be of chief value.

RIOTING IN BRITISH GUIANA.

SIR GEORGE BADEN-POWELL (Liverpool, Kirkdale) asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he could give any further information as to the reported rioting in Georgetown, British Guiana; and whether there were at the time any Imperial troops stationed in the colony; and, if so, whether he can state why the troops were not called out when the police were unable to cope with the rioters?

BARON H. DE WORMS: Rioting occurred in Georgetown on the 19th and 20th of March; it seems to have arisen out of an assault by a Portuguese upon a negro boy, and an unfounded report that the boy had been killed. A mob of negroes attacked the Portuguese

and broke into and plundered their shops and stores. Special constables were sworn in, and a company of volunteers were called in to assist the police, but the riot was not quelled until the Governor authorized the magistrates to order the police to fire upon persons found breaking into or plundering houses or shops. No firing actually took place. One life was lost from a bayonet wound, and many of the police and special constables and of the rioters were injured. There are Imperial troops in the colony; but it was not found necessary to call them out. The police, with the aid of the special constables and volunteers, succeeded in coping with the rioters.

IRELAND—RATHMORE PETTY SESSIONS.

MR. GILL (Louth, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he was aware that Mr. Maurice Leonard, J.P., who, at Rathmore (county Kerry) Petty Sessions on Thursday last sentenced a man to six months' imprisonment for cheering Mr. William O'Brien, M.P., as Agent for the Kenmare Estate, gave evidence against Mr. O'Brien at Tralee the day before, and announced the refusal of the Trustees of the Kenmare Estate to accept the arbitration of the County Court Judge; and whether he would take steps to prevent magistrates from adjudicating on matters in which they have a direct personal interest, and which are connected with the estates under their control?

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have not yet received information.

MR. SEXTON: Is not the right hon. Gentleman aware, without the necessity for an application to Ireland, whether this Gentleman is agent for the Kenmare Estate, or not, and whether he ought to have adjudicated in such a case?

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I should not like to answer an abstract question in the absence of specific information from Ireland.

TREATMENT OF MR. W. O'BRIEN M.P.

MR. CRILLY (Mayo, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he would see that the Report and Evidence in the case of the inquiry into the treatment of Mr.

William O'Brien, M.P., in Clonmel Prison, was circulated without delay.

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The Report and Evidence in the case of the inquiry into the prison treatment of Mr. William O'Brien, M.P., was laid upon the Table yesterday, and, I have no doubt, will be circulated forthwith by the Stationery Department, with whom the matter rests.

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT IN WELSH.

MR. THOMAS ELLIS (Merionethshire) asked the President of the Local Government Board what was the reason for the long delay in the publication of the Welsh version of the Local Government Act?

*MR. RITCHIE: The Welsh translation of the Local Government Act is complete, and the whole of it is in type, and the proofs are with the translator for revision. I will press for the revision being proceeded with as rapidly as possible. The delay in the publication probably arises from the difficulty of printing the Welsh language.

IRELAND—FAIR RENTS.

MR. NOLAN (Louth, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he can hold out any hope to the tenant farmers of County Louth that a Court to fix fair rents will be held in Dundalk at an early date?

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have no information.

PRISON LABOUR.

MR. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland what was the general effect of the decision of the Irish Prisons Board upon the case referred to them at the instance of Mr. Sheehy with regard to prison labour?

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The suggestion contained in the question on the Paper is of so vague a character that I do not know what answer to make. Will the right hon. Gentleman supplement the question by an explanation?

MR. SEXTON: Two versions have appeared in the Press, one of which is that the Prisons Board have decided that a prisoner who pays for his diet is not liable to prison labour, and the other is that he is not liable to perform manual offices.

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: There is a provision in the prison regulations by which a prisoner on paying for his diet escapes certain work.

MR. SEXTON: Does the exemption refer to all prison labour?

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: My belief is that it applies to all prison labour, excepting of course the cases of those who are sentenced to hard labour.

MR. J. O'CONNOR: Is it optional with a prisoner or not?

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I understand so.

MR. J. O'CONNOR: Will all prisoners who have not been sentenced to hard labour have the advantage of the rule?

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have nothing further to say than was conveyed in the answer I gave last week.

MR. J. O'CONNOR: But that has not reached the prisoners.

MR. CLANCY (Dublin County, N.): Have the prisoners who are in prison in Belfast Gaol for disgraceful frauds, and who are said to be walking about the prison in tall silk hats and long coats, the advantage of this rule?

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I know nothing about that.

MR. SEXTON: Is it not a standing regulation of the Prisons Board that all the rules shall be hung up in the cells?

No answer.

MR. CAREW, M.P.

MR. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he had observed the report published in the *Belfast Morning News* of the 12th instant, as to the state of health of Mr. Carew, M.P., in Belfast Gaol; and whether he had any communication to make to the House on the subject?

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The Surgeon of the Prison reports that there is nothing in Mr. Carew's condition of health to cause anxiety.

MR. SEXTON: Is it intended that Mr. Carew shall serve out his full sentence?

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I suppose so.

ROYAL GRANTS.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON (Dundee) asked the First Lord of the Treasury when he will state the terms of the proposed reference to the Committee on Royal Grants?

*THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH, Strand, Westminster): I informed the hon. and learned Member on the 18th of March, that I did not think it possible or desirable to place on the Paper the terms of the reference to the Committee until I saw some chance of being able to proceed with it. I must add it is not a matter of urgency, as there is no immediate intention to apply to the House for a grant which would come within the definition given by the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian; but as soon as I have any reasonable hope of being able to proceed with the Motion, which I understand the hon. and learned Member intends to oppose, I will not only put it on the Paper, but I will also give him full notice personally of the terms of such reference.

SHIPS WITHOUT GUNS.

MR. J. O'CONNOR: On behalf of my hon. Friend the Member for Mid Cork (Dr. TANNER), I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty if it is a fact that the *Hove* and *Galatea* at Portsmouth, the *Australia* and *Narcissus* at Chatham, and the *Aurora* at Devonport are lying by, being unprovided with guns?

An hon. MEMBER: Before the noble Lord replies to the question, may I ask you, Mr. Speaker, if it is in order for an hon. Member to put down questions on the Paper time after time, and not take the trouble to attend here for the purpose of putting them?

*MR. SPEAKER: As a point of order the hon. Gentleman is entitled to put a question which stands in the name of another hon. Member, but it is only respectful to the House that the hon. Gentleman who gives notice of a question should attend here and put it, unless he is unavoidably prevented from doing so.

MR. SEXTON: My hon. Friend is unavoidably absent.

LORD G. HAMILTON: As the Return moved for by the noble Lord the Member for East Marylebone will shortly be issued, I will ask the hon. Member to wait for this Return, which will give fuller particulars as to the subject generally than I can compress into an answer to his question. The dates on which it is anticipated that the War Office will have completed the

necessary proofs of the guns for the ships named in the question are respectively 30th June, 31st August, 31st May, 20th June, 31st October of the present year.

HAULBOWLINE DOCKYARD.

MR. J. O'CONNOR (for Dr. TANNER) asked the First Lord of the Admiralty whether any steps were being, or would be, taken to create and organize the necessary dockyard staff at Haulbowline; and whether it was the intention of the Admiralty to import or to employ local skilled artificers?

LORD G. HAMILTON: As I have frequently stated before, the Admiralty do not intend to set up a large dockyard establishment at Haulbowline. Measures will be taken to provide a staff sufficient for any casual work that from time to time the wants of the service or the facilities of the locality may require to be undertaken there.

MR. J. O'CONNOR: Has the money voted last year for the purchase of machinery at these docks been expended, and if so, what use is to be made of it?

LORD G. HAMILTON: I cannot answer the question offhand, but I imagine that the principal part of the money has been expended.

IRELAND—CHARGES AGAINST A JUSTICE OF THE PEACE.

MR. MATTHEW KENNY (Tyrone, Mid) asked the Solicitor General for Ireland if the attention of the Lord Chancellor has been called to charges against Mr. Samuel M'Keown, a Justice of the Peace for County Tyrone; if he is aware that Mr. M'Keown, on Saturday, 12th February, 1889, endeavoured to compel the Head Constable of Omagh to liberate one Anderson, who was in custody on a charge of being drunk while in charge of a horse and cart; that upon the refusal of the Head Constable to comply, Mr. M'Keown asked Mr. Devlin, J.P., to accompany him to the police barracks for the purpose of securing Anderson's liberation; and that Mr. Devlin, upon ascertaining the facts of the case, declined to interfere; if the District Inspector was subsequently appealed to, who also declined to release Anderson; if the police have been questioned as to the state Mr. M'Keown was in at the time of this

occurrence; if other complaints have been addressed from time to time to the Lord Chancellor against Mr. M'Keown; and if a full inquiry will be made into all the circumstances of the case?

MR. MADDEN: I understand that a complaint of the nature indicated in the first part of the question was made to the Lord Chancellor against Mr. M'Keown, J.P., and his Lordship at once called upon him for an explanation, and he has not acted at Petty Sessions pending the result of the correspondence. His Lordship also made inquiries into the circumstances of the case, and the matter is now under his consideration. No other complaint was made to the Lord Chancellor against Mr. M'Keown, except the one referred to on a former occasion by the hon. Member who puts this question.

EDUCATION—SCHOOL INSTRUCTION IN THRIFT AND INSURANCE.

MR. HUBBARD (Bucks, N.) asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education if his attention had been drawn to the paragraph of the Report of the Select Committee on National Provident Insurance (August 1887), in which they record their opinion that instruction in sound principles of thrift and insurance should form part of the education now made compulsory by the Legislature; that an elementary text book in the principles of provident insurance (such as is recommended by Mr. Sutton in 1885 and Mr. H. S. Tremenheere in 1887) might be comprised in a few pages, introduced by the Education Department into the routine of elementary schools; and, by sapping the evils of improvidence and imprudent investment, prove of infinite advantage to the whole mass of the population; and if the Education Department had taken, or would take, any steps for giving effect to these recommendations?

*SIR W. HART DYKE: My attention has been called to the paragraph in question, and the Department have long since anticipated one of the suggestions by recommending the establishment of school savings banks wherever possible. I am not aware of the existence of any text book on the subject that usefully fulfils the conditions of a school reading book, but if such a book were produced the Department would place no difficulty in the way of its adoption by school

managers in lieu of one of the ordinary reading books.

IRELAND—THE CONSTABLE LEAHY TAX.

MR. J. O'CONNOR: On behalf of my hon. Friend the Member for North Cork (Mr. Flynn) I wish to ask the Solicitor General for Ireland if he had been made aware of the recent proceedings at the Fermoy Petty Sessions on Monday, 8th instant, in connection with summonses issued for the amount of the Constable Leahy tax, in which a number of decrees were granted against respectable traders for amounts varying from 3s. 3d. upwards; why, and on what principle, was £1 costs given in each case, this being a house to house collection; whether the severance of the town of Fermoy, under the 206th section of "The Public Health Act, 1878," exempts it from the jurisdiction of the Grand Jury Collectors; and whether, in the collection of this cess, the salaries of the County Treasurer, Secretary, and other officials are included as being apportioned on the township, seeing that these salaries are exempted by "The Fermoy Provisional Order, 1886;" and, if these salaries are not included, how is the assessment of nearly 4d. in the pound accounted for, the valuation of the township being £9,960? I wish to add that my hon. Friend is not absent from any wish to be disrespectful to the House.

*MR. SPEAKER: I made that reservation in reply to the question put to me by an hon. Member, because it is quite possible for an hon. Member to be unavoidably absent.

MR. J. O'CONNOR: I was only anxious to explain that my hon. Friend is absent out of no disrespect to the House whatever.

MR. MADDEN: My attention has been called to the proceedings by the question, and I am informed that, though the decrees were granted on the 9th inst, the Magistrates suspended the issue of the warrants for a fortnight in order to enable Counsel's opinion to be taken—the defendant's solicitor having questioned the legality of the levy. I have, however, no information as to the amounts for which the decrees were granted. The costs are in the discretion of the Magistrates, and I cannot state the reasons which influenced their

decision. In answer to the third paragraph, I have to say the severance of the town of Fermoy referred to in the question does not exempt it from the jurisdiction of the Grand Jury collectors, in the event of the Town Commissioners not paying to the County Treasurer the amount mentioned in the certificate of the Secretary of the Grand Jury within one month from its delivery. The salaries referred to in the question are not included in the amount certified by the Secretary and apportioned on the Township.

DISTURBANCE IN TIPPERARY.

MR. J. O'CONNOR asked the Chief Secretary, in view of the fact that the Judge Advocate General had quashed a sentence passed by a court martial upon a constable charged with committing an assault in police barracks, county Tipperary, whether he would make an inquiry into the sentence passed upon civilians by civil Courts for offences arising out of the same incident; and whether he would, if the circumstances were the same, give instructions that the civil sentences should also be quashed?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I shall be glad to make any inquiries that may be necessary; but I cannot answer the latter part of the hon. Member's question offhand.

PERPETUAL PENSIONS.

MR. BRADLAUGH asked the First Lord of the Treasury whether he could fix a day for the promised Debate in May on the Treasury Minute relating to perpetual pensions?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I am aware that a large number of persons take very great interest in this question, and I am desirous of giving them full opportunity for expressing their opinions upon it, but it must depend on the progress of business. The hon. Member may rest assured that if there is any delay in the discussion of a question in which he takes great interest, the subject itself, from his own point of view, will not be prejudiced, as no action can be taken on the Minute.

DR. CLARK (Caithness): May I point out that we allowed the Government to get the Order on the understanding—

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order. That is not a question.

Mr. Madden

DR. CLARK: Then I will ask a question. Was it not the case that the Order, which is equal to an Act of Parliament, was obtained last Session on the promise that upon an early day there should be a full discussion on the question?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: No, Sir. I think the hon. Gentleman has taken an absolutely incorrect view of the matter. The Order is not an Act of Parliament in the sense in which the hon. Gentleman speaks, and the Government have undertaken that it shall not be put in operation until the House has had an opportunity of expressing an opinion upon it. Therefore, the engagement of the Government has been absolutely complied with.

DR. CLARK: In the case of a Treasury Minute having laid for 40 days on the Table of this House, has it not the same effect as an Order in Council?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: In this case, no.

THE SCOTCH LOCAL GOVERNMENT BILL.

DR. CAMERON: May I ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether it is proposed to proceed with the Scotch Local Government Bill on the 2nd May?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I am afraid it will not be in the power of the Government to do so on that day, and I think such a step would probably not be desired by the Scotch Members themselves. The Bill will be proceeded with at the earliest possible date after the 2nd May.

MOTIONS.

—, —

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Francis Powell, Bill to amend the Law relating to Elementary Education, and to exempt Elementary Schools in the receipt of Parliamentary Grants from the payment of Rates, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Francis Powell, Mr. de Lisle, Mr. Harry Davenport, Colonel Eyre, Mr. Howorth, Mr. W. F. Lawrence, Mr. John O'Connor, Mr. Byron Reed, and Mr. John Talbot.

Bill presented, and read first time.—[Bill 203.]

COUNTY COUNCILLORS (QUALIFICATION OF WOMEN) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Channing, Bill to enable Women to be elected and to act as County

Councillors, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Channing, Baron Dimsdale, Sir John Lubbock, Mr. Firth, Mr. James Stuart, Mr. Walter McLaren, and Mr. Bernard Coleridge.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 204.]

WAYS AND MEANS.

Resolutions [April 15] reported.

TEA.

(1.) "That, towards raising the Supply granted to Her Majesty, the Duties of Customs now chargeable on Tea shall continue to be levied and charged on and after the first day of August, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-nine, until the first day of August, one thousand eight hundred and ninety, on the importation thereof into Great Britain or Ireland that is to say) : on—

Tea . . . the pound . . . Sixpence."

INCOME TAX.

2. "That, towards raising the Supply granted to Her Majesty, there shall be charged, collected, and paid for the year which commenced on the sixth day of April, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-nine, in respect of all Property, Profits, and Gains mentioned or described as chargeable in the Act of the sixteenth and seventeenth years of Her Majesty's reign, chapter thirty-four, the following Duties of Income Tax (that is to say) :—

For every Twenty Shillings of the annual value or amount of Property, Profits, and Gains chargeable under Schedules (A), (C), (D), or (E) of the said Act, the Duty of Six Pence;

And for every Twenty Shillings of the annual value of the occupation of Lands, Tenements, Hereditaments, and Heritages chargeable under Schedule (B) of the said Act,—

In England, the Duty of Three Pence;

In Scotland and Ireland respectively, the Duty of Two Pence Farthing;

Subject to the provisions contained in section one hundred and sixty-three of the Act of the fifth and sixth years of Her Majesty's reign, chapter thirty-five, for the exemption of persons whose income is less than One Hundred and Fifty Pounds, and in section eight of 'The Customs and Inland Revenue Act, 1876,' for the relief of persons whose income is less than Four Hundred Pounds."

BEER DUTY.

(3.) "That the Duty of Excise imposed by Section eleven of 'The Inland Revenue Act, 1880,' and the Duty of Customs imposed by Section three of 'The Customs and Inland Revenue Act, 1881,' in respect of Beer by relation to Worts of a specific gravity of one thousand and fifty-seven degrees, shall be charged, collected, levied, and paid in respect of Beer by relation to Worts of a specific gravity of one thousand and fifty-five degrees, and that the said Acts shall be read and construed as if the gravity of one thousand and fifty-five degrees were therein substituted for the gravity of one thousand and fifty-seven

degrees wherever such last-mentioned gravity is therein referred to.

"And that the charge of Duty in respect of Beer shall extend to Berlin White Beer and other preparations, whether fermented or not fermented, of a character similar to Mum, Spruce, or Black Beer."

AMENDMENT OF LAW OF CUSTOMS AND INLAND REVENUE.

(4.) "That it is expedient to amend the Law relating to the Customs and Inland Revenue."

Resolutions agreed to.

Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Courtney, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Mr. Jackson.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY—CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES.

SUPPLY—considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

CLASS II.

(1.) Motion made, and Question proposed—

"That a sum, not exceeding £38,244, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1890, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Offices of the House of Lords."

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): Mr. Courtney, the first item here relates to the Department of the Lord Chancellor. Personally, I think the Lord Chancellor receives a great deal too much money. He receives £6,000 per annum as a Judge—I believe he has nothing to do—and he receives £4,000 a year for presiding over the House of Lords, in which capacity he does very little, and where what he really does do is pernicious. We keep a vast number of officials attached to the House of Lords, whose duty it appears to be to maintain a species of state in connection with the Lord Chancellor. There are the Black Rod, the Yeoman Usher of the Black Rod, the Serjeant at Arms, all of whom have higher salaries than officers of the same rank in the House of Commons. The Serjeant at Arms attends on the Lord Chancellor. He is a kind of private Serjeant at Arms, for his duties are entirely connected with the Lord Chancellor. I think we ought to move the reduction of the Vote by the whole of his salary—["Hear, hear!"]—but I have put

down a notice to move to reduce it by £500 only. As, however, my Friends consider I am too moderate, I will move to reduce the Vote by £1,500. It really is preposterous that £1,500—a very large salary in comparison with the salaries paid to some eminent men in the public service—should be paid to this gentleman, who appears to me to do very inferior work—I might almost call it menial work—about the person of the Lord Chancellor.

Motion made, and Question proposed, “That Item A, Salaries of £5,545, be reduced by £1,500, the Salary of the Sergeant-at-Arms in attendance on the Lord Chancellor.”—(*Mr. Labouchere.*)

MR. PICTON (Leicester): I anticipated we should be told, and we may yet be told, that in connection with a high office like that of Lord Chancellor, it is necessary to maintain a certain amount of becoming state. I admit there must be some sort of outward sign of dignity about the Lord Chancellor, but I have seen ceremonials, with gorgeous flunkies arrayed in vestments which astonished all beholders and impressed the multitude with the dignity of the officials they surrounded, and I do not think they cost anything like £1,500 a year. It is all very well to argue in favour of becoming state, but there ought not to be any wastefulness. There have come down to us from by-gone times many offices which were thought necessary then, but which are quite unsuited to the present age. We protest against their continuance. If we could receive a promise that there is an intention to do away with this piece of extravagance there would be something for us to go upon. Do not let hon. Gentlemen reproach us with being indifferent to becoming dignity and state, and all that kind of kind. We quite admit the necessity of it, but we do protest that this Sergeant-at-Arms at a salary of £1,500 a year is simply a relic of a by-gone age that has, so far as I can understand, no application whatever to the present day. If his presence is only to maintain the dignity and state of the Lord Chancellor, we maintain that his salary is, at least, seven times too high. I heartily support the Motion of my hon. Friend.

MR. H. GARDNER (Essex, Saffron Walden): This is not the first time this

subject has been referred to. I am sorry not to see the noble Lord the Member for Paddington (Lord R. Churchill) here, because last year he took part in the debate upon this Vote. The noble Lord pointed out that the expenses of the services of the two Houses of Parliament were far too high—they amounted to £120,000 a year—and the First Lord of the Treasury promised to take into consideration the desirability of appointing a Joint Committee of the two Houses to consider the subject. I want to know from the First Lord what has become of that promise. Was it merely made for the purpose of stopping debate and hurrying through the Estimates, or was the measure seriously contemplated?

*THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH, Strand, Westminster): The hon. Gentleman asks me whether there was any serious intention in the promise to look into the matter. There was a serious intention to deal with the question, and at the end of last Session I entered into communication with right hon. Gentlemen opposite, with the view of arriving at an understanding, whereby a Joint Committee might be satisfactorily appointed. The Recess intervened, and it is in no way due to any action on the part of the Government that the Joint Committee has not been appointed. A Committee of the House of Lords has, however, gone carefully into the salaries and expenditure of that House, and has drawn up a scheme by which considerable prospective reduction will be effected in the charges of that House. I confidently expect that as vacancies occur from time to time in the offices, they will be filled up with a due regard to economy. But if there is still a desire on the part of hon. Gentlemen opposite for a Joint Committee, there will be no indisposition on the part of the House of Lords to arrive at a settlement of the question, so far as they are concerned.

MR. BIGGAR (Cavan): In theory a general promise that reform will take place at some future date, is more or less satisfactory, but what occurs in practice is that whenever a vacancy occurs, there is some official who claims by prescription or otherwise, to have a right to the office, and by what some people outside would call a job, or by

what, perhaps, the First Lord of the Treasury would call the necessity of the case, the office is filled up at the full salary. Under the circumstances the Committee ought to mark its sense of the retention of these sinecure offices. I suppose that what the Lord Chancellor requires is simply a crier with a livery upon him, but surely it is not necessary to pay such an official a salary of £1,500 a year.

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON, Leeds, N.): I hope I may be allowed to supplement what my right hon. Friend (Mr. W. H. Smith) has said in answer to the hon. Member opposite (Mr. Biggar). If the hon. Member can point to a single instance in which a sinecure has been filled up, he will have made good his case. But he has not referred to a single case where, during the last two years, any office that can be properly described as a sinecure has been filled up by the present Government. It has been attempted by the present Government to abolish all sinecures, and they have been successful in abolishing a great many. The hon. Member also says these are the usual answers made by the Government, but that as soon as a place becomes vacant pressure is brought to bear, and the old system is reverted to. But what are the facts? My right hon. Friend told the House last year that a Committee was considering the whole question of the expenditure in connection with these offices. That Committee went into the question most carefully. We had to consider, on the one hand, what arrangements to make to prevent injustice being done to individuals, even though it might promote what might appear to be economy to the State. On the other hand, we had to consider the very distinct declaration made by the House last year. I think the Committee ought to be satisfied if the Government are able to show that as vacancies occur, no new appointments are made without the most careful and full consideration of the requirements of the case, and without Members of the Government being able to stand up in this House and defend the appointments made by them. Since last year no vacancy has occurred, and, therefore, there has been no opportunity for the carrying out of the promise of the Government. In justice to the

Clerk of Parliaments, I may say that since his appointment he has not filled up one of the vacant clerkships, there being two at present unfilled. I can assure the Committee that the whole of this matter has been most carefully considered, and I believe the Committee may rely upon it that as vacancies do occur very considerable economies will be effected.

*Mr. G. O. MORGAN (Denbighshire, E.): I am perfectly ready to give to the First Lord of the Treasury and the Secretary to the Treasury credit for sincerity, and it is simply because I believe the adoption of the Amendment of my hon. Friend would strengthen the hands of the Government in this matter, and encourage them to persevere in the creditable course in which they are pursuing, that I recommend him to go to a Division.

MR. LABOUCHERE: We really have had no explanation as to what this Sergeant-at-Arms does. So far as I can gather, the Secretary to the Treasury admits that the office is an absolute sinecure. [Mr. JACKSON signified dissent.] He does not. Then will he tell us what this gentleman does? There is some mysterious function connected with the Lord Chancellor which the Secretary to the Treasury does not understand. I have not that confidence, either in the House of Lords or in the Lord Chancellor, which appears to be entertained by the Secretary to the Treasury and the First Lord; and, therefore, I should like to know something about this mysterious Committee. Are there Minutes of the Committee? Has its Report been embodied in any Blue Book? We, who are the persons who have to the vote these sums of money, are told that there are to be alterations at some future time; but we are not told what the alterations are. I differ entirely from the view taken by the Secretary to the Treasury with regard to this sinecure. The hon. Gentleman holds the opinion that when a gentleman is given a sinecure he becomes, as it were, owner of a freehold. I hold that as the Vote is submitted to the House of Commons every year, the holder has only a yearly tenure of the office, and that so soon as we consider that the office is a sinecure, we ought to proceed at once to refuse the money for it. It is admitted on both sides of the

House that this Sergeant-at-Arms does absolutely nothing [Sir. R. FOWLER: No.] The right hon. Baronet will, no doubt, explain what this gentleman does. The Secretary to the Treasury seems to think this gentleman does uncommonly little, but the right hon. Baronet thinks he performs services which are only adequately rewarded by the sum of £1,500 per annum. None of us receive £1,500 a year for doing nothing, and it appears that because this Sergeant-at-Arms has been so fortunate as to receive this money for years, we are not to do away with his office until he is good enough to die.

*SIR R. FOWLER (London): The hon. Gentleman seems to think that some of the officers of the other House are overpaid. [Mr. LABOUCHERE: This one.] This gentleman is one of Her Majesty's Sergeant-at-Arms and attends upon the House of Lords. If that House does not sit much, I apprehend it is because we do not send them work to do. The Sergeant-at-Arms is a most estimable gentleman, and I do not think he is at all overpaid. ["What does he do?"] With very few exceptions, I do not believe there is anyone in the service of Her Majesty who is not underpaid. I have said before, I only know two men who serve Her Majesty who are at all adequately paid—of course I refer to the Law Officers of the Crown.

DR. CLARK (Caithness): We thought the right hon. Baronet would give us the information we have been seeking for the last half hour; but the right hon. Gentleman evidently confuses this Sergeant-at-Arms with the Usher of the Black Rod, who in the House of Lords performs the functions which our Sergeant-at-Arms performs in this House. The Gentleman in respect of whom the reduction is moved is merely a flunkey in attendance on the Lord Chancellor, and, therefore, we wish to know why he should be paid the enormous salary of £1,500 a year. Surely the day has arrived on which to get rid of these sinecure offices, the retention of which is simply a genteel way of picking the nation's pocket.

MR. M. KENNY (Tyronne Mid): It is only fair we should be told what it is exactly that this gentleman does. Who is he, and when was he appointed? It is perfectly ridiculous that the Lord

Chancellor, in addition to receiving £10,000 a year, should also have the right to appoint a Sergeant-at-Arms with £1,500 a year. We are entitled to ask what the functions of these officials are, how they are appointed, by whom, whether each Lord Chancellor has the right to appoint his own Sergeant-at-Arms, and whether this office is really a sinecure.

MR. A. J. WILLIAMS (Glamorgan, S.): It certainly would have been more likely to satisfy the Committee had the Secretary to the Treasury told us a little more specifically what are the duties of this official. But even the hon. Baronet opposite (Sir R. Fowler) seemed to admit that this estimable gentleman has really no duties. I have been endeavouring to realize what he can possibly have to do. He sits, as I understand, as an appendage to the Lord Chancellor when the noble and learned Lord sits judicially in the House of Lords. We know how seldom he does sit in the House of Lords; and, assuming that there is something to do when that august Court sits, it only occupies him a few days in the course of the year. Comparatively speaking, we may say he has nothing to do. It might settle the matter once for all if the Secretary to the Treasury could have told us that as a result of the deliberations of the Committee of the Lords a determination had been arrived at to abolish this as a sinecure office as soon as it becomes vacant.

MR. JACKSON: I do not think it is possible for me to say anything that will satisfy hon. Gentlemen opposite. The hon. Gentleman, by the tone of his remarks, seems to question whether the Committee ever sat at all.

MR. A. J. WILLIAMS: I can assure the hon. Gentleman that I never for a moment suggested anything of the kind. I only asked a simple question, whether the office had been represented as a sinecure, and whether, when it became vacant, it would not be filled up? I do not think I put my question in an unfair way.

MR. JACKSON: I apologize to the hon. Member if I misunderstood him, and I will not pursue that any further. I have already supplemented what my right hon. Friend said as to the question of this expenditure having been considered by the House of Lords. Probably, it may be in the recollection of

hon. Members that there is a Standing Committee of the House of Lords charged with the responsibility of looking after all questions of this kind. Hon. Members have asked me—I do not find fault with them for it—to say more as to the recommendations of the Committee: and what I wish to say is this—the Committee had before them a scheme which had been prepared as what I may term a model scheme, if I may use that term, upon which, as vacancies occurred, the staff should be remodelled. I am not in a position to say—I do not think it is reasonable I should be asked to say—the particular form which the recommendations of the Committee should take, or that the particular action that should be taken on the recommendations of the Committee should be the abolition of the office of Sergeant-at-Arms; for it must be observed that there are two alternatives in re-organizing a staff, the amalgamation of duties, or the abolition of an office altogether. I am not prepared to say that if the office of Sergeant-at-Arms should become vacant to-morrow it would be abolished; for I am not sure if that is the particular form of the recommendation. I hope the Committee will believe me when I say that the scheme which has been considered by the Committee is a scheme which holds out prospective economies, and that effect will be given to these economical recommendations as vacancies arise; and if effect has not been given to any of them during the past year it is simply because no vacancies have arisen. I must not be taken as accepting the statement that the Sergeant-at-Arms has no duties to perform. He has the duty of attending the Lord Chancellor in the House of Lords, and also when his Lordship goes to the Court of Chancery or elsewhere, and in many other ways he has duties to perform. Not very laborious duties, I dare say—possibly there are many that would suggest that the duties of the office I have the honour to hold are not laborious. It is well to bear in mind that the whole of these salaries used to be paid out of fees paid to the House of Lords, but in the wisdom of Parliament it was decided that it would be well if those fees were paid into the Exchequer, and when this was decided the House of Commons took

over the responsibility of paying the salaries of these offices. I venture to say it does appear to me a little unreasonable, if I may use the expression without offence, that Parliament should in the first place decide that all House of Lords' fees should be handed over to the Exchequer on a distinct understanding that the salaries previously charged to these fees should be voted in the Estimates, and then that this question should be raised. However I feel that I am at a disadvantage because of the promise made last year. Although there has been no departure from that promise, I am not in a position to say it has been given effect to; but the only reason why it has not resulted in distinct and specific action is because no vacancy has occurred. But the Committee may rely that as vacancies do arise every single one of these appointments will be considered, and as far as possible effect will be given to the desire to reduce expenditure.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE (Bradford, Central): Do I understand that the model scheme referred to as having been laid before the Committee of the House of Lords was prepared by the Treasury, or was it prepared by the House of Lords? I presume that this model scheme provided for a re-organization of Departments, and for considerable changes to be made hereafter. If so, does it contemplate any changes in the three considerable offices of the House of Lords—the Black Rod, the Deputy Black Rod, and the Sergeant-at-Arms? As compared with the House of Commons, the House of Lords is overburdened with highly salaried officials. For my part, I certainly should not vote for the Amendment, if I had an assurance that these are to be reduced as soon as the present occupants cease to hold office. I think we ought to have an assurance that one of these offices will be abolished. It is to be remembered, too, that one of these officers occupies one of the best houses in this building. I have always felt that, looking at the duties of this officer and at the demands made upon the space in these buildings, this officer should not have a large house at his disposal. I venture to hope that whenever a vacancy occurs this model scheme provides for the reduction of one of these very highly

paid offices. If that assurance is given I shall not vote for the Amendment, which otherwise I shall support.

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN, St. George's, Hanover Square): It is, of course, impossible to give an assurance when we are dealing with the officers of the other House, but the spirit in which the matter is treated by the Government is one of anxious desire—in which we believe we are supported by the House of Lords—to make considerable economies in the direction suggested by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford. We have every confidence that effect will be given to our desire, and I hope the right hon. Gentleman will accept that assurance. I think the matter may be now considered as thoroughly thrashed out. ("No, no.") If we devote more time to this item, I am afraid the Committee will, at some time or other, find that there is not sufficient leisure to discuss other matters in the future of a larger importance and in which greater interest is taken. I would suggest it is not advisable to discuss this at greater length, and that sufficient time has been devoted to it.

SIR WILFRID LAWSON (Cumberland, Cockermouth): I hope the Committee will not be influenced by the veiled threat we have just heard—

*MR. GOSCHEN: I can assure the hon. Member and the Committee that I intended no veiled threat. It is time only that I referred to. It must be seen that the actual time at our disposal, apart from the interest of other business, will not suffice for the discussion of the Estimates if it is distributed over the items in this proportion. I do not wish to add anything to heat the discussion. I simply point out the question of time, and make what I think is a reasonable proposition.

SIR WILFRID LAWSON: I accept at once the right hon. Gentleman's explanation, and am sorry if I said anything to hurt his feelings. As to the use of time, I do not think it could be better expended than in discussing the expenditure of the nation. I think we have spent the time very well so far, and we have gained our point, because nobody on the other side has been able to say what the gentleman who holds this office does. When anybody on this side says this is a sinecure

office, the Secretary to the Treasury shakes his head, but when he got up he could say nothing against the statement. Another reason why we should not take a vote yet is that we have not yet heard the opinion of the hon. Member for Stockport (Mr. Jennings). It is very interesting to come down to the House when the hon. Gentleman makes an able and vigorous speech in favour of retrenchment. I consider him a master, a teacher on these matters. How is he going to vote? It would be a guide to some of us to know.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton): One thing might have abbreviated this debate, and that is, if the Secretary to the Treasury had stated clearly to the Committee, as he has not done, what kind of reductions, in what direction, of what specific character, have been sketched out in this model scheme. The Committee would then have known something definite on which we might rely, but the hon. Gentleman simply tells us of some scheme, to make some unnamed reduction in the event of some unspecified vacancy occurring in some office; but surely that is not very conclusive as to the item under discussion. Nothing has been said to show that it is intended to make any reduction in these offices. It would have been easy for the hon. Gentleman to have said that nothing had been determined, that it was in too vague and indefinite a state to put before the Committee. If the scheme is too vague and indefinite to put before the Committee, then it is too vague and indefinite to influence the Committee. I would respectfully suggest to the Secretary to the Treasury that if he really wishes a debate on an item of this kind to be confined within a limited compass, instead of giving us nice words, prettily spoken, but meaning nothing in the end, he should tell us exactly what is the kind of reduction contemplated.

MR. JAMES ROWLANDS (Finsbury, East): One reason why we ought not just yet to divide on this Vote is to be found in the concluding words of the Secretary to the Treasury. He indicated as a reason why we should not reduce or abolish these offices that when the fees were handed over to the Exchequer payment of these salaries was thrown upon the Estimates. This would imply that we are bound to find the money for any

office the charge for which was so transferred—that we must continue the office simply because it was then in existence. Now that is an argument we must protest against. When the arrangement was made, of course it was necessary to take over the payment of the then existing offices, but having taken over this control, surely it is not maintained that we are bound to continue the offices for all time, that we may not review these offices and dispense with those shown to be unnecessary. Neither can I agree with the right hon. Gentleman who spoke from the Front Bench on this side (Mr. Shaw-Lefevre) that we are bound to continue an appointment until a vacancy occurs. It is contrary to the ideas of our modern times that an appointment should be continued after it is found to be unnecessary. If the office is a sinecure, if there is nothing for this gentleman to do, deal with the office at once, find this official something to do elsewhere if you can, but do not say that for another 20 years—I have no idea how old the gentleman is—we are to go on paying £1,500 a year, simply because the appointment was made in years gone by. This is the curse of all reorganizations of Services under the State—that you cannot move a man having once given him an appointment. We have to make a new departure from this principle, and I hope this is the commencement of it.

MR. HERBERT GARDNER (Essex, Saffron Walden): There is one point to clear up in reference to this inquiry by the Committee. We now learn from the Secretary to the Treasury for the first time that this is not a special Committee, as we were led to believe, but the ordinary Standing Committee of the House of Lords. I should like to know definitely if that is the fact, because I think the Committee will agree that the First Lord led us to believe just now that, as the result of what passed on a previous occasion, the House of Lords appointed a Special Committee to consider this subject. The Secretary to the Treasury has, it would seem, “let the cat out of the bag,” and it is only the ordinary Standing Committee to which this has been referred.

MR. M. KENNY: Perhaps the hon. Gentleman will also answer the question whether each Lord Chancellor ap-

points his own Sergeant, or whether he is a permanent official.

MR. JACKSON: He is a permanent officer of the House of Lords, and does not change with successive Lord Chancellors. The present Sergeant at Arms was, I think, appointed 20 years ago.

MR. LABOUCHERE: So he has drawn £30,000!

MR. JACKSON: The hon. Member opposite (Mr. H. Gardner) has asked me a question from which it appears he has rather confused the answer given by the First Lord of the Treasury. My right hon. Friend has explained to-day what action he took on the suggestion made for a Joint Committee. It is not a statement made to-day for the first time, because it was made when the Vote was under discussion last year. The hon. Member speaks now of a Special Committee, but what was said last year was that this had been specially referred to the Committee—not that it had been referred to a Special Committee, but specially referred to a Committee charged with looking after these matters. My right hon. Friend explained why the proposals for a Joint Committee were not entertained, and the Government are not responsible for that scheme not having been carried out. The hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh) asked me whether I could not have shortened the discussion by stating specifically if this particular office was referred to in the scheme sketched out. I have already stated, the scheme which was submitted to the Committee was a scheme which contemplated a reduction of expenditure—a considerable reduction of expenditure—and that effect will be given to it as vacancies occur. The hon. Member complains that that is very vague, and I have no reason to complain of his criticism. But let me point out—and I think it is an additional reason why I may ask the Committee to excuse me if I do not state specifically what reforms are contemplated—that there has been, as hon. Members know, a recent change in the occupancy of the Chairmanship of Committees in the other House, and it is the noble Lord who fills the office of Chairman of Committees who presides over this Committee referred to as dealing with this question. I had an interview with the new Chairman of Committees the other day, and I went into

this question with him and sought to obtain from him some distinct information as to whether this particular scheme I have mentioned was likely to be adopted by the Committee.

MR. BRADLAUGH: Was the scheme submitted by the Treasury, or by whom?

MR. JACKSON: The scheme was submitted to the Committee—

MR. BRADLAUGH: By whom?

MR. JACKSON: It was prepared by those who are responsible. [“Who?”] I do not think I should be called upon to say whence the scheme emanated. It will, I think, be sufficient for the House of Commons if the proposals are satisfactory. But I was giving the reason why I would rather not just now give specific information as to this scheme. The Chairman of Committees said, “I am most anxious to carry out this, but I have been only three or four days in office, and I was not a member of the Committee previously, when this scheme was before them, and before I pledge myself I must make myself acquainted with the proposals, I should prefer to have time to look into the question. It may be that I cannot agree to every detail, and may suggest alterations on some points.” This I could not but admit was only reasonable. But I have not the slightest doubt of the intention of the House of Lords to give effect to alterations in the direction of economy; and I can say with confidence, that but for the change that has taken place in the office of Chairman of Committees, I should have been in a position to give details now.

MR. BRADLAUGH: I understood the Secretary to the Treasury to say a few minutes ago that some scheme, with which he was satisfied, would have taken effect but for the fact that no vacancies had occurred. But now I understand that the scheme has not been accepted, and possibly it may never be accepted, and that he thinks he ought not to communicate the authorship of the scheme. I do not blame him for that. But even now he does not say if the scheme has any application to this particular item. Really this is not the way to expedite debate.

MR. A. J. WILLIAMS (Glamorgan, S.): I think we may see the value of persistent inquiry. We were led to understand that a Committee had been

appointed *ad hoc* to look into this matter, including the whole official staff, and that a careful and elaborate scheme had been drawn up with a view to the reduction of the staff as vacancies occur, and that we might rely on this being carried out. What do we find after all? That somebody unknown has drawn up a scheme which has been submitted to the Standing Committee, who have not made up their minds whether they can accept it or not. Now I think it is only reasonable that, if it is to have any influence with us at all, we should have this scheme submitted to us for our judgment.

MR. HERBERT GARDNER: The hon. Gentleman says I misunderstood the answer I received. What I asked was, whether the Committee to which reference has been made was the ordinary Standing Committee or a Special Committee, and the hon. Gentleman referred to the debate of last year. Now, in that debate the noble Lord the Member for Paddington (Lord Randolph Churchill) suggested a Joint Committee of both Houses, and the First Lord said he would favourably consider that. When asked, the right hon. Gentleman referred to this as an undertaking to have a Special Committee inquiry, and he did so again this afternoon. Will the Secretary to the Treasury say yes or no? Is it a Special Committee or the ordinary Standing Committee of the House of Lords?

*SIR JULIAN GOLDSMID (St. Pancras, S.): Surely this is a very simple matter. The Duke of Buckingham last year was chairman of a committee which had under consideration a plan for the future reduction of the superabundance of officers of the House of Lords. The noble Duke died, and Lord Morley was appointed in his place, and the noble Lord, before pledging himself to carry out the scheme, wishes to have time to examine it. Any reasonable man would do the same, and the House of Commons would do right to accept this from a man who has done good service in the past under the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian, and I am sure will do good service in the position he now occupies.

MR. ESSLEMONT (Aberdeen, E.): This discussion has been somewhat protracted, and I desire to take a decision and bring it to an end. I do

not think the Government have put the case fairly. This Committee, it appears, has been sitting, but has done nothing about this question; and, after all, it appears the promise given depends upon the approval of Lord Morley. I may take this opportunity of saying that I think we spend a great deal too much time in hammering away at points that cannot be remedied, but I think, for the sake of the time of the Committee, the Government might come to some conclusion whereby we may rest assured that we shall have no further trouble. If they authoritatively state that when these appointments come to an end the House will have no more of them, but that future appointments will be made under the pleasure of the House, so that people appointed may be properly paid, and that the House will be at liberty to discontinue appointments when they are thought unnecessary, such a declaration from the Government would save further waste of time.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland): The Secretary to the Treasury seemed to be somewhat indignant when I cheered the reference to the Committee promised last year. That investigation was promised last year, but we are now just as far from a conclusion as we were then. Hon. Members will remember what took place last year. I think it was I who raised the question of these salaries, and I had the good fortune to have the influential support of the noble Lord the member for Paddington (Lord Randolph Churchill). Up to that time we had got no satisfaction from the Government, but when such a strong and formidable ally declared in our favour the Government changed front, and the First Lord said the matter should be referred to a Committee.

MR. JACKSON: The hon. Member has misunderstood what the First Lord said. What my right hon. Friend said was that he would consider it, and he has explained what action he took on the promise then made.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: The right hon. Gentleman promised to consider it, and as the result we are told it was referred to the Standing Committee of the House of Lords. Any way, the matter was referred by somebody to the Standing Committee of the House of Lords. Well, but what has been done? When and

how often has the Standing Committee considered the subject? What are its recommendations? Are any salaries to be reduced or discontinued? We are absolutely as much in the dark as we were months ago. Why attempt to shuffle the Estimates through the House of Commons on a vague and misleading promise? I think I have a perfect right to cheer or jeer at such a promise. What is the other line of argument? I was astonished to hear the hon. Baronet the Member for South St. Pancras (Sir Julian Goldsmid) who, except on one class of subjects, is usually a lucid-minded man, say that because we are promised an inquiry by Lord Morley, who has been a useful public servant, and who, he anticipates, will be so in the future, we ought to be satisfied. But surely the question of Lord Morley is utterly irrelevant to the issue. Our contention is that the investigation promised twelve months ago has not taken place.

MR. JACKSON: The hon. Member will allow me to say that is not so. That statement is absolutely contrary to the real facts of the case. What was stated by the First Lord in this Committee last year was that this question was at that time under consideration. My noble Friend (Lord Randolph Churchill) made a suggestion that a Joint Committee should be appointed, and my right hon. Friend the Leader of the House undertook to consider that suggestion. He has explained what action he did take upon that undertaking, but the hon. Member will see that the question was then under consideration by the Committee of the House of Lords. I have stated to the Committee what has happened since.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: Really, I fail to see how that explanation improves the hon. Gentleman's position; it betters our position, but it does not improve his. He says the investigation was not because of, but was antecedent to, our demand of last year; and is it therefore not more shameful that we should have no conclusion arrived at? The hon. Baronet above the Gangway (Sir J. Goldsmid) says Lord Morley has done good public service—a point I neither deny nor affirm, for I know nothing about it—and therefore we may rely on him in the future; but what has that to do with the case?

We had a right to expect a decision on the subject before being asked to vote this salary again. Now, I have a proposal to make. I do not suppose we shall get any satisfaction from the House of Lords Committee, and it is we, the House of Commons, who have to satisfy the taxpayers. It is the House of Commons, which passes these Estimates, which ought to investigate the matter. Will the Secretary to the Treasury agree to nominate after Easter a Committee of the House of Commons to investigate the question of salaries paid to officials of the House of Lords, and that this Committee shall take evidence as to expenditure and duties? The Secretary to the Treasury smiles, but I see nothing in the proposition to occasion amusement, though it might be afforded in the result. Is the House of Commons to be denied investigation of this part of the expenditure of the country? I do not say whether the result may or may not show that the Serjeant-at-Arms is badly paid at £1,500 a-year—he may be an extremely overworked official—nor am I prepared to anticipate the evidence whether or not Black Rod, who alternates between a somewhat comic appearance on the floor of this House, and a courteous acceptance of our prayer to admit ladies or gentlemen to the Gallery of the House of Lords, is grossly overworked and scandalously underpaid. I will not anticipate the results that may be attained; but, at least, we shall have the satisfaction of a thorough examination. What is the alternative course? We do not know whether the hon. Gentleman may be on that Bench next year. So far as he is personally concerned, I hope he may be, for I do not know anyone who could fulfil the duties of his office with greater skill, ability, and courtesy. But the fact is, it requires more than all his tact, and more than all his large amount of courtesy to get through the House of Commons such a scandalous Vote as this. But if he should be in his place next year—and I should be glad if it should be so, if his Party are in power—what will happen? I will venture to utter a prophecy. We shall find this House of Lords Committee still profoundly absorbed in the study of the expenditure—that it is perplexed, divided, and overwhelmed with all the facts, figures,

and the diverse heterogeneous and miscellaneous considerations that encircle the question, and that it will require years of examination to determine it. But meantime we are called upon to vote for this highly paid, and, as it now appears, sinecure office. This is why we cannot accept the statement of the Secretary to the Treasury as satisfactory.

MR. NOLAN (Louth, N.): I cannot agree that time has been wasted over the discussion of this item. It is a case of a class which, being satisfactorily settled, may clear away discussion which else may be necessary on other items. Several things have been brought out in the discussion. I am sure we heard with great interest, if not with satisfaction, that this gentleman, as Serjeant-at-arms, has received £30,000 of the taxpayers' money. But we have failed to elicit from one side or the other what are the services rendered for this enormous sum of money. The brief explanation of the functions of the office we had from the Secretary to the Treasury was that the Serjeant-at-arms attended the Lord Chancellor. Putting the most liberal interpretation on this duty, I think it will be agreed that it could be efficiently discharged by a policeman, who would consider himself fairly well paid at £100 a-year. This cannot be considered a small matter. In the course of the debate last night, an hon. Member opposite (Mr. Bartley) with painstaking elaboration showed how a poor family with an income of £39 a year paid in taxation £2 17s. 5d. per annum. Now, it is out of money thus received that the salary of £10,000 to the Lord Chancellor, and £1,500 for the gentleman who attends upon him, are paid. We have this state of facts in the teeth of the statement I heard not long since in this House, that it has ever been the practice for gentlemen of wealth, position, and education to devote their time, energy, and great talents to the service of their country. This was the statement that met a proposal from the Representative of a working class constituency on this side, that Members of this House should receive some allowance for the time they devote to public duties here. On that occasion, hon. Members pointed to the terrible state of affairs in the United States, where Members of Congress receive some such allowance, but here

we have a gentleman who, without underrating his position, I may describe as a subordinate official, receiving a salary equal to that of the Vice President of the United States. I do not think more can be added to give force to the ridiculous position taken up in defence of an appointment like this. The Secretary to the Treasury has spoken in rather a wounded tone on this matter. Now, I would endorse the well-merited compliment the Chancellor of the Exchequer paid him last night, and I am sure there is not a Member of the House but will agree that the hon. Gentleman discharges his duty in the most conscientious and courteous manner, and I should be sorry to say anything that might be considered offensive to him; but we are here as Representatives of the taxpayers, and are anxious to reduce the burdens upon them. In that sense we are acting now, and we would strengthen the Treasury in any desire for economy in the direction of these salaries.

The Committee divided:—Ayes 75; Noes 117.—(Division List, No. 76.)

Original Question again proposed.

MR. MUNRO FERGUSON (Leith, &c.): If the Standing Committee of the House of Lords desire to know to what point to direct their attention, and where we consider salaries are excessive, I would offer for their consideration the item under the head of salary and allowances to the Lord Chancellor of £4,000, in connection with his duties as Speaker of the House of Lords. I think this sum is somewhat excessive as compared with the duties discharged by the Speaker in this House, or by yourself, Mr. Courtney, as Chairman of Committees. I think it must be admitted that, if allowances in the latter cases were accepted as the basis for applying the principle of payment by results, the payment to the Speaker of the House of Lords would sink to a very low point indeed in comparison. It seems to be considered that a high salary is necessary to preserve the dignity of officials and ensure the efficient discharge of the duties of the office; and in the case of Members of the legal profession, it would appear that they require twice as much as anybody else. I might institute a comparison with the position of a Justice of the Supreme Court in the United States, an official

who has to discharge duties as august and onerous as those of the Lord Chancellor, and for whom a salary of £2,000 is considered adequate. It will be seen, therefore, that experience does not show that inflated salaries are necessary to the dignity of position; and I move that the item of £4,000, the salary of the Lord Chancellor, be reduced by £2,000.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item A, Salaries of £5,545, be reduced by £2,000, part of the Salary of the Lord Chancellor as Speaker of the House of Lords."—(Mr. Munro Ferguson.)

DR. TANNER (Cork, Mid): I really think that some little explanation or answer is due from the Government.

MR. JACKSON: It was out of no want of courtesy that I did not rise. I took this as only part of the scheme by which hon. Gentlemen opposite desired to draw attention to the items in the Vote. I am sure that I can say nothing that will alter the view of hon. Members on this matter or beyond what has been urged on former occasions, and I thought it better to come to a decision at once.

MR. HERBERT GARDNER: As I have notice of Amendment in respect to the Chairman of Committees in the House of Lords, it might spare the Committee inconvenience if I dealt with that now—

THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order! I think that will be best secured by coming to decision upon this first.

The Committee divided:—Ayes 62; Noes 132.—(Div. List, No. 77.)

Original Question again proposed.

MR. HERBERT GARDNER: I wish now to call attention to another matter. The salary of the Chairman of Committees of the House of Lords amounts to no less a sum than £2,500, and, in moving a reduction of the Vote by £500, I may say I do so in no spirit of hostility to the noble Lord (Earl of Morley) who now fills the office, or to the noble Duke (the Duke of Buckingham and Chandos) who lately filled it. The present Chairman of Committee in the House of Lords will, no doubt, fulfil his functions with the same ability as he displayed in other Departments of

the State, and, as to the efficiency of the late Duke of Buckingham, I have never heard any question. But I would ask the House to compare the duties performed by the Chairman of Committees in the House of Lords for a salary of £2,500 a year with the very onerous duties of the Chairman of Ways and Means, whose salary is of the same amount. If the standard of pay adopted in this House is fair and reasonable, I think the Committee will agree that the country must get a very poor return for the money it votes for the Chairmanship of the House of Lords. The Committee cannot deny one of two propositions: Either the salary of the Chairman of Ways and Means is too small, or the salary of the Chairman of Committees in the House of Lords is far too large. As to the first proposition I will not express an opinion, except to say that I should not be in order if I tried to move an augmentation of the salary of the Chairman of Ways and Means. With regard to the second proposition, I have no doubt about it myself, and I am sure there is no Member of the House who does not agree with me on that subject. There is a vast difference between the demands on the time of the Chairman of this House and that of the Chairman of the House of Lords. The Estimates are never brought before the House of Lords, and that constitutes in itself a wide and significant distinction between the duties of the two officials. The House of Lords meets day by day, merely to adjourn to some livelier and busier scenes, while this House is content to spend hours and hours in debating propositions which some Members may think important, and others trivial. The Committee will find, on referring to *Hansard*, that you, Mr. Chairman, were last year compelled to open your mouth some 547 times whilst presiding over this Committee, whereas the late Duke of Buckingham was only required to address the House of Lords on six separate occasions. There is, as a matter of fact, no possible comparison between the two Houses. The Chairman of Committees of the House of Lords has, no doubt, to fulfil very responsible duties, but the office which you, Sir, fill with so much discretion, and with such general approval from all parts of the House, is without doubt

the most exacting, the most onerous, and the most exhausting of all the offices of this House, not even excepting that of Mr. Speaker. That being so, to vote this amount to the Chairman of Committees in the House of Lords would be irrational, absurd, and almost an insult to the position which you, Sir, occupy.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That Item B, of £5,000, be reduced by £500, part of the Salary of the Chairman of Committees of the House of Lords."—(*Mr. Herbert Gardner.*)

*SIR W. BARTTELOT (Sussex, N.W.): Some years ago, as many here will remember, my hon. Friend the Member for Swansea (Mr. Dillwyn) proposed to reduce the salary of the Chairman of Committees of the House of Lords to £1,500, as the salary of the Chairman of Committees here was £1,500. It was, however, urged that it would be an unwise and ungenerous thing to attempt to deal with the salary of the distinguished man who occupied that position, and an ungracious act towards the other House. It was, however, suggested from the Treasury Bench that the Chairman of Committees of the House of Commons might well receive the same salary as the Chairman of Committees of the House of Lords. This was at once agreed to, and the Chairman of Committees, then my right hon. Friend the Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) found his salary at once increased by £1,000 a year, and from that time the two salaries have been the same. I think it would be unjust and unfair to the present holder of that office to reduce his salary. I venture, therefore, to hope the Committee will by a large majority decline to endorse so ungracious an act towards the other House of Parliament.

*SIR J. GOLDSMID (St. Pancras, S.): I would point out that the Chairman of the House of Lords has more responsible work to do than any other paid officer of the House of Lords, as he has charge of all the Private Business of the House of Lords. We all know with what ability, zeal, and energy Lord Redesdale discharged his duties, and I say that the responsibility which falls upon the Chairman of Committees in the House of Lords is so considerable, and the amount of work he has to do is so large that a

Mr. Herbert Gardner

salary of £2,500 is not too high. I do not think a comparison can in every respect be fairly made between the position of the Chairman of Ways and Means and that of the Chairman of Committees in the House of Lords. I believe that the Private Business is not quite so responsible in the House of Commons as in the House of Lords, because more Private Bills, I think, originate in the House of Lords than in this House. Though there is more general work done in the House of Commons, our Chairman of Committees has hon. Gentlemen on whom he can call for assistance if he thinks proper. We all know, Mr. Courtney, how capable you are in the discharge of your duties, and what a glutton you are for work, and the consequence is that you very rarely call on those Gentlemen to assist you. You, however, have the opportunity of doing so whenever the work becomes too pressing. Under the circumstances of the case, I do not think it would be suitable for the present to reduce the salary of the Chairman of Committees in the House of Lords.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: I would like to ask the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson) whether the hon. Baronet (Sir J. Goldsmid) is right in stating that the Chairman of Committees in the House of Lords is precluded from getting any assistance in his work?

MR. JACKSON: I did not understand him to say that.

*SIR J. GOLDSMID: What I said was, that the duties of the Chairman of Committees in the House of Lords were not as onerous as those of the Chairman of Committees in the House of Commons; but I said that in the House of Commons the Chairman of Committees had four gentlemen on whom he could call to assist him in discharging his duties.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: If the hon. Baronet does not say that the Chairman of the House of Lords has no power of obtaining assistance, what becomes of his argument? The Chairman of the House of Lords can call upon forty or fifty Peers, if he likes, to take his

place. The hon. Baronet shows a want of lucidity that I am surprised to find in him. I have seen you, Sir, and other Chairmen of Committees, seven, eight, or ten hours in your place without calling for any assistance, and I have no reason to doubt that your successors will be as energetic in carrying out their duties as you are, though we cannot perhaps hope that they will be as able as you. If the Chairman of the House of Lords is less hard-worked than you, Sir, he ought to be paid less, and if he is more hard-worked he ought to be paid more. We say he is less hard-worked, and therefore ought to be paid less. I admit that the Chairman of the House of Lords has a great deal to do in connection with Private Business. Whether the hon. Baronet (Sir J. Goldsmid) is right in saying that he has more to do in that respect than you, Mr. Courtney, I do not know, but he certainly has nothing like the same amount of work to do in presiding over Committee of the House of Lords as you, Sir, have in presiding over this Committee. You have to be in your place all the time the House is in Committee, which means that you have to be in your place the greater part of the Session. The House of Lords is not an over-worked assembly. It reminds one of an April shower. It is here now and the next moment it is gone. You hear a mysterious mumble and a few whispers, and the House of Lords has done for the evening. I venture to say that the Chairman of the House of Lords does not sit as Chairman for one hour a week, and yet the hon. Baronet (Sir J. Goldsmid) compares his labours with those of the Chairman of Committees in this House. The hon. and gallant Baronet opposite (Sir W. Barttelot) argued this question from another point of view. The hon. and gallant Gentleman represents in their most orthodox form "good old Tory doctrines," and he does so in the matter of these salaries. But I think he was rather unfortunate as to the ground upon which he based his defence. He said it would be an act of discourtesy, an ungracious thing, to reduce the salary, but as guardians of the public purse we have nothing to do with courtesy or grace. I think that

this case has been brought forward by the hon. Member for Essex (Mr. H Gardner) in a most unanswerable manner. The only fault I have to find with him is that the amount of reduction he proposes is disproportionate, when you consider the light duties of the Chairman of Committees in the House of Lords and the salary paid and the heavy duties of the Chairman in this House.

The Committee divided, Ayes, 62; Noes, 138; (Division List No. 78.)

Original Question again proposed.

MR. LABOUCHERE: The next item, Sub-head "C," is one which always causes a considerable amount of discussion in this House, the reason being because the system of payment of the Clerks of the other House is so manifestly unfair. The last Motion made was to reduce the salary of the Chairman of Committees in the House of Lords below that of the Chairman of Committees in this House, but that was not the view of the majority. The argument against the reduction was that it would be unfair to give the Chairman in one House less than the Chairman in the other. Well, it is on that argument that I claim the vote of hon. Gentlemen in favour of the reduction which I now propose in regard to the salaries of the clerks of the House of Lords, who surely ought not to be paid more than the clerks of the House of Commons, seeing that the latter work a great many more hours. Yet the clerks of the House of Lords are higher paid than those of the House of Commons. The Clerk of Parliaments receives £2,500 per annum, with an allowance for a house, or £500 more than is paid to the Chief Clerk of the House of Commons. It was thought that the late Chief Clerk of this House, Sir Erskine May, one of the most distinguished men who has ever acted as Clerk to this House, would have been promoted after long service to the office of the Clerk of Parliaments, with its higher salary and position, but it was not so. A gentleman was fished out for the higher post, who was the relative of one Lord Chancellor at least, if not of two, and who had been some-

thing connected with lunatic asylums. [Laughter.] I am not exaggerating. That gentleman was pitchforked into the office of the Clerk of Parliaments, for which he had had no sort of training, and the doctrine that the Chief Clerk of the House of Commons may expect to be promoted to that post, after long and faithful service, as a sort of *otium cum dignitate quasi*-pension, has been exploded. We have a Clerk in the House of Lords, therefore, who receives £500 a year more than our Head Clerk. Then the Clerk-Assistant of the House of Lords receives £1,800 per annum for filling a position equivalent to that for which the corresponding officer of the House of Commons receives £1,500. And all these gentlemen have houses besides. Then we find that the Senior Clerk in the House of Lords receives £1,000, whereas the maximum salary of the Senior Clerk in the House of Commons is £800 per annum. I want to know why these distinctions are made. The reduction of £1,000 which I intend to move is, roughly speaking, the amount of the excess in the payment to clerks in the Department of the Clerk of the Parliaments as against the payment to the clerks in this House. I heard the Secretary to the Treasury say a while ago that there was a species of bargain entered into as to these salaries. I have heard that before, and I have heard the same from the hon. Gentleman's predecessors. What he pointed to was that at one time all the salaries were paid out of fees which came from suitors in the House of Lords. This practice was done away with, however. The fees are now paid into the Treasury, and the Treasury pays the salaries. It was understood that if the fees were paid into the Treasury the salaries should be paid out of the Votes of the House, but there was no undertaking that the payment of the existing salaries should go on for ever and aye. [Mr. JACKSON: Hear, hear!] The Secretary to the Treasury accepts that statement. At the time of which I spoke the fees were paid into a fee fund, and the interest on that served as pensions to the clerks and other officials in the House of Lords. We have nothing to do with that, I admit, but we have to do with the salaries of officials which we are

called upon to vote. I have never yet heard a satisfactory reason why the clerks of the House of Lords, who do very much less than our clerks here, should be paid higher salaries. I do not say that our clerks do not deserve more than they are getting, and I should be ready to put the salaries of the two sets of clerks together, and to give our clerks more and those of the House of Lords less; but I do protest against the clerks of the House of Lords being paid more than our clerks for doing less work than our clerks. I beg to move the reduction of the Vote by £1,000.

Motion made, and Question put, "That Item C, of £22,367, Salaries, &c., Department of the Clerk of the Parliaments, be reduced by £1,000."—*(Mr. Labouchere.)*

MR. JACKSON: The hon. Member has made a comparison between the clerks in the House of Lords and the clerks in this House, and I do not think we can very successfully discuss that at any great length. The hon. Member says the clerks of the House of Lords receive more than the clerks of the House of Commons.

MR. LABOUCHERE: The clerks as a whole.

MR. JACKSON: I do not think I could entirely agree with the hon. Member there. I think he is rather mixing up the titles of these Gentlemen. It is not easy to compare the salaries of the clerks in the two Houses of Parliament; because it does not follow that those bearing the same titles occupy analogous positions. I quite agree that there is no reason why the salaries should necessarily be perpetual; but the proper time to consider a revision of salaries is when vacancies occur. I should not agree with the hon. Member if he contended that we are on our own Motion to go and reduce the salaries of officers who have been duly appointed and have given up other appointments in order to accept these posts, but I agree with him that when vacancies occur these appoint-

ments should be reviewed, and the salaries proportioned to the work which has to be done. The Clerk of Parliaments has other duties to perform beyond those connected with the House of Lords as a legislative body. He is Registrar of the Supreme Court of Appeal, and a certain part of his work begins in November, when Members of this House are taking holiday. Since the gentleman who now holds the office has been appointed he has effected economies to the extent of £2,000 a year. Though the Head Clerk of the House of Lords receives £300 a year more than the Head Clerk of the House of Commons, yet this sum is hardly the equivalent in cash of the furnished house with which the latter is provided.

MR. LABOUCHERE: We have protested from the very first against the appointment of this Clerk of the Parliaments—we have opposed the salary every year since he was appointed. If Sir Erskine May after his long service in this House had been promoted to this superior position when a vacancy occurred, we should not have complained, but our complaint was that the present holder of the office was taken on, knowing nothing of the business of the Clerk of the House of Commons or the Clerk of the House of Lords. He may have learnt it since, but that is not our affair. The hon. Member says this gentleman has saved us £2,000 a year; that is to say he has cut down other people's salaries to the extent of £2,000 a year. But I should like to know if his economies take the view of cutting down his own salary. It is all very well to talk about saving £2,000 a year by cutting down other people's salaries—we have to interfere because he cannot take an independent view of his own salary. We want that to be reduced until the clerks in both Houses can be regarded as in an identical position. The hon. Gentleman opposite said we could not fairly compare one clerk with another clerk. Well, take the Clerk Assistant. In the House of Lords the clerk occupying that position receives £1,800 a year, whilst in this House he gets £1,500 a year and a house.

MR. JACKSON: They are not exactly the same.

MR. LABOUCHERE: I do not see the distinction. There are three clerks in the House of Lords, and there are three clerks here. One is an assistant clerk in the House of Lords, and one is an assistant clerk in this House. The hon. Gentleman says they are not the same, but the only distinction I see is that their salaries are not the same; and that is precisely the distinction which I wish to do away with. I am sure the hon. Gentleman must see that this system is unfair. It exists because it has existed. But it ought to be altered. I do not see why our clerks should not be paid the same as those in the House of Lords. I am only raising the question on the point that the clerks in one House ought not to be paid more—I think they ought to be paid less—than the clerks who occupy identically the same position in the other House; and in paying them equally it should be distinctly understood that there is a sort of system by which the Head Clerk of this House will succeed to the appointment of Clerk of Parliaments, when it becomes vacant—by which he would have a call upon the office, if I may so term it. By such a system the Head Clerk of this House would know that, at a given time, if he did not get a rise in his salary, he would succeed to an office where he would have less heavy duties to perform in his advanced years. I am perfectly certain that if you take hour for hour, it will be found that the Clerk of Parliaments does not work the same number of hours as our Chief Clerk does. I am only asking for common and reasonable fairness in this matter.

DR. TANNER (Mid Cork): We have been told that the Clerk of Parliaments is Registrar to the Supreme Court of Appeal, and I should much like to know whether he is paid anything extra for the duties of the office. We know, in the case of other officers of the House of Lords that they are paid extra for supplemental offices. Another point I would wish to drive home is that raised by my hon. Friend the Member for Northamp-

ton with respect to the position of the Clerk of Parliaments. If the post is of such very high honour it is certainly of paramount public importance that there should be a process of promotion of the Officers of this House to the corresponding posts in the House of Lords, where the clerks have not so much trouble and have not these very long hours. Now, I would point out that the post of the Clerk of Parliaments is judicial. For my own part, I speak of a gentleman who is not in the costume of a barrister, but who wears a peculiar sort of wig. I have seen him standing in the doorway of this House. I asked who he was. "Oh, that is the Clerk of Parliaments—the Senior Clerk of the House of Lords." I asked why he wore a wig which was different from the wigs of our clerks, and I was told that his office was such a very high one that he actually occupied the position of a Judge. That in itself is a very high reward, but in addition he gets this enormous salary, with a position which affords him the opportunity of associating with noblemen in the other House occasionally, and for very short periods. I think he ought to be satisfied, and that the country should be saved the expense. I would ask the hon. Gentleman for an answer to the first point which I endeavoured to bring under his notice, whether the Clerk of Parliaments receives additional pay as Registrar to the Supreme Court of Appeal?

MR. JACKSON: The Clerk of Parliaments receives no additional pay for that appointment.

DR. TANNER: Does his salary cover everything?

MR. JACKSON: Yes.

The Committee divided:—Ayes 68; Noes, 137.—(Div. List, No. 79.)

Original Question again proposed.

MR. LABOUCHERE: (Northampton): I regret that the House should have to occupy so much of its time with these questions relating to the House

of Lords, considering that all I ask for is equal justice between the two Houses, and that sinecures should cease to exist; but I am obliged to trouble the House with an Amendment on Sub-head E, with regard to the salaries of Black Rod and the Yeoman Usher of the Black Rod. Now, while Black Rod receives £2,000 a year and a house; the Serjeant-at-Arms in the House of Commons only receives £1,200; the Yeoman Usher of the Black Rod receives £1,000, and the Deputy Serjeant-at-Arms in the House of Commons £800. No one can deny that the Serjeant-at-Arms and Deputy Serjeant do more work than the Black Rod and the Yeoman Usher of the Black Rod, for the simple reason that neither of these latter officers have anything to do except in the short sittings of the other House. I will venture to say that this House sits ten times as long as the House of Lords. The fact is that the offices in the other House are the appanages of the great. I do not complain of those to whom they are given, but they are generally given to gentlemen who are in the category of courtiers or the friends of courtiers, and they are almost sinecures, the gentlemen holding them going to the House of Lords for an hour or so in the evening for a few months in the year. I say they are excessive salaries, and that it is ridiculous to pay the Black Rod as much as you pay the President of the Local Government Board, who is one of the ablest of Her Majesty's Ministers, and performs really good work. I do not think the right hon. Gentleman ought to be paid more than he gets, because £2,000 a year is a very good salary; but there is undoubtedly a wide disparity between the services rendered in the two cases. We shall probably be told by the Secretary to the Treasury that the Committee he has spoken of is looking into the matter; but I should like to know, has there ever been any objection made in the Committee to these salaries in the House of Lords? Under all the circumstances, I beg to move that the sum be reduced by £500.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That Item E, of £6,075, Salaries of Department of the Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod, be reduced by £1,000."—(*Mr. Labouchere.*)

MR. BIGGAR (Cavan): Much time has been spent on this Vote, and I would suggest that time would be saved if the Secretary to the Treasury were to agree to the recommendation of the hon. Member for the Scotland division of Liverpool (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) and appoint a Committee to sit permanently for the purpose of revising the Estimates. A large portion of the Votes for the House of Lords is utterly indefensible, and I certainly think that this question of the salaries of the officials ought to be considered. Although I do not think the House of Commons should do anything to strangle the efficiency of the House of Lords or curtail its dignity, at the same time, I think these matters ought to be treated with a little more candour, and I should like some one to tell this House, having regard to the length of time occupied by the sittings of the other House, how much an hour the Black Rod gets for his services. We might also be informed as to the period of life at which these appointments are conferred, and whether, when they are made, the gentlemen receiving them are at an age when they could fill any other position. I may say I have no personal objection to these gentlemen. On the only occasions I have come in contact with them they have been polite; but I think the salaries they receive are large compared with those of gentlemen holding similar positions in this House.

MR. A. O'CONNOR (Donegal, East): The time of adjournment of this House may be fraught with important issues to the unfortunate people of Donegal. I have just had placed in my hands a telegram, which deals with a matter of so much importance that, in order that we may have an opportunity of considering the matter to which it relates, I will move that the Chairmain report Progress, and ask leave to sit again.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. Arthur O'Connor.*)

MR. SEXTON (Belfast, West): I hope the Government will assent to the Motion. I have seen the telegram my

hon. Friend refers to, and I believe the condition of the people of Donegal to be very serious and to depend largely on the interposition of this House. The telegram reveals a state of things showing that many of the people of Donegal are in a state of starvation.

MR. JACKSON: I cannot consent to the Motion at this moment. This Vote has been under discussion for four hours, and ought now to be allowed to pass. If we are allowed to take this and the next two Votes, we might then report Progress.

MR. LABOUCHERE: If we allow this Vote, which can be again discussed next year, to pass, I hope the Government will allow Progress to be reported. In that case, I think we could agree to the Votes named by the hon. Gentleman.

MR. BRADLAUGH: The matter referred to by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Donegal is so serious that I hope the Government will allow it to be discussed.

MR. JACKSON: The Votes we ask for after this are not contentious.

MR. A. O'CONNOR: Then I ask leave to withdraw my Motion.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Motion, "That Item E, of £6,075, Salaries of Department of the Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod, be reduced by £1,000," by leave, withdrawn.

Original Question put, and agreed to.

(2.) £44,420, to complete the sum for House of Commons Offices.

Resolutions to be reported upon Monday, 29th April.

Committee to sit again upon Monday, 29th April.

MR. A. O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.): Mr. Speaker, I rise to move that this House do now adjourn.

*MR. SPEAKER: There are one or two more Orders.

MR. A. O'CONNOR: I respectfully ask that I may move the Adjournment of the House, the questions having been disposed of and the Orders of the day entered upon.

Mr. Sexton

*MR. SPEAKER: Before the Orders of the day are disposed of it is very unusual to move the Adjournment of the House.

MR. A. O'CONNOR: I do not wish to provoke a decision from the Chair on the spur of the moment. I will not persist in my Motion, and I will not say that I submit to your ruling, because I hope you will not give any ruling on the point.

*MR. SPEAKER: There was a precedent a year or two ago.

MR. A. O'CONNOR: There are many precedents the other way.

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

WALTHAM ABBEY (GUNPOWDER FACTORY) BILL.—(No. 175.)

The Select Committee on the Waltham Abbey (Gunpowder Factory) Bill was nominated—Mr. Alfred Gathorne-Hardy Hardy, Mr. Pickersgill, Mr. Woodall, and Mr. Brodrick.

WOODS AND FORESTS AND LAND REVENUES OF THE CROWN.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the Administration of the Department of the Woods and Forests and Land Revenues of the Crown."—(*Mr. Jackson.*)

DR. CAMERON, (Glasgow College): This is a matter which concerns a great number of Scotch Members, and the hon. Gentleman will remember that a promise was made in respect of certain Scotch fishing rights, and I would suggest that the Motion should be withdrawn for the present.

MR. JACKSON: The question to which the hon. Member alludes is included in the terms of the reference, and the names of the latter will be given afterwards.

MR. BUCHANAN: I think we are hardly being treated fairly by the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury in having this Motion put upon the Paper on the last day before the House rises.

MR. JACKSON: Very well; I will postpone it. With the permission of the

House I ask leave to withdraw the Motion.

Motion by leave withdrawn.

OFFICIAL SECRETS BILL. (No. 97.)

THIRD READING.

Order for Third Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read the third time."

MR. M'LAREN (Crewe): May I ask the hon. and learned Gentleman to postpone this Bill also?

*THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir RICHARD WEBSTER, Isle of Wight): There is no reason for postponing this Bill. It has been on the Paper for a considerable time, and the hon. Member, who has had Amendments on the Paper, was not here to move them.

*MR. M'LAREN: I was called out of the House for a few minutes last night, and in that time the Bill was dealt with. Of course I do not blame the Government. But I do think it is rather hard after my hon. Friend (Mr. A. O'Connor) has given way, on the understanding that only non-contentious business should be taken, that this Bill should be pressed. It puts me in a very awkward position. I am unwilling to delay the discussion of the very important question of the condition of Donegal, but I am equally unwilling to let this Bill go through without a single word of protest or explanation [An hon. MEMBER: Move the Adjournment of the debate.] I am unwilling to take a step of that sort, if I could get any sign from the right hon. Gentleman that he is willing to take the Bill on the Monday after the holidays, which really would be the fair course to take. This Bill went through the Second Reading without a single word of explanation, and the only Member who spoke upon it was my hon. Friend the Member for Mid Cork. If there is no other course I will move the adjournment of the debate.

*SIR R. E. WEBSTER: The hon. Member is really misinformed. I made a statement on moving the Second

Reading, and I answered the questions raised. I sincerely trust the hon. Member will allow the formal question to be put to the House.

DR. CAMERON: The Attorney General, on the occasion when the Bill was brought into Committee, stated that it had been represented to him that those Gentlemen who had Amendments on the Paper would be able to move them on the Report stage. The Bill got through without Amendment, and consequently there was no Report stage. Now, I would ask the hon. and learned Gentleman whether he is not under a moral obligation to consent to the Adjournment, so that the Bill may be discussed on its merits. Certainly there is a clause here which, it strikes me, would prevent information of any sort being given to a Member of Parliament, and which would prevent jobs being exposed in this House. I should certainly give that clause every possible opposition in the present stage. And, Sir, hon. Members below the Gangway feel as strongly as I do, and they would certainly give it every opposition in their power. When the hon. and learned Gentleman remembers that it was thought by hon. Members they would have an opportunity of renewing their Amendments on the Report stage, and that in that way all opposition was swept away, I think he will allow that, under these circumstances, the Government would not be fulfilling an honourable understanding if this Motion for the Third Reading were pressed.

*SIR R. WEBSTER: Of course, if it is understood that anything I said last night caused opposition to be withdrawn, I should not oppose the Motion for the Adjournment of the debate. I therefore consent to the matter standing over to the second Monday after Easter.

Debate adjourned till Monday, 29th April.

TOWN COUNCILLORS' (SCOTLAND)
BILL. (No. 177.)

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed,
"That the Bill be now read a second time."

Debate arising ;

Debate adjourned till Tuesday, 7th May.

Motion made, and Question proposed,
"That this House do now adjourn."—
(*Mr. Jackson.*)

IRELAND—CONDITION OF DONEGAL.

MR. A. O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.): In the short time which remains to us, I wish to call attention to the fact that every vestige of constitutional and legal administration in the county of which I am one of the Representatives has now been cast aside by the Executive. They have introduced into use for what they call police purposes, but really for landlord purposes, a battering ram; they have given over to the police functions which are not properly police functions, and besides that, they have caused the police to assume an attitude towards the people which is absolutely illegal and unconstitutional. The inhabitants of portions of Donegal are not at liberty to pursue in ordinary and personal security their daily avocations without permits from the police, and there is established, especially in West Donegal, a kind of "white-terror." People are threatened with indiscriminate and momentary arrest, and no man knows from hour to hour how far his personal safety will be respected. A step further has been taken, and we are assured, on the authority of three Members of this House who are now in Donegal, that the police have started burning the houses of the people. It is difficult to see what more the police can do in the way of disregarding every constitutional duty and every limitation of their official functions. I do not wish to dwell at any length on the matter, and I shall best consult the convenience of the House by reading the following telegram:—

"Reinforcements of police from all parts of county are being brought into Falcarragh. Armed sentries posted at all evicted houses to arrest or keep out tenants. Non-evicted houses dangerously overcrowded through evictions. Wholesale evictions threatened and hourly expected. People simply destitute. Furniture and bedding destroyed by emergency men. One house not destroyed re-entered by tenant, deliberately set on fire last night by police."

Mr. Speaker, I think that before the House adjourns we have a right not only to ask the Government to cause prompt and searching investigation into the present conduct of the police in Donegal, but to ask also for an assurance that, whatever the conduct of the police may have been in the past, they shall be directed not to overstep the plain lines of their duty, and to respect not only the property but the liberty of the subject in Donegal.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): The hon. Member in the opening sentence of his speech has gone back to matters which, however important and interesting, are not of immediate urgency, having occurred some weeks ago, and which need not therefore have been raised on this debate. I refer to permits which were issued by the police on the occasion of the arrest of the persons charged with the murder of Inspector Martin, and I am not aware that for many weeks past anything of the kind has been done. I suppose it has been merely introduced as a topical matter, and is not one calling for any observation from me. I therefore pass from that portion of the constitutional liberties which the hon. Member says are being broken down and will go to the others. The hon. Member's charges were, that the police had used a ram; that the police were stationed near the houses from which tenants had been evicted; that arrests were contemplated; that the people were destitute; that emergency men had been destroying bedding; and that some of the police had destroyed one house by fire. On the last accusation I have no information at all, but I confess I am wholly sceptical as to the accuracy of the information supplied to hon. Gentlemen opposite. I do not believe, and shall not believe this

charge, until I get much more detailed information. I would, however, point out that the house in any event is not the house of a tenant, but the house of a landlord. I repeat that I do not believe that the police have done anything of the kind alleged against them, and shall continue to disbelieve it in the absence of much better and more detailed information than appears to be in the possession of hon. Gentlemen opposite. I pass then to the other accusations. The hon. Member says that bedding and furniture are destroyed by the emergency men. But, Sir, if a house is defended elaborately and in such manner that it cannot be entered unless the roof or the side is broken down, it may be sometimes absolutely impossible to avoid some injury to the contents of that house. But who is responsible?

DR. TANNER (Cork, Mid): You.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Is it the people who make a forcible entry, or those who fortify the house so that no other mode of entry is possible? The people themselves and those who have prompted the people are alone to blame. Every care ought to be, and I believe is, exercised by those entrusted with carrying out the law. I would, however, point out that this accusation is made not against the police, but against the special bailiffs, for whose conduct I am in no respect responsible. Then the hon. Member says the police are watching evicted houses. I do not know whether it is true, but I do not think it unnatural if it is true. The people, as I have heard within the last few hours, have been retaking forcible possession of the houses from which they have been evicted. That is a grossly illegal act, which the police are bound to stop, and if, as the hon. Gentleman says, there are police in the neighbourhood of the evicted houses, considering that illegal possession is being taken by the tenants, I do not think that any complaint ought to be made of it. Then I come to the question of the ram. I am not aware that the ram has been used in these evictions; I rather think it has not.

MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): The hon. Member did not say it had.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: An hon. Member says it was never alleged it had been used, but the hon. Member for East Donegal complained that it was used for unconstitutional and illegal purposes.

MR. A. O'CONNOR: I beg the right hon. Gentleman's pardon. What I said was that the Government furnished the police with a ram, nominally for police, but really for landlord purposes. My complaint is that the police are allowed to go beyond the scope of their functions, and to do that which the Constitution does not contemplate.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: If the use of the ram be improper, it has not been used on this occasion. I had thought we were discussing a concrete question arising out of the evictions in Donegal, to call attention to which the adjournment of the House had been moved; but I am quite willing to discuss the abstract question of whether or not, under any circumstances, a ram can be legitimately used by the police. I say emphatically it may be so used; and I say more—that if the police have in their possession or can use any method by which injury to themselves and to the people and violation of the law may be diminished, abridged, or prevented, they are absolutely bound to use those means. The hon. Gentleman was entirely wrong in his interpretation of the law. I do not believe that the police have done anything further than perform the usual duties of protecting the bailiffs, but I do not believe that the functions of the police are necessarily limited to those duties. If the hon. Gentleman will read the charge of Chief Baron Palles on the occasion of the Woodford evictions, he will find that, in the opinion of the Chief Baron, there may be circumstances under which the police would be justified and even obliged to go beyond the special functions of protecting the bailiffs, though neither in the case of the evictions in Donegal nor any other place, as far as I am aware, have

they done so under any Administration. So much for the law. Then the hon. Gentleman says that the people are destitute. He has discussed that question upon two separate occasions in the course of last week, and in the speeches he then made he admitted that probably at that time, and probably at any time in the last 50 or 100 years, there had been some distress in those congested and overcrowded parts of Ireland. I do not believe that there is anything in the nature of a general famine. I do not believe that the distress is widespread, or that it prevails especially among the persons evicted, and I believe that the attempt which has been made to rouse the sympathies of the public has been made for political purposes, and for political purposes alone. If you had searched other Unions in Ireland where no evictions have taken place, you would find equal or greater distress, as to which it has never occurred to right hon. or hon. Gentlemen opposite to move the adjournment of the House, or to excite the sympathy of the English philanthropists. I have already given the House the result of certain figures which have been supplied to me, and I have also told the House that I am going to make further investigations. Until those investigation are completed I do not pretend to give a complete or final judgment to the House on this matter; but I will tell the House a fact which has been communicated to me to-day by telegram. Although I have not had an opportunity of examining it in all its bearings, I state it to the House as being probably significant, and, at all events, of interest. The amount given in Poor Law relief in the particular Union where these evictions have taken place is less, and much less, than in other Unions in the same county of Donegal.

MR. A. O'CONNOR: Because Mr. Olphert is Chairman.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: No Board of Guardians, no Chairman of a Board of Guardians, has either the right or the power to allow starvation in the Union over which they have jurisdiction.

MR. A. O'CONNOR: How little you know of Donegal!

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I give that fact to the House not because I have

Mr. A. J. Balfour

had either opportunity or time to investigate it in all its bearings, but because I think it is an important and a significant fact in regard to the condition of these people. When hon. Gentlemen attack the conduct of the police they must be perfectly well aware that the whole object and aim of their policy is to render the task of the police as difficult as it can be. Hon. Members talk of Donegal and the evictions of the peasants and the distress, but they are looking not to Donegal, but to English platforms and the English people. It is manifest in every word they utter that their desire is to turn to political account these unhappy incidents. That is why they object to the ram. It is not because of any additional hardship which the ram inflicts. They object to the ram because they know that the use of that instrument will shorten the scenes at evictions, and will diminish the sufferings which evictions are calculated to inflict, and in those two ways defeat the game which hon. Gentlemen desire to play. As I have said, I do not believe that the distress is of such a kind that the ordinary Poor Law is incapable of coping with it. If that belief is modified by any further reports which I may receive, I will take any action which may be necessary in the matter. But until the necessity for action is demonstrated, I repeat you cannot be guilty of a more mistaken kindness to the people of Donegal than by unnecessarily relaxing the regulations which limit the use of the Poor Law, or by giving public and private funds unnecessarily and recklessly to subventions for this purpose. If subvention should be necessary, at all events, let care be taken that it is not given under circumstances which would in the long run do more harm than good. I hope—I fear I hope in vain—that if that task be put upon the Government we shall receive the assistance of hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway, and that they will not urge the House, with the weight of power which belongs to them, to induce the Government to carry out measures which have perhaps done more harm of a permanent kind in creating the congested districts than even temporary benefit to the population which they affected.

*MR. J. STUART (Shoreditch, Hoxton): There are three main accusations contained in the telegram read by the hon. Member; first, that the bedding and furniture have been destroyed by emergency men. The right hon. Gentleman has answered that by saying it was probably destroyed during the defence of the houses; but if he had ever been present at an eviction, he would have known that it is destroyed by being thrown into the roadway and trampled upon by emergency men. The next was that police sentries had been posted in the neighbourhood of evicted houses to prevent the people from re-entering them. An hon. Member has suggested that this is a matter for the Civil Courts, and that the police had no right to take this step; but, Sir, that is not so, for it is made a crime by the Coercion Act of 1887 for a man to re-enter a house from which he has been evicted. It is one of the new crimes created by that Act, and which at the time we protested against. Lastly, Sir, there is a definite accusation here in this telegram that one house which had been re-entered by the tenant was deliberately set on fire last night by the police. The right hon. Gentleman, I take it, did not endeavour to apologise for such action on the part of the police, if it be true; but he doubted whether it had taken place. I hope that one result of the debate may be that the right hon. Gentleman will hasten to ascertain whether such an event has taken place, and, if it has, will prohibit such conduct in the future. We have here a definite statement that it has taken place, on the authority of three Members of this House, and I cannot, therefore, but think that there is some truth at the bottom of it. You have sent to gaol the priest of Falcarragh, and now you are taking the roofs from over the heads of these poor people. I cannot think that the answers given by the right hon. Gentleman are satisfactory, and I trust that we shall yet receive some assurance that the police will be warned against setting fire to houses.

MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary, who is a master in the art of evasion,

has not informed the House how the battering ram, with all its unrecognized virtues, can be used by the police as an engine of self-defence, and I charge the right hon. Gentleman with having purchased this ram, not as vindicator of the public law, but as a piece of machinery to assist private persons in collecting debts, and in exacting vengeance when the money is not forthcoming. The right hon. Gentleman rather blamed my hon. Friend for referring again to the system of police permits; but let me say that this unfortunate county is subject to an elaborate system of tyranny by the police, and the fact that people are forbidden to pass along the highway is an indication of the callous and cruel system pursued by the police. The right hon. Gentleman has endeavoured to account for the breaking of the furniture by saying that it is broken in the defence of the houses. Sir, the police are not assailed at evictions, and this furniture is broken, not in the defence of the houses, but by the emergency men, who, when they succeed in forcing an entrance, will break it by striking it and throwing it out into the roads. I challenge the right hon. Gentleman to name one Union where so much distress prevails as in this Union of Falcarragh. Let me point out that the landlord who has evicted these tenants is also the Chairman of the Poor Law Union, and owing to the poverty of the district he nominates the Guardians, and practically the whole question of out-door relief is in his hands. Now, I ask is it not the duty of the Government to save these poor people from starvation? They are being turned out of the houses which they have built with their own hands; the workhouse is so many miles away that many are unable to go there; is not the Government bound to provide them with food and shelter or with vehicles to convey them to the workhouse? Has it come to this, that the British army is to be employed to prevent men, women and children from committing a civil offence by crawling back for shelter to the homes from which they have been so cruelly evicted? I ask for a pledge from the right hon. Gentleman that he

will inquire into the allegations made in this telegram from Members of this House, and I think we are entitled to have from him an assurance that the police, who are paid from Imperial funds, shall not be used to serve the private interests of the landlords. I want the Government to provide shelter for these poor people, so that they shall not die from exposure on the roadside. We know that in the houses of the evicted no food has been found; we know that their potatoes failed last Christmas, and that they have since been existing on Indian meal; but the Representative of the Government cares nothing for all this; he lounges on his Bench and yawns and laughs. Under his elegant Criminal Code he has made it an offence to re-enter houses in which evictions have taken place; but surely it is not such a heinous crime to crawl into a dismantled building for shelter. It appears to me that if the Government desire to promote confidence in the law, they will put a stop to this action on the part of the police. I believe the right hon. Gentleman himself the very worst enemy the Government have, and that his conduct in regard to the evictions in Donegal is calculated to make the people hate the Government and detest the law.

MR. M. J. KENNY (Tyrone Mid): I challenge the Government to show any authority by which the police can prevent a man re-entering the house from which he has been evicted. If you allow that they can do that, you give them the right to break down houses with a battering ram, and to set fire to buildings, and I submit that in firing houses, as they have done recently, the police have committed an offence against the law. The right hon. Gentleman, by his smiles and yawns, encourages the police thus to act, and whereas only one house was fired last night, we shall, as a consequence, have 30 or 40 fired to-night.

MR. WADDY (Lincolnshire, Brigg): Let us see where we are. Slowly, yet purposely and deliberately, the people are being murdered in this part of Ireland. Whatever may be the desire of the Government, that is the effect and

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result of their action; and yet when complaint is made by hon. Members that that is so, we are met with the inevitable suggestion that this is the game being played by hon. Members on this side. I think we are justified in saying that the game played by the Government is by deliberate brutality to stamp out all opposition to their policy. I say we should be justified—

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

MR. SEXTON: There are still ten minutes. Cannot the debate be continued?

*MR. SPEAKER: The last ten minutes are reserved for unopposed business. We are placed in very peculiar circumstances by the fact that the debate on the Motion for the Adjournment stands adjourned under the Rules of the House at ten minutes to Seven.

It being ten minutes to Seven of the clock, the debate stood adjourned.

SUBMARINE TELEGRAPH CONTRACT (HALIFAX AND BERMUDA).

Copy ordered—

Of Contract dated the 12th day of April 1889, for the construction of a Submarine Telegraph Line from Halifax, Nova Scotia, to the Island of Bermuda, together with Copy of the Minute of the Treasury with regard thereto.—(*Mr. Jackson.*)

Copy presented accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

EXCISEABLE ARTICLES (DIAGRAMS).

Copy ordered—

Of Diagrams showing the Consumption from 1856 to 1888 of Tea, Coffee, Cocoa, and Chicory, of Alcoholic Beverages, and of Tobacco, compared with the increase of Population.—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

Copy presented accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 121.]

It being Seven of the clock, in pursuance of the Resolution of the House of the 12th April, Mr. Speaker adjourned the House without Question put until Monday 29th April.

HANSARD'S PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES.

No. 7.]

THIRD VOLUME OF SESSION 1889.

[MAY 7.]

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Monday, 29th April, 1889.

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887 (COMMITTAL OF MR. CONDON).

MR. SPEAKER acquainted the House that he had received the following Letter relating to the Committal to Prison of Mr. Condon, a Member of this House:—

Court House, Clonmel,
24 April, 1889.

Sir,

I beg to inform you that the appeal of Mr. Thomas J. Condon, M.P. for East Tipperary, from the decision of two Resident Magistrates, sentencing him to two months' imprisonment with hard labour, came on to be heard before me, and I this day affirmed the decision of the Magistrates and sentenced him to two months' imprisonment with hard labor, and have issued my warrant for his arrest.

I have the honor to remain,

Sir,

Your most obt. servant,

WILLIAM ANDERSON,

County Court Judge and Chairman of
Quarter Sessions Co. Tipperary.

The Right Honble.

The Speaker of the House of Commons,
London.

MERSEY DOCKS AND HARBOUR BOARD BILL.

Ordered—

“That all Petitions against the Bill presented on or before the 9th day of March be referred to the Committee on the Bill, and that (subject to the decision of the Referees as to the right

of the Petitioners to be heard upon their Petitions in respect of matters other than those specially mentioned in the Order of the House of the 1st day of April) such of the Petitioners as pray to be heard by themselves, their Counsel, Agents, or Witnesses, be heard on their Petitions, if they think fit, and Counsel heard in favour of the Bill against such Petitions.”—(*The Chairman of Ways and Means.*)

QUESTIONS.

FOREIGN SHIPS.

MR. DONKIN (Tynemouth): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether, in view of the fact that, by an Order in Council of the 26th June 1873, Her Majesty was pleased to direct that merchant ships belonging to the German Empire which were propelled by steam should, after the 1st January 1873, be deemed to be of the tonnage denoted on their certificates of registry, or other national papers, in the same manner, and to the same extent in and to which the tonnage denoted in the certificates of registers of British ships is deemed to be the tonnage of such ships; provided that, if the owner of any German ship should desire the deduction for engine room on his ship to be estimated under the rules for engine room measurement and deduction applicable to British ships, the engine room should be measured, and the deduction calculated, according to the British rules, and that Orders in Council to a similar effect have been made with respect to ships of Italy, Russia, Norway, Sweden, Spain, Denmark, the Netherlands, Greece, the United States, and other countries, and, also, having regard to the 26th Section of “The Merchant Shipping Act, 1854,” it is intended, by the Merchant Shipping Tonnage Bill (now before the

House), to deprive Foreign ships, and ships of the United States, which, by virtue of such Orders in Council, have had their engine rooms measured, and the crew spaces measured, and the deduction calculated according to the British rules now in force, of the benefit of the deductions appearing on their register, or on the certificates of British tonnage granted to such ships?

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Sir MICHAEL HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): The facts as stated in the question are accurate. The tonnage system as it existed in 1873 is the basis of International Tonnage. It is not intended by the Merchant Shipping (Tonnage) Bill now before the House, to treat foreign ships in any way differently from British ships, but to put right an anomaly not discovered in British law until 1879. The Bill before the House will preserve the International system intact.

MR. J. MORLEY (Newcastle-on-Tyne): Will not the effect of preserving the International system intact be to give an advantage to Foreign over British ships?

*SIR M. H. BEACH: No.

MR. DONKIN: Will not English steamers be taxed on more tonnage than Foreign steamers?

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: I think the hon. Member had better put the question down on the Paper.

FAIR RENTS.

MR. CHANNING (Northamptonshire, E.) asked the Solicitor General for Ireland how many applications from tenants on the property of His Excellency the Lord Lieutenant in county Down asking for fair rents to be fixed were still unheard; whether His Excellency had taken proceedings by way of ejectment against any of these tenants for recovery of the old rent in cases where the tenants might be entitled to the benefit of the fair rent under the Act of 1887; whether any, and, if so, how many, applications later in date from tenants on other properties in county Down had already been adjudicated upon; and whether it was true that at the Ulster Sub-Commission held at Banbridge on the 8th instant, the only case disposed of from the estate of His Excellency was the case of James Hamilton, and that in

that case the rent of £9 12s. 4d. was reduced by the Commission to £6 10s.?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. MADDEN, University of Dublin): The Land Commissioners report that on the estate mentioned there are 231 applications to have fair rents fixed still undisposed of. I understand that in seven of these cases proceedings in ejectment have been taken; but that the agent has in no case required payment of the full amount of rent, and has expressed his willingness to accept payments on account, having regard to the periods in arrear. No applications later in date from tenants on other properties in the same unions in the county of Down have been adjudicated on in priority to cases on this estate. The facts are as indicated in the last paragraph of the question.

THE COUNTY COURT ACT.

MR. HENRY H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.) asked the Attorney General whether any steps had been taken to carry into effect the provisions of the 25th and 45th Sections of the County Court Act, 1888.

*THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir R. WEBSTER, Isle of Wight): No vacancies where the provisions would take effect have occurred since the Act came into operation; but there are certain cases where the registrars have expressed their willingness to come under these provisions, subject to certain terms being such as they desired, and these cases are under the consideration of the Lord Chancellor and the Treasury.

THE VACCINATION COMMISSION.

*MR. PICTON (Leicester): I beg to ask the right hon. gentleman the President of the Local Government Board a question of which I have given him private notice, namely whether he is now able to state the names of the intended Royal Commissioners to inquire into the working of the Vaccination Acts, and also the terms of the reference.

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. RITCHIE, Tower Hamlets, St. George's): I am not in a position to state to the House the names of the proposed Commissioners. I have been in correspondence with gentlemen on the subject, and it will be a few days before I am able to inform the House of the names. But the pro-

posed reference is to the following effect:

—The Royal Commission is to inquire and report as to (1) the effect of vaccination in reducing the prevalence of, and mortality from, smallpox; (2) what means, other than vaccination, can be used for diminishing the prevalence of smallpox, and how far such means could be relied on in place of vaccination; (3) the objections made to vaccination on the ground of injurious effects alleged to result therefrom, and the nature and extent of any injurious effects which do, in fact, so result; (4) whether any, and, if so, what means should be adopted for preventing or lessening the ill effects, if any, resulting from vaccination, and whether, and, if so, by what means vaccination with animal vaccine should be further facilitated as a part of public vaccination; (5) whether any alterations should be made in the arrangements and proceedings for securing the performance of vaccination, and in particular in the provisions of the Vaccination Acts with respect to repeated prosecutions for non-compliance with the law.

MR. PICTON: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether there is any authority whatever to be attached to the announcements which have been made in various journals of the names of certain gentlemen who are intended, it is said, to be placed on the Commission, or can he account for the appearance of the names to which I refer?

*MR. RITCHIE: No, Sir; they are absolutely unauthorized and absolutely inaccurate.

PUBLIC BUSINESS.

MR. J. MORLEY: Perhaps it will be convenient if the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer is able to tell us what business will be taken on Thursday?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EX-CHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN, St. George's, Hanover-square): In the absence of my right hon. Friend the First Lord of the Treasury, who is unable to be in his place on account of the death of a near relative, I may say, in reply to the right hon. Gentleman, that on Thursday it is proposed to take the Budget Resolutions first and Supply afterwards.

SIR G. CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy): At what hour will the House meet to-morrow?

MR. GOSCHEN: Three o'clock.

THE WELSH SUNDAY CLOSING ACTS.

MR. BOWEN ROWLANDS (Cardiganshire) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he was in a position to give the names of the Gentlemen who would compose the Commission to inquire into the working of the Sunday Closing Acts in Wales?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. MATTHEWS, Birmingham, E.): I am not in a position to give the names at present.

THE COLLECTION OF TITHES IN WALES.

MR. B. ROWLANDS asked whether there was any truth in the statement which appeared in the papers on Saturday that, after communicating with the Home Secretary, it had been decided by the magistrates of Cardiganshire to place a police force of 70 men to protect Mr. Stephenson, the agent of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners in the collection of Tithes?

MR. MATTHEWS: I must ask the hon. Gentleman to put the question down upon the paper.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (SCOTLAND) BILL.

MR. CRAIG SELLAR (Lanarkshire, Partick) asked when the Second Reading of the Scotch Local Government Bill would be taken?

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. P. B. ROBERTSON, Buteshire): I should prefer to see the Leader of the House before I name a day. My right hon. Friend has stated already that the Bill will not be taken this week.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY—CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES.

SUPPLY—considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

CLASS II.

1. Motion made, and Question proposed,

“That a sum, not exceeding £48,751, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1890, for the Salaries and Expenses in the Department of Her Majesty's Treasury, and in the Office of

the Parliamentary Council, and also the Expenses of the Statute Law and State Trials Reports Committees."

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): I rise to move the reduction of this Vote by the sum of £6,000—that is to say the reduction of £3,000 from the salary of the First Lord of the Treasury and of £3,000 from the salary of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. I desire at once to say that there is nothing personal in the matter. I am perfectly ready to admit for the sake of argument, that the First Lord of the Treasury is the very best First Lord of the Treasury that it is possible to conceive, and so also with regard to the Chancellor of the Exchequer; but I am of opinion that the salaries of our high officials and particularly the salaries of these officers are exceptionally high in their character, and much too high. We have been told that a Cabinet Minister is put to a large expense in order to maintain his position. Now I do not understand what that means. I have the same respect for a Minister whether he spends £1,000 a year or £10,000 a year, or whether he lives in a large or a small house. But I find that a certain number of Cabinet Ministers receive £5,000 per annum while there are a certain number who only receive £2,000 per annum. I have before now pointed out to the House, and I think the House will agree with me, that there is no distinction in the individuality of the gentleman who receives £2,000 per annum and the gentleman who receives £5,000 per annum. It appears to be purely a haphazard matter, and if we can get competent men to do the duties for £2,000 a year, I see no reason why we should pay £5,000. If you will look abroad it will be found that Ministers are paid much less than in this country. It used to be urged that living was more expensive in this country than abroad, but as a matter of fact existence is cheaper in London than in Paris, Berlin, or Washington, and, probably than in Vienna. The United States Ministers receive about £1,000 per annum, and some years ago when an attempt was made to put the salary up, there was an immediate outcry in the country. The attempt was called "a salary grab," and those who put it up found themselves obliged to reduce it. In France the salary of a

Minister is £2,000, and in Berlin and Vienna £1,600. Therefore I am not asking the House to do anything exceptional but only to act as in other countries, and as, in point of fact, we act in this country in regard to some of our Ministers. As it is impossible to move, upon these votes, an increase of the salaries of Ministers who have only £2,000 a year, I am obliged to take that as the salary which ought to be given to all Ministers of the Crown. I am prepared to admit that a Minister has a considerable amount of work to do, but it is not a very great deal if we compare his duties with those of many permanent officials in this country. He has to attend his office in the morning, and he has to come down to this House. But we also have to come down, and a right hon. Gentleman is not necessarily here more than if he were not a Minister. I can assure the Chancellor of the Exchequer that looking after him is quite as hard work as that which he has to perform in this House as a Minister. I am sorry for the reason which has deprived us of the presence here to-day of the first Lord of the Treasury, but I see the Chancellor of the Exchequer in his place, and I hope that on the part of Government he will assent to this moderate reduction. Both of the right hon. gentlemen I have mentioned are wealthy men, and it is not a personal matter so far as they are concerned; but I think it will be generally admitted that we can get good Ministers for £2,000 per annum. That is about what the Ministers abroad get, and I see no earthly reason why we should pay more.

Motion made, and Question proposed,
 "That Item A. of £49,855, for Salaries, &c., be reduced by £6,000, part of the Salaries of the First Lord of the Treasury, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer."—(Mr. Labouchere.)

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EX-CHEQUER (Mr. Goschen, St. George's, Hanover-square): I entirely accept the declaration of the hon. Member that there is nothing personal whatever in the observations he has made. The hon. Member has compared the salaries of Ministers here with the salaries of Ministers abroad. A fairer comparison to draw would have been between the salaries of Ministers and the emoluments received by successful professional

and business men. If we compare the salaries of Ministers with the emoluments of successful lawyers, physicians, the managers of insurance companies, or the general managers of railways, I think it will be found that abroad the salaries of Ministers bear a very fair proportion to those of professional men. But, in this country, certainly the emoluments of successful men in all classes are much greater than in other countries, a contrast between the salaries of Ministers and the emoluments of successful men in other walks of life are very unfavourable to the former. The sacrifice which is made by a Minister in this country when he accepts office is very considerable. The question of Ministers' salaries was inquired into by the House in 1850, and the House then came to the conclusion that the salaries were not too high. The hon. Member says that Ministers have no hard work to do. Now I venture to think that they do far more work than they are generally credited with. With some few exceptions, able men in the Civil Service are not over paid, but during the last 15 or 20 years, Parliamentary life has been much harder to all Members than it was formerly, and the increased work has fallen especially upon Ministers. It may be some consolation to the hon. Member to know that it is doubtful whether Ministers can now last as long as they have done in the past. Private Members are not obliged to attend the sittings of the House in the same sense as Ministers. If the First Lord of the Treasury or the Chancellor of the Exchequer is absent, the hon. Member might complain; but, on the other hand, if the hon. Member were absent the Government would certainly not complain. I think it will be generally admitted that Ministers have extremely heavy work to perform besides their administrative business. The matter, however, is one for the Committee to decide.

MR. LABOUCHERE: The right hon. Gentleman has made a defence of the present salaries paid to Ministers in this country as against those paid to Ministers in other countries on the ground that they ought to be compared with the salaries paid to the managers of railroads and insurance companies in England rather than with those paid abroad. Let me take the case of a

United States Minister. He gets less than is paid to a Minister in Paris, Berlin, or Vienna, and yet the managers of railway or insurance companies get far higher salaries than they do in the countries I have mentioned. Therefore, the analogy of the right hon. Gentleman hardly holds good, and the proper comparison is, that of the salaries paid to English ministers with those paid to ministers in other countries. I do not complain of the remarks of the right hon. Gentleman. He has very fairly put the case from his own point of view, but I would point out to him that a Minister is expected to do a certain amount of work for the salary paid to him. We do not pay for what the right hon. Gentleman chooses to call the extra amount of strain put upon the Minister. We expect even a navy to give his full strength, and we expect a Minister to give his full strength during the hours he is at work. What I contend is that if you take the business of the chairman of a railway company, we shall find that he does a great deal more than the Minister, if we except the time the Minister has to be in this House. The right hon. Gentleman says that a Minister is obliged to be here, and that I as an ordinary Member am not obliged. He added that it would be a good thing if I did not come here at all.

*MR. GOSCHEN: No; I said I should not complain.

MR. LABOUCHERE: The right hon. Gentleman says he would not complain, but he must not forget that I owe a duty to my constituents. My constituents send me here, just as the constituents of the right hon. Gentleman's send him here. He is here to look after the public exchequer, and I am sent here to look after the custodian of the public exchequer. We should not fulfil our duties unless both of us were in this our House. For instance, the right hon. Gentleman proposes what he considers to be good legislation; but I on my part oppose it, because I consider it to be bad legislation. What, however, I want to get at is, why the salaries of certain Ministers, and only of certain Ministers, should be higher than those paid to Ministers abroad. Does the right hon. Gentleman suggest that no efficient First Lord of the Treasury or Chancellor of the Exchequer can be got for £2,000 per annum? If

a determination were come to to pay only that sum, would there be a strike on the part of those who were likely hereafter to become First Lords of the Treasury and Chancellors of the Exchequer? For my part I think we should get the same gentlemen, and that they would be as well contented with £2,000 per annum as the President of the Board of Trade and the President of the Local Government Board now are. So long as we have right hon. Gentlemen who are ready to be Ministers upon £2,000 per annum, and to consider that they are fairly and adequately paid, I hold that there is no legitimate reason for exceeding that sum, except perhaps in the case of the Prime Minister and the Foreign Secretary, who are required to extend hospitality to foreign diplomatists and visitors, and who might receive £1,000 a year more. It has been said that they have private hospitality to maintain, but neither the Chancellor of the Exchequer nor the First Lord of the Treasury are in a position which demands a lavish expenditure on that account.

*THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (MR. JACKSON, Leeds, N.) was understood to dissent from the remark of the hon. Member.

MR. LABOUCHERE: Well, take the case of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. He invites my hon. Friend and others to partake of his hospitality, with the object of keeping the Party he represents together, and of corruptly inducing them to hold to their Party; and they are delighted to accept the hospitality offered them in order that they may go back to their country places and swagger about saying that they met the Duchess of this and Lady that at the Chancellor of the Exchequer's private party. There is really no earthly reason why a Minister should receive more than £2,000 per annum, except that he does receive it. We profess to desire a reduction of expenditure in various respects. Let us begin at home. The country will, I think, have some confidence in us if we say that in regard to the official positions in this House we are making a proper and efficient reduction.

MR. BIGGAR (Cavan, W.): I do not see that the right hon. Gentleman's argument founded upon the attendance of Ministers in this House is entitled to

any consideration; as elected Members we have all the duty of attendance. We get no pay for the duty and we have reason to complain that attendance of Ministers here to vote against us should be made a ground to support a claim for larger salaries. As regards the First Lord of the Treasury and the Chancellor of the Exchequer, I am strongly of opinion that these offices should be more of an honorary nature. Looking at the serious and important duties that attach to the positions, I do not think it is advisable that these offices should be held by gentlemen who are not notoriously men of large means. Of course in regard to other offices the same considerations do not arise, but certainly I think for the responsible position of custodians of the public purse gentlemen of notorious wealth are preferable to those who are not so favoured. It may be this is not a Radical idea, but it is one I hold personally. As to the labours of the First Lord of the Treasury and the Chancellor of the Exchequer, we cannot but admit that the Financial Secretary to the Treasury has to perform a great deal more drudgery than his official superiors, but he gets a much lower salary. If actual amount of labour is a test to be applied at all, then if the salaries of the First Lord and the Chancellor of the Exchequer are not excessive, the salary of the Financial Secretary ought to be raised. I shall vote for the Amendment proposed by the hon. Member for Northampton.

The Committee divided.—Ayes 30; Noes 100.—(Division List No. 80.)

Main Question again proposed.

*SIR G. CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.): I wish to move a much smaller reduction in the salary of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The last reduction was moved on broad and general grounds, but this I move is rather on personal grounds—personal to the present Chancellor of the Exchequer. I do not want to be too hard on the right hon. Gentleman. The notice on the paper is to move a reduction by £1,000, but I intended to put down £100, and that is the reduction I propose to move as a protest against what I may call the conduct of the Chancellor of the Exchequer in regard to Egypt. I protest against the way in which in successive years the Chancel-

lor of the Exchequer has, as it were, balanced the Egyptian Budget at the expense of the British taxpayer. I have called attention to this matter in former years, but ineffectually. Year after year we have had grants made to the Egyptian Exchequer on account of the expedition of 1882 and on the ground that the payments were for services rendered by transport or in other ways. When I had hoped that these grants had at last come to an end we were surprised in the present year by another demand of the Chancellor of the Exchequer for £40,000 on account of this long-forgotten expedition of 1882. I said when that demand was made, and I say again, it is a gift to the Egyptian Government, although the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in a light and airy way, says it is settlement of accounts. It is giving hard cash now in the hands of the officials of the Caisse to the Egyptian Government instead of devoting it to British purposes. When the Egyptian Budget is balanced in this way, it does much to promote, to a dangerous extent, the optimist view of Egyptian finance that now prevails, a view that is not well founded. It may be agreeable to the Chancellor of the Exchequer to have Egyptian finance justifying his expectations; but we trusted in his high character and high official position that he would not have shown undue favour to Egypt as against the British Exchequer; that he would have been most careful not to favour the Egyptian bondholders at the expense of the British taxpayers. It does, however, seem to me that by successive gifts, under the pretence of claims on account of this expedition, the Chancellor of the Exchequer has not acted on this principle. A mere £40,000 is not a very large sum, but be it remembered Egypt has been a heavy burden on our taxpayers. What I object to in regard to this payment is the manner in which it was obtained, and that is why I renew my protest to-day. It was slipped through Committee of Supply in the small hours of the morning when the Rules had been suspended, and nobody attended to the matter, nor was it brought to the notice of the people of this country. There are many objects nearer home to which the money could have been better applied, and even in Egypt the money would be well spent

in providing a suitable residence for our representative at Cairo. I certainly would never grudge a gift to the Egyptian people; but this is not a gift to the Egyptian people, it is a gift to the Egyptian bondholders. I object to the manner in which the vote was slipped through without discussion, as a Supplementary Estimate, the very last of the year, and in the early hours of morning after the Rules had been suspended. Nor was the Report stage of the Vote taken in the usual way, but on a Wednesday after six o'clock, just before the Speaker was about to entertain a number of Members of the House at dinner, and it was totally impossible to obtain attention to this matter. I do not think I say that the Chancellor of the Exchequer in making these successive gifts to the Egyptian Government, has acted up to what his position should be in regard to this matter, and I also think there is danger in the optimist view of Egyptian finance encouraged by these gifts for the purpose of balancing the Egyptian Budget. I have been in Egypt lately, and I know that the encouragement of these optimist views points in the direction of fresh Egyptian loans and additional burdens upon the Egyptian people and their last days will be worse than the first. I admit that there has been economy in administration, but I say that in pursuance of the policy of paying the bondholders in full, Egyptian finance is being balanced, not only by economy, but chiefly by additional taxation.

THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order!

*SIR G. CAMPBELL: Well, I will not press the subject further as I would have pressed it on a previous occasion, if I had had the opportunity. I believe this optimist view of Egyptian finance is an unsafe view, and not beneficial to the people of Egypt.

THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order!

*SIR G. CAMPBELL: I will then content myself with a motion for the reduction of the salary of the Chancellor of the Exchequer by the sum of £100, as a protest against the successive gifts of the Chancellor of the Exchequer to balance Egyptian finance.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That Item A, of £49,855, for Salaries, &c., be reduced by £100, part of the Salary of the Chancellor of the Exchequer."—(Sir George Campbell.)

*MR. GOSCHEN: I believe the hon. Gentleman is anxious to be fair, and I do not in the least degree accuse of him of any desire to make a charge he does not believe to be well founded, but he is so prejudiced in this matter that it is scarcely possible for him to be fair. He speaks of my having made successive gifts to the people of Egypt at the expense of the British taxpayers.

*SIR G. CAMPBELL: Not the people; to the bondholders.

*MR. GOSCHEN: Payments that have gone to the reduction of taxation.

*SIR G. CAMPBELL: No.

*MR. GOSCHEN: The hon. Member must know that these arrangements arise out of what occurred some years ago when the interest was fixed, and there has been no change whatever in the matter. However, I do not press that. But then he charges me with having continually worked rather for the interest of the Egyptian Government than for the British Exchequer, where the interests of the two clashed, and if I had done that I should be deserving of more severe censure than he has passed upon me.

*SIR G. CAMPBELL: I do not mean to suggest that the right hon. Gentleman constantly worked for Egyptian interests, but on several occasions he has permitted himself to go further in direction of these gifts than I think is permissible.

*MR. GOSCHEN: The hon. Gentleman alluded to my optimist view in regard to Egyptian finance. Now, the hon. Gentleman is well acquainted with Egyptian affairs, and he may possibly remember that upon my assumption of office one of the first things I did was to refuse to admit the claims of the Egyptian Government, to the amount of £500,000, which had practically passed the Cabinet. I do not know whether the hon. Member recollects the circumstances, but it is somewhat hard to be attacked now for laxness in looking after the interest of the Exchequer; and I may remind him that on that occasion the noble Lord the Member for Paddington (Lord Randolph Churchill) complimented me on my action, and used these words: "The right hon. Gentleman (that is myself) was practically able to save the country £500,000 by the attitude he took up with regard to these

claims, and I attribute to him all the credit of this saving." Is it quite fair, then, for the hon. Member now to make this attack upon me in regard to this matter? No gifts whatever have been made to the Egyptian Government. This is not a gift of which the hon. Member speaks; it is the settlement of claims made by the Egyptian Government; claims arising out of former expeditions, and if the hon. Member knows how long it was before the expenses of the auxiliary expedition were cleared up, he will understand that these contested items of account could not be kept longer in abeyance under the circumstances. The hon. Member complains of my having a special desire to slip the Vote through, but the Committee will remember that in the Supplementary Estimates there were a number of important Colonial Votes, in regard to each of which the hon. Member moved reductions, and so time was occupied, while the necessity to pass the Supplementary Votes before the close of the financial year grew more urgent. I hope the Committee will acquit me of any desire to burke discussion upon this or any other vote. I was rather sorry at the time, that the hon. Member was unable to pursue the discussion, for I know the interest he takes in the subject, but I trust now, at all events, he will see that I had no desire to assist Egyptian finance by grants from the Exchequer, and that my whole interest, if I was guided by interest in any way, lay in the other direction; the direction of anxiety for my own surplus rather than for the interest of Egypt. Egyptian finance is in a fairly prosperous condition, our own position was not altogether satisfactory. I trust it is not necessary for me to say anything further. While I acquit the hon. Member of any desire to be unfair, I think he is somewhat unfair, owing to his having failed to take a wider view of the financial position.

*SIR G. CAMPBELL: I do not for a moment suggest that the Chancellor of the Exchequer is altogether an abandoned character, and that he has entered into a conspiracy to give the Egyptian Government whatever it asks; but we know that one party in an Oriental bargain always asks three or four times as much as he expects to get, and such has been the case in these

Egyptian claims. The right hon. Gentleman did not accept the claim for half-a-million, but, I think, he allowed claims to something like £293,000; which, having in mind the nature of the transaction, is a very large sum. I remember asking if this would conclude the Egyptian demands, and I had an impression that the right hon. Gentleman said there would be no further demands, but I find on reference that he said there remained a disputed item of £25,000 to be settled. This, it seems, grew in two or three years to £40,000. Again, I say, my attitude is not that of imputing to the Chancellor of the Exchequer that he worked all through in favour of Egyptian finance, but I do say in regard to the Nile Expedition that it is not right the British taxpayer should, in addition to the direct cost, be also taxed for the indirect assistance afforded by the Egyptian Government for the fighting of Egyptian battles. All through the Egyptian Government have been allowed the best of the bargain, and this £40,000 is the last straw that might well break the patience of the British taxpayer. You, Mr. Courtney, stopped me when I was going into the question to explain that this grant does not go towards the reduction of taxation, but as the Chancellor of the Exchequer says it has gone in the reduction of Egyptian taxation. I may be allowed in general terms to say that, having gone carefully into the subject, I am certain that the payments in the last year or two from this country have not gone towards the reduction of Egyptian taxation, because it has been largely increased, but towards making up payments in full to Egyptian bondholders.

Question put, and negatived.

Original question again proposed.

MR. E. ROBERTSON (Dundee): I desire to draw the attention of the Committee to two items in the Vote, one being the salary of the Auditor of the Civil List—the Assistant Secretary to the Treasury—and the other the salaries of the Civil List Clerk, and the Assistant Civil List Clerk. I do not know what the duties of these officers may happen to be, but it is high time that Parliament had some information as to what they do, and unless some satisfactory reply is given on be-

half of the Government I shall feel it necessary to move to reduce the Vote by the sum of £1,000, in respect of the salary of these three officials. The three salaries are not inconsiderable, amounting, altogether, to nearly £2,500 a year, the Auditor receiving £1,500, the Civil List Clerk £550, and the Assistant Clerk £375. I should not be in order in discussing the general policy of the Civil List on this occasion, but I would point out that a very strong case exists for reforming the Administration in this respect. The Civil List Act, which was one of the first Acts passed in the present reign, provided for the payment out of the Consolidated Fund of £385,000 a year, which money has to be applied to certain purposes connected with the maintenance of the dignity and the comfort of the Royal Family. The Act divides the Civil List into five classes, and provides that in each class there shall be a certain maximum of expenditure; and it goes on to say that if there is any saving in any one of these classes at the end of any one quarter, that saving is to be carried over to a separate account, and the Lords of the Treasury for the time being may, if they see fit, make an order authorizing an application of that saving to the purposes of any other of the classes. The £385,000 is not given *en bloc*—in solidarity—for the maintenance of the dignity of the Crown, but it is given on the responsibility of the Government as representing the taxpayers of the country. It is part of the duty of the Government, as representing the taxpayers of the country, to see first of all whether there is any saving to be effected in the Civil List, and next to see how such saving can be apportioned to other classes of the Civil List. It appears to me, moreover, that this duty of the Government is strictly a public one—they being the trustees for the public—and that the public are entitled to know what the savings are in any one particular class, and to what other class they are applied. The most astounding fact in connection with this matter is that for something like 30 years Parliament and the country have been kept by successive Governments absolutely in the dark on this subject. Although we are asked year after year to pay the large salaries of these three officials whose business it is to audit

the Civil List and find out how much saving has been effected in any one class, yet no information as to the administration of this enormous fund is allowed to be laid before the representatives of the people who have to provide the money. How it came about that no information whatever on the subject is given to Parliament is, in itself, somewhat remarkable. At the beginning of the reign and for some 20 years, I believe, a meagre amount of information was laid before the Government as to the administration of this money. Up to the year 1854, there appeared an obscure item in the Finance Accounts stating that a certain sum had been saved. In that year Lord Brougham, in the House of Lords, asked for some explanation as to certain savings having been effected in connection with a branch of the Civil List—the saving amounting to something like £36,000 annually—and for his impertinence the Ministers of the day withdrew from the financial accounts of the country that one item, and from that day to this no scintilla of information has been afforded to Parliament as to these matters. I trust that the Government will not, upon this occasion, repeat the myth which has been presented to the House on several occasions—that the Civil List arrangement is a compact between the sovereign and the country. The main point I wish to bring before the Committee is that we are asked to pay these salaries without being informed as to what the officers do for the money. We know they ought to deal with the question of the savings of the Civil List. If it is asserted on the part of the Government that we have no right to ask what the audit is, then I say let the Civil List speak for itself, and do not saddle the country with an additional expense of £2,500 a year for an audit which you will not allow Parliament to know anything about. I think I have made out a case for the Motion I may have to make, if the Chancellor of the Exchequer or some other Member of the Government does not offer a satisfactory explanation.

*MR. JACKSON: The hon. Gentleman has fallen into an error when he takes the salary of the auditor to be £1,500 a year. It has been the practice for one of the Assistant Secretaries at the

Treasury to hold the office, and £1,500 a year is paid to that gentleman as Assistant Secretary at the Treasury and Auditor of the Civil List. If that gentleman did not audit the Civil List he would still draw £1,500 a year. I can speak from my own knowledge on this matter, and can assure the hon. Gentleman that if the gentleman who now occupies the position of auditor were to cease to occupy it, he would still remain Assistant Secretary to the Treasury at his present salary. The position as Auditor may, therefore, be regarded as in some degree honorary, as it does not involve a salary. The hon. Member is under an entire misapprehension when he speaks of the cost of this audit being £2,500 a year. The Committee, I think, will be of opinion that it is very desirable that these accounts should be audited, and that they should be audited by somebody who is competent to discharge the duty, and furthermore, that the audit should be carried out under the eye of the Treasury. I do not propose to follow the hon. Member through the whole of his observations, and I will merely point out that the 10th Section of the Act of Parliament provides that when in any year the expenditure on the Civil List exceeds £400,000, an account shall be presented to Parliament showing the details of such excess. In order that it may be discovered whether there has been any excess, it is necessary that there should be an audit, and the present method of providing for such audit by the Assistant Secretary to the Treasury, assisted by two clerks, is not an extravagant one. I am sure that any hon. or right hon. Gentleman who has been connected with the Treasury will be ready to speak in the highest terms of the conscientious manner in which the gentleman in question—Mr. Mowatt—does his work.

MR. E. ROBERTSON: I must say I do not think the hon. Gentleman has given a sufficient explanation. I beg to disclaim any intention of calling in question the capacity of the gentleman who fulfils this apparently nominal duty. I had not the least idea that the post of Auditor of the Civil List was of the honorary character the hon. Member says it is. I did not know it, and I am thankful for the information. The hon. Gentlemen informs me that the two clerks are the real auditors.

*MR. JACKSON: I am sure the hon. Gentleman does not wish to misrepresent me. I did not intend to convey that the audit is of a nominal character. The auditor is, of course, responsible for the accuracy of the accounts, though he has the assistance of clerks. Each voucher has to be examined, the work being done by the clerks acting under his authority. I do not wish to diminish his responsibility.

MR. E. ROBERTSON: His main public duties are those of Assistant Secretary to the Treasury. What I want to observe is that the public have an interest in these accounts, not merely to see whether they exceed the stipulated amount, but to see whether any savings can be effected. If savings can be effected, it is our duty as representing the taxpayers to see that they are properly apportioned, and we have a right to insist on the particulars of this audit being placed before the country. The hon. Gentleman says, and says truly, that these things should be done under the eye of the Treasury, but I hold that they should also be done under the eye of Parliament and the country. As a protest against the system of withholding such information, I will move to reduce the Vote by £1,000.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That Item A, of £49,845 for Salaries, &c., be reduced by £1,000, in respect of the Salaries of the Clerks attached to the Audit of the Civil List."—(*Mr. Edmund Robertson*).

MR. HANBURY (Preston): I should like to know whether these accounts are treated like other public accounts, and placed before the Auditor and Comptroller General. I think that, in the interest of the public, these funds should be treated like all other funds in this respect, and should be audited by an independent official who is not under the control of a Minister. I understand that the auditor has merely to see that the total amount has not been exceeded, but I think we ought to be able to see that the amount under the different heads has not been exceeded. The hon. Gentleman opposite says it is the intention of the Act that we should not only see that the whole amount does not exceed a certain sum, but that we should see where savings have been effected and to what classes they can be apportioned. I understand

that the audit has not been carried to that length. At any rate, I should like to have some information on these two points.

*MR. GOSCHEN: I do not concur in the interpretation put upon the Act by the hon. Member for Dundee, but as no notice has been given of any intention to raise this discussion, I have not got the subject as thoroughly at my fingers' ends as I should if I had known it would come up. These accounts stand altogether on a different footing to other public accounts, for any savings effected do not go to the National Exchequer but to the credit of the Civil List, and the whole concern of the public therefore is that the total amount is not exceeded. The accounts, for that reason, are not submitted to the Auditor General. There is probably no instance of so long a reign during which the Sovereign has abided so strictly by the contract made with the nation—for after all, despite what the hon. Member for Dundee has said, there was a compact between the Crown and Parliament on these matters, and that such has been the case has been the contention of all Ministries.

THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order! The only question is that of the salaries of certain persons.

*MR. GOSCHEN: I will not pursue the matter further. I quite bow to the ruling of the Chairman, though I thought that the speech of the hon. and learned Gentleman had opened up the subject generally of the Civil List.

MR. PICTON (Leicester): Though it may be highly inconvenient, the forms of the House absolutely require that there should be amendments of this kind moved, because there is no other way of raising our objections. We have no idea whatever of attacking the conduct of the gentlemen who are concerned in these matters. They of course execute their orders and do their duty. We are accused of attacking the Government, but, so far as I am concerned, if the right hon. Gentlemen, now of the Opposition were sitting on those benches, and I were behind them, I should certainly raise the very same objections as I have done in times past. It is not against the Government we are protesting, but against the system which unfortunately they are obliged to carry out. Now, the right hon. Gentle-

man the Secretary to the Treasury, who is always, I am sure, anxious to afford to this House any information that he can, seems to think it is required to make a mystery of this matter. We are to vote so much money every year, and we are to inquire no further what has become of it. It appears to be—

THE CHAIRMAN: I would ask the hon. Member to be more precise in following the Vote. The question included in the Vote is the question of the audit.

MR. PICTON: Certainly, I will do my best, Mr. Courtney. I would say that we see no kind of audit, yet we are to pay a salary to a gentleman who audits the accounts. There is a mystery made, otherwise we should have had it before us. I say that as long as we pay the salary of an auditor, we have a right to require that the accounts be presented to us. I am glad that the hon. Member has raised the question, though in the exercise of your duty, Mr. Courtney, you necessarily keep us within limits which make it very difficult indeed to present our arguments as we should feel inclined.

MR. E. ROBERTSON: The Chancellor of the Exchequer has challenged my reading of the Act, and perhaps I may be allowed to state what the Act says. I refer the right hon. Gentleman to Clause 9 (not the 10th Clause) of the 1st and 2nd Victoria. There is, I take it, a public interest in several ways in the administration of these laws, created under this section. We are entitled to know whether all this has been done. Does the Chancellor of the Exchequer say that these quarters have been carried forward?

***MR. GOSCHEN:** Yes.

MR. ROBERTSON: Then we who provide the money and pass this Act are entitled to see the accounts. In the second place, if a saving has been effected, we are entitled to know whether it has been entered as the Act directs. In the third place, we ought to know whether the Treasury have exercised control in the matter. Supposing there is a saving on Class 1, it is open to the Treasury to apportion it to class 3, 4, 5, 6, or 7; we are entitled to know how they discharged their responsibility, and to know to which of these classes they applied it, or whether they applied it to any one of them.

Mr. Picton

***MR. GOSCHEN:** The hon. and learned Member has justified me in my contention that these matters are not laid before the House.

MR. ROBERTSON: No, no; I did not say that.

***MR. GOSCHEN:** The hon. and learned Member knows that wherever it is the intention of Parliament that accounts should be presented, it is stated in the Act that the Accounts shall be presented to Parliament. But in respect of these surpluses, so far as I understand, it has never been the practice that Parliament should be informed of the various details of expenditure on the Civil List. The hon. Member's contention rests more on the general power of Parliament than on the particular Act which he has cited, though perhaps he is far more conversant with the Act of Parliament than I am.

MR. ROBERTSON: Down to the year 1854 a statement was annually presented to Parliament showing the total saving on the Civil List during the year. I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he knows that as a fact?

***MR. GOSCHEN:** No; I do not.

MR. BIGGAR: I think the contention of the right hon. Gentleman is utterly weak. It seems to me that the Government are extremely indiscreet in refusing information, because it raises a suspicion that something is wrong where probably nothing is wrong at all. If we could get the information everybody would be satisfied. I think it very desirable that there should be a reform in this matter, especially as it is very desirable before another Civil List is settled that the country should know whether or not there has been a saving on any of the different classes of these items of expenditure. I think the Government are exceedingly indiscreet in refusing this information.

MR. A. O'CONNOR (Donegal): I merely rise to clear up one question on this point. The provision which restrains the over-issue of the money in question is Section 3 of the Act, and that Section says:—"That the daily, weekly, or other issue of the money appropriated by the Act shall be so made that there shall not be an over issue for any single class in any single year." Now, under these circumstances it is perfectly clear that there must often be a surplus at

the end of the year on one class or another. The question I desire to ask the Financial Secretary is this: if there is a surplus upon each of these classes other than class 5, which never can be exceeded, so that there is not one of them to which the money so saved can be applied, what becomes of that money?

MR. COURTNEY: I must remind the hon. Gentleman that he is entering into a question outside the scope of the Committee.

MR. A. O'CONNOR: I will ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether a report is made each quarter of the means expended by monthly, daily, or weekly issues in each of the classes into which the Civil List Fund is distributed; and whether at the end of each quarter, "the whole amount then due"—that is with regard to each of these classes—"is computed, made up or specified according to the full intent and meaning of this Act," and whether the attention of the Government has been called to the fact that there is a surplus in each and everyone of the five classes?

***MR. JACKSON:** Yes, sir; I think I can answer that question without any hesitation. I may say I would rather use the expression that it is the duty of the Auditor to consider these matters and to draw attention to anything they may deem necessary. The hon. Member is, of course, aware that the outstanding balances are reported by the Controller and Auditor General to Parliament.

MR. A. O'CONNOR: On the Civil List?

***MR. JACKSON:** On the Civil List. In February of this year the outstanding balances of 1888 were reported by the Controller and Auditor General at £89,405 19s. 11d.; and the outstanding balances are always reported by him to Parliament. He also reports the issues from the Exchequer every year, so that, as I believe, there is every safeguard.

***MR. BRADLAUGH:** Do I understand the Secretary of the Treasury to mean that the audit shows £85,000 on some or all classes of the outstanding balances?

***MR. JACKSON:** No, Sir; I said the outstanding balances unpaid. If the hon. Member will refer to the accounts he will see that there was issued from the Exchequer in 1887-8 the amount of £410,407 0s. 2d.; that is on the balance

of sums issued on the 1st of April, 1887, which with the outstanding amount for the previous year of £96,845 7s. 2d. made up a total of £507,315 7s. 4d. The payments in 1887-8 were £217,847 8s. 2d.; the balances unpaid on the 31st March, 1888, were £89,405 19s. 11d.

***MR. BRADLAUGH:** Can the Secretary to the Treasury tell me in precise words what the Auditor has reported—whether the Auditor shows a saving in the Civil List on any or all of the different classes for the year?

***MR. JACKSON:** No, Sir; it merely gives the total amount and the balances outstanding. I have already said that the details were not before the Controller and Auditor General, who does not audit these accounts; they are audited by the Auditor of the Civil List, who is an officer of the Treasury.

***MR. BRADLAUGH:** I have not made my question clear. I understood the Secretary to the Treasury to urge the necessity for the audit, in order that there might not be an excessive expenditure in any of the classes; and I also understood him to put it that the Controller and Auditor General had either an excess or a saving brought to his notice by the Auditors. I ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether the audit shows for the year a saving on all or any of the classes, and on what classes?

***MR. JACKSON:** The Controller and Auditor General is in duty bound to report the amount issued from the Consolidated Fund, and in pursuance of that obligation he sees the amount issued by the Exchequer in each year, while each particular service is reported to Parliament.

***MR. BRADLAUGH:** I regret the clumsy way in which I put my question. What I wished to ask the Secretary to the Treasury was whether, as a mere fact, the audit of this Civil List, by whomsoever performed, does bring to the notice of the Treasury, or of the Secretary to the Treasury, the amounts saved and the excess in any or all classes, and whether the audit of the past year has brought to the knowledge of the Treasury what the saving has been in any or all of the classes, and how much it has amounted to altogether?

***MR. JACKSON:** I am not able to answer the question in regard to the

past year. I have no doubt I can ascertain what the amount was, but I am not prepared to say at the present moment what it was.

*MR. BRADLAUGH: Cannot the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury say whether the audit has not shown for several years past a saving of several thousands of pounds on the total classes of each year?

*MR. GOSCHEN: I would point out that that is not a question for the House of Commons. As long as the expenditure remains within the totals voted by Parliament, it is not for the House of Commons to interfere. That has been the practice in the past, and I leave it to the House to say whether it shall be altered.

MR. A. O'CONNOR: I should like to know whether the accounts kept are in the nature of a continuous account or whether the accounts of each year are kept by themselves?

*MR. GOSCHEN: No Exchequer accounts could be satisfactory if they did not show how one year joined on to another; but the information asked for has never been laid before Parliament.

MR. ROBERTSON (Dundee): I should be very sorry to divide the House on this question, but the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh) has asked for information in regard to the total amount of saving each year in regard to the Civil List, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer says that this is information that has never been laid before Parliament. I ask him whether he is not aware that up to 1854, a statement was annually presented to Parliament showing the total saving in the Civil List during the year?

*MR. GOSCHEN: It has certainly not been the case in late years. Down to 1854 I believe there was a statement, but the practice has not prevailed since.

MR. LABOUCHERE: I do not quite understand all this. The auditor merely declares the amount shown to have been expended by each department, and that it is, or is not, in excess of the amount allocated to that department; but the auditor does not look into the way in which the money has been spent by each department; he merely certifies that it has spent so much money. What we want to know is whether there is a saving in any of these departments,

and, whether, if there be a saving in any department, it is handed over to the Privy Purse.

THE CHAIRMAN: I must remind the hon. Gentleman that the discussion must be confined to the question before the Committee.

*MR. CAUSTON: I should like to ask the right hon. Gentleman, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether, in the event of his finding that up to 1854 papers were annually laid, he will promise in future to place these statements before Parliament?

*MR. GOSCHEN: No; I can give no pledge of the kind.

MR. J. SINCLAIR (Ayr, &c.): How is it that these accounts are audited not by the Auditor General, but by the officials mentioned? Is there any statutable authority for this?

*MR. GOSCHEN: I have already said it is difficult, offhand, to go into the historical part of the case, and I am unable to state the circumstances under which the original arrangement was made.

The Committee divided:—Ayes 72; Noes 141.—(Div. List, No. 81.)

Original Question again proposed.

*MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton): I wish to ask a question in reference to the Statute Law Revision Committee. Last Session a case in connection with Ireland was referred to, in which an amendment of an old Statute had not been noticed in the revised Statute, and in a recent discussion the Solicitor General, in his place in this House, admitted that some Statutes had become obsolete, and ought to form part of the next Statute Revision Act. I want to know in what way these matters are brought to the notice of the Statute Law Revision Committee, and why a portion of the Vagrant Act, which was repealed by the Statute of 5 George IV., cap. 83, sec. 1, has been allowed to remain unnoticed. [After a pause] If I do not receive an answer I shall certainly move a reduction of the Vote.

*MR. JACKSON: I am sorry that my hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General left the House just before the hon. Member rose, because he would have been able to answer the question. Personally, I am unable to say whether the particular point referred to by the hon. Member has been brought under

the notice of the Revision Committee or not.

*MR. BRADLAUGH: The matter formed the subject of a discussion between the Home Secretary and myself for two days, and while my construction of the Act was disputed, there was no dispute as to certain portions of the Act having been specifically repealed, and the repeal not noticed in the Revised Statute, or in the index, or in the chronological tables. I want to know whose duty it was to bring the matter forward?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL (Sir E. CLARKE, Plymouth): I have had no duty to perform in connection with the Statute Law Revision Committee, but my hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General has been engaged in the preparation of a Bill upon the subject. I do not remember the discussion to which the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh) has referred. My attention has not been directed to it in any way, but I will inquire into the matter.

MR. HANBURY (Preston): As the Treasury has, to a very large extent, the control of other departments, I want to know when it is likely we shall have the legislation in regard to the Civil Establishments which was promised in the Queen's Speech, in order to carry out the recommendations contained in the Report of the Royal Commission; and whether the Treasury have taken any steps—which, I understand, they can take—for dealing with the matter by regulation. I desire to know how far the Treasury have taken steps to deal with the question as a whole, by framing regulations which, to a large extent, would have the effect of diminishing the cost. Has nothing been done to provide that the Civil Service clerks, not only in the Treasury but in other departments, should really attend during the hours for which they are paid? That is a matter which I understand the Treasury has, at present, the power of dealing with. I should also like to know whether steps have been taken to enforce regulations as to holidays, sick leave, and attendance of all kinds, so that the provisions may be the same in all departments, thus rendering more easy than at present transference from one department to another. If such

regulations were enforced we should not have, as we have now, the scandal of redundant clerks in one department, and a whole host of extra clerks employed in another.

*MR. GOSCHEN: I may remind the hon. Member that the past three months are the busiest part of the year in the Government offices, owing to the preparation of the Estimates and other business connected with the meeting of Parliament. All the departments are consequently more heavily worked than at any other period of the year; but nevertheless, attention has been given to the regulations affecting Civil Service clerks, their hours, holidays, sick leave, &c., and a Bill is in preparation, which will secure that the labour which the Royal Commission has bestowed upon the matter, shall not be thrown away. Nothing has yet been done simply because the ordinary work of the departments has been so extremely heavy. The subject, however, is one that requires a good deal of care.

Question put and agreed to.

2. Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £79,668, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1890, for the salaries and expenses of the office of Her Majesty's Secretary of State for the Home Department and Subordinate Offices."

*MR. J. E. ELLIS (Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe): I rise for the purpose of moving to reduce item A. Salaries, &c., by £1,000, from the salary of the Secretary of State, and in doing so I will say, at the outset, that one of my grounds is that the sum of £4,000 per annum is, in my opinion, amply sufficient for the office of Home Secretary. Allusion has already been made to the very great discrepancies which exist in regard to the salaries of various Ministers. I must confess that I cannot understand why £2,000 per annum should be sufficient for the President of the Local Government Board and the President of the Board of Trade, and £5,000 be required for the Secretary of State for the Home Department. Certainly I fail to see why the functions discharged by the President of the Board of Trade and the President of the Local Government Board should be measured by the figure

2, while those discharged by the Home Secretary are to be measured by the figure 5. The hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) in moving the reduction of the salaries of the First Lord of the Treasury and the Chancellor of the Exchequer said he would allow for the sake of argument that those offices are filled by gentlemen of the highest conceivable capacity. I cannot make a similar allowance in the case of the office of Home Secretary. It does appear to me that an unfortunate step was taken when by some sort of arrangement between the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham (Mr. Chamberlain) and the noble Lord the Member for South Paddington (Lord R. Churchill) the present holder of the office was appointed without having had the slightest previous experience of official life. I maintain that in this instance the want of previous official experience has been detrimental to the public service, and that it has been shown not only in reference to the question of Trafalgar Square, but in the administration of the police generally. Most deplorable results have occurred which might have been avoided altogether by the exercise of a little more tact and discretion on the part of the gentleman holding the office of Home Secretary. Then, also, in respect to the resignation of Sir Charles Warren, I think the House is entitled to more information on that point than it has yet received. I think it would be found, if we were in possession of the whole circumstances of the episode, that Sir Chas. Warren was in many respects more sinned against than sinning. My main point has relation to the Coal Mines Regulation Act, 1887. No doubt the right hon. Gentleman, bearing in mind that he had absolutely no knowledge of the subject when he started, gave abundant proof of the admirable manner in which he was coached and attended to the progress of the Bill through Committee with great care and assiduity. The right hon. Gentleman is no doubt a very clever lawyer, and like clever lawyers he was able to discuss the technical points of the Bill as they arose, and to conduct the clauses generally in a satisfactory manner. But whereas in the House of Commons, the right hon. Gentleman was careful to point out that the Bill

involved very complicated matters, and to claim our assistance in passing it into law, when he went down to his constituents in January, 1888, he claimed that it was a great measure and gave whole credit for it to the political party, with which he was himself connected. All I have to say is that if the right hon. Gentleman had accepted more of the amendments which were suggested on this side of the House, and had not allowed his colleagues in the other House to strike out amendments which had been accepted here, the Act would have been a much better and more successful measure than it is at the present moment. What has occurred in regard to the weighing clause of the Act? I have asked a number of questions in respect of that clause, and other hon. Members have asked questions also. On the 25th of January, 1888, the right hon. Gentleman told his constituents that this had been a burning question; that it was only just that the miners should have that, for getting which they received their wages, correctly weighed, and that the Government had made provision by the Bill that that should be the case in future. Now, what are the real facts of the case? In the Act passed by the Government of the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. Gladstone) in 1872 it was provided that, with certain exceptions, when the wages depended on the amount of mineral got, it should be weighed. By a Bill introduced in 1886, that clause was to a certain extent strengthened by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Edinburgh (Mr. Childers). The Bill as introduced in 1887 was on the same lines, that is to say, it gave to the Home Secretary power to exempt mines from the operation of the clause, and to relieve the owners from the obligation of providing weighing machines. On the 23rd of June, 1887, my hon. Friend the Member for the Wansbeck Division of Northumberland (Mr. Fenwick) moved an amendment to the effect that the words giving a discretion to the Secretary of State should be struck out, and, although it was resisted by the right hon. Gentleman on the ground that the matter might be allowed to remain where it was, the amendment was carried against the Government by 127 to 119. Why did not the right

hon. Gentleman mention that fact to his constituents, and tell them that the provision, as it stood in the Bill of 1887, was carried, contrary to his wishes, by the hon. Member for the Wansbeck division. It was hardly worth while for the right hon. Gentleman to go down to his constituents and claim all the credit of the Act when its main provisions were carried in his teeth by his political opponents on the opposite side of the House. I sincerely wish the right hon. Gentleman would follow the example of the President of the Local Government Board, and give justice where justice is due. If he had done so, his opponents would have had full credit for their efforts to make the measure a satisfactory one. I wish to ask the right hon. Gentleman what he intends to do this Session in regard to the weighing clause? It now provides that it shall not affect mines that were exempted prior to the passing of the Act, and I wish to know whether he will not exercise the discretion he now possesses and abolish all exemptions? I asked the right hon. Gentleman before Easter to state the total tonnage of all the collieries now exempt; but he replied that it would not be proper to publish the individual tonnage of different collieries. I know that it would not be legal to do that. There is really no difficulty about the matter. It is perfectly possible to have a weighing machine at every colliery, and the opinion of the House has already been expressed in favour of having no exemption. I again ask the right hon. Gentleman what steps he is prepared to take, and if his discretion is not large enough, whether he will introduce a Bill dealing with the whole matter? I venture to say that if he is disposed to take that step he will receive no opposition from any quarter of the House. I beg to move the reduction of the Vote by the sum of £1,000.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item A, of £28,205, for Salaries, &c., be reduced by £1,000, part of the Salary of the Secretary of State."—(*Mr. John Ellis*).

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (*Mr. MATTHEWS*, Birmingham, E.): The hon. Member in the course of his remarks referred to a speech which I delivered to

my constituents last year. Now I must say that that speech has entirely passed away from my recollection; but certainly my impression is that I spoke in special commendation of the representatives of the miners in this House. In regard to the Weighing Clauses the Act provides that instead of laying down a cast-iron rule certain exceptions may be made. I think that that is a reasonable clause. The hon. Member now asks me what course I intend to take in the matter. To be perfectly candid, I confess that I was a little surprised at the decision of the Court of Queen's Bench on the subject of exemptions from the Weighing Clauses. My own impression was that all exemptions were gone. I was bound, however, to accept loyally the decision of the Court of Queen's Bench. That decision was to the effect that under the terms of the Act no exemptions are to be allowed in the future; but that Parliament has thought fit to keep alive all the exemptions existing at the time the Act passed. I have considered anxiously what my duty is after that decision. I came to the conclusion that my duty was not to revoke all the existing exemptions as a matter of course, without enquiry, but to determine in each particular case whether the exemption should be continued. I start with the strongest prejudice in favour of weighing, but I think that, if a strong case be made out, and there are particular reasons why an exemption should continue, it may be wise to allow it to continue. There are some collieries in which the tubs are very small, and there is so great a number of them during the day that it is difficult to weigh them all during the ordinary working hours. If masters and men agree that an exemption should be made, circumstances of this kind ought, I think, to be taken into account in considering the question. I have already taken into consideration the continuance or otherwise of the exemption in the case of one or two collieries, and I have now under my consideration the case of the Burnley collieries. I shall certainly not shrink from taking a course which involves a large amount of trouble on my part, if by so doing, I can meet the convenience of all the parties interested.

MR. BURT (*Morpeth*): I am very glad attention has been called to this subject, because I know that consider-

able dissatisfaction has arisen from the continuance of the exemption that has been so long in existence. It will, I think, be generally admitted by members who were in the House during the debates in Committee on this subject, that the whole question was fought out on the assumption that we were taking away not only the power of exempting in the future, but all existing exemptions. If that had not been so, I can assure you, Sir, that the part of the Act which allows these exemptions to be continued, would have certainly been resisted in the House. I do not think the objections with regard to thin seams is a valid one. Weighing is carried out satisfactorily in some of the thinnest seams in the country, and there are large collieries where several thousand tons per day are got out of the mines and where every tub is weighed. With the appliances that are now in operation there is certainly no practical difficulty in making weighing general, and I hope the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary will refuse to sanction the continuance of any exemption whatever.

MR. COSSHAM (Bristol, E.): I wish to say a word or two on this question, with which I am practically acquainted. The right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary, in speaking of the difficulty of weighing a great number of small tubs, seems to forget that they are weighed not singly but on trollies, so that there is really no practical difficulty to be got over. For my own part, I think the time has come when all exemptions of this kind should be done away with. I myself have always sold on the same scale as I have bought on. I have always sold at 20 and bought at 20, and I think it is unfair that exemptions should be made in particular cases.

*MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton): I am glad to hear that the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Matthews) is about to inquire into the case of the collieries near Burnley. He will probably remember that those are the collieries, as to which I put some questions quite twelve months ago, and I think the Committee has some cause to complain of the delay that has taken place in regard to them. I must attribute that delay to the right hon. Gentleman himself or to those who are under his immediate control. The case that came

before the magistrates might have been submitted to the Queen's Bench Division in a very few days; but, instead of that, there was a delay of many months, and I think I can show that there are many other cases where the same kind of delay has taken place. I am glad he is going to look at the case with a prejudice in favour of weighing, because the men think that they have been defrauded owing to the continuance of the exemptions.

MR. W. REDMOND (Fermanagh, N.): I rise for the purpose of supporting the Motion of my hon. Friend for the reduction of the right hon. Gentleman, the Home Secretary's salary by £1,000. I wish to give the right hon. Gentleman an opportunity, which I think he ought to be very much obliged to me for giving him, of clearing up, once and for all, the position he occupies with regard to his opinions upon political affairs of great interest to this country and to the neighbouring country of Ireland. If I had proposed this amendment it would have been for the sweeping away of the right hon. Gentleman's salary altogether, in the event of which proposal being carried, I suppose he would not continue in office much longer. I support the reduction of the right hon. Gentleman's salary because he holds Separatist views, and because I do not think it compatible with the holding of an office so great and important as that of Home Secretary that a gentleman should entertain opinions in favour of Home Rule, which, as everybody on the other side of the House knows, means the disintegration of the British Empire and the general overthrow of the power of Great Britain.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Gentleman cannot be astonished at my warning him to come to the point.

MR. W. REDMOND: With very great deference to you, Sir, I am upon the point, and I think the right hon. Gentleman, judging by the expression of his face, was of opinion that I was very much upon the point. My principal reason for supporting the proposed reduction of the right hon. Gentleman's salary is that I want, as a loyal subject of this Empire, to give the right hon. Gentleman an opportunity of explaining to the House whether he has, in the course of his career, held the outrageous principles attributed to him.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Gentleman will be entirely abusing the liberty of the Committee if he attempts to enter into what the right hon. Gentleman's opinions were years ago. If he thinks he can bring home to the right hon. Gentleman now anything which is inconsistent with the discharge of the duties of his office, he will be entitled to do so.

MR. W. REDMOND: I am very much obliged to you, Sir, for supplying me with the word inconsistent. I cannot imagine anything more inconsistent with the discharge of the right hon. Gentleman's duty than the opinions which he has publicly avowed.

THE CHAIRMAN: I shall be constrained to order the hon. Member to resume his seat permanently, unless he addresses himself to the question before the Committee.

MR. W. REDMOND: I only wish to ask the right hon. Gentleman, as a matter of personal explanation, whether certain things in dispute with regard to himself are true or untrue. I ask the right hon. Gentleman to be manly enough to clear up this point—whether he is a Home Ruler or not. If you, Sir, say this is out of order, of course I will not press the point.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member must be aware that the question is out of order.

MR. W. REDMOND: Then I will ask a question which is very germane to the vote—namely, whether the right hon. Gentleman contributed £21 to the special Trust Fund of the Home Rule organisation of 1874.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member must be perfectly aware that he is abusing the privileges of the House in referring to distant matters—matters happening in 1874. It has no bearing on the official conduct of the Home Secretary. I must beg the hon. Member to observe the ruling of the Chair.

MR. W. REDMOND: I assure you, Sir, that I have no desire to ignore your ruling. Is it not in order to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether a certain thing occurred which, if it did occur, disqualifies the right hon. Gentleman in the opinion of many people from occupying the position of Minister of the Queen? ("Order.") If that is out of order, I shall take another opportu-

nity. Is it out of order? (A pause.) Then it is not out of order.

THE CHAIRMAN: I should have thought the hon. Member would have sufficient intelligence to be aware that it is out of order. He must refer to something inconsistent with the duties of the right hon. Gentleman as Home Secretary. If he has anything of that kind he is entitled to bring it forward.

MR. W. REDMOND: Well, all I can say is that I asked you, Mr. Courtney, in the most courteous terms I could command, whether it was out of order, and as you did not reply I thought it was not. That is what my intelligence showed me. I think, however, that the good taste of the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary, will tempt him to offer an explanation on the point to which I have referred.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): I should always support the reduction of the salary of any Minister who receives £5,000 per annum, but there are special reasons which lead me to support a reduction in the salary of the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary, and they are, I am bound to say, personal to himself. I am not going to allude to anything the right hon. Gentleman did before he became Home Secretary. The appointment of Home Secretary, as I understand, condones any previous misconduct. But since he has been Home Secretary he has acted in a manner of which complaint has more than once been made in the House, and I should imagine he will be exceedingly obliged to me for calling specific attention to these matters, because I am sure he must be anxious to give full and explicit explanation to the House. As we all know, there has been a Commission called the Parnell Commission. The right hon. Gentleman, as Home Secretary, has had occasion to mix himself up, or to allow his subordinates to mix themselves up, in the action of those who were called upon to bring accusations against Members of this House in a manner which certainly, to my mind, makes the Government and the Home Secretary parties to that action. I will only allude to two cases, and ask for some explanation. The Committee will remember that a person named Molloy, a *Times* witness, was prosecuted for perjury. A witness named Delaney came forward on

that occasion. Delaney was a convict, and as I understand, he had been removed to the Chatham or some other English prison, when suddenly a gentleman of the name of Shannon appeared at the prison and had an interview with the Governor. Shannon then had an interview with Delaney, and the prisoner stated in his evidence that he was told that a person whom he understood to be a Treasury official wanted to see him. Shannon asked him to give evidence, and Delaney made certain statements to him. Anyone knows that if a Treasury official goes to a convict and asks him to make statements, the convict reasonably supposes that he will in some sort of way benefit by doing what he is asked to do. When we find that Shannon was introduced to the prisoner as a Treasury official, or at any rate, when we find that the prisoner was left under the supposition that Shannon was a Treasury official, we have no record at all that the Home Secretary has in any way protested against the conduct of the Governor, but on the contrary, judging from what has transpired upon the subject in the House, the right hon. Gentleman approves of the action of the Governor, and defends the matter on the ground that he would have done the same to any other solicitor. But I understand the same facilities would not have been granted to any other solicitor. The only plea on which Shannon was allowed to go to the prisoner was that the prisoner was entitled to a visit, and that this was a periodical visit. But it does not appear that Delaney had any choice in the matter. I maintain that by this action the Government have made themselves parties to the attempt to obtain the suborned and perjured evidence of a convict, in order to blast, if possible, the reputation of Members of the House. We have a right to complain that the right hon. Gentleman has accepted responsibility for the action of the Governor. The second case is that of Le Caron and Anderson. Le Caron was a spy employed by the Home Office and paid in some mysterious way by another Office. Somehow or other Mr. Macdonald of the *Times* became possessed of the fact that Le Caron was a spy, and that it would be a desirable thing in the interest of the *Times* to call this spy. What did Le Caron do?

He went to Anderson and asked him to give him up documents which were the property of the country, because they had been paid for by the country. These were secret reports which were sent over by Le Caron to Anderson as the chief of what I may term the Spy Department of the Home Secretary. Anderson gave these documents to Le Caron, and I understand from the report of an interview with Le Caron, that Le Caron still retains possession of them. I could not gather from what took place when the matter was discussed some time ago, whether the Home Secretary was aware at the moment of these occurrences, that Anderson was acting in this fashion. If he was, I hope he will be able to justify his conduct. If he was not, I ask how is it he has not blamed and punished Anderson for acting in this manner. But Anderson went further than this: he wrote to the *Times*, entered into a full defence of his conduct, and made attacks upon my right hon. Friend, the Member for Derby (Sir William Harcourt). Most assuredly Mr. Anderson, as a public employé, had no business to sneer at or make inuendoes against the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby, concerning his action as Home Secretary; he certainly had no right to say "I could crush the right hon. Gentleman if I liked to produce documents." I can conceive nothing more improper than Anderson's communication to the *Times*. There is a rule in the Public Offices that no subordinate may communicate with a newspaper on the matters of his Department, without the permission of the head of the Department. A little while ago Sir Charles Warren, in a higher position than Anderson, was blamed for somewhat similar conduct by the right hon. Gentleman. Sir C. Warren had to resign because he had made communications to the public Press; and yet the Home Secretary said that Mr. Anderson, having been attacked, was justified in sending a communication to the *Times*. But Sir C. Warren also was attacked over and over again. Therefore, the right hon. Gentleman either acted most unfairly and most ungenerously towards Sir C. Warren, or he has shown undue favour to Mr. Anderson. I think that an explanation is certainly due to this House upon the matter.

*MR. M'LAREN (Cheshire, Crewe): There is another point to which I wish to call the attention of the Committee. The second order upon the Paper to-day relates to the Official Secrets Bill. That Bill provides that any member of the Civil Service who attempts to communicate to any person outside the service an official secret of which, from the official position he occupies, he has become cognizant, shall be sent to prison. Now, it seems to me that Mr. Anderson has in effect been guilty of this offence, and therefore it would be instructive to ascertain how the Home Secretary can reconcile his action towards Mr. Anderson for being the means by which official secrets were communicated through Major Le Caron to the *Times* with his action in supporting the Official Secrets Bill.

MR. MATTHEWS: Mr. Anderson communicated no official secret to any human being. Mr. Anderson had been in correspondence with Major Le Caron for many years, and it was obvious that if Le Caron went into the witness-box he would have been able to state the substance of his communications to Mr. Anderson. The necessary result of that would have been that Mr. Anderson would have been subpoenaed to produce the documents, and that they would have come out in a roundabout way. Le Caron would have been entitled to refresh his memory with any of those documents in giving his evidence. The circumstances under which these letters were sent in the first instance to Mr. Anderson were such that the letters had, up to that moment, remained private between Le Caron on the one hand, and Mr. Anderson on the other, and Mr. Anderson was under an obligation of honour not to hand them over to anybody but Le Caron himself. [An hon. MEMBER: An informer.] Nothing is commoner in the police service than to return to informers of all classes the written communications which they have made. Information is received often anonymously, and sometimes with the name attached, with the condition imposed by the writer that the communication should be returned.

MR. MOLLOY (King's County, Burr): Was that condition imposed in regard to any one of Le Caron's communications?

MR. MATTHEWS: I am not saying that Le Caron did make that precise condition. His condition was that the letters should be communicated to nobody at all, and that they should not, as I believe, be seen by any eye but Mr. Anderson's. In spite of Mr. Anderson's dissuasion, Le Caron became a witness before the Special Commission, and he was entitled to refresh his memory with the documents. I myself did not know of the existence either of the documents or of Le Caron. The hon. Member for Northampton asks me whether I blame Mr. Anderson for what he has done. In substance I think that Mr. Anderson did right. It was due to the Commission that if Le Caron appeared before them he should appear with those documents which were essential to the completeness of his evidence. Indeed, it would have been a grave contempt of Court to have kept them back. It is not necessary for me to pass any judgment as to whether Mr. Anderson was right in trying to dissuade Le Caron from becoming a witness; but, Le Caron having determined to appear, for Mr. Anderson to have destroyed those letters would have been a grave error on his part, and calculated to interfere with the discovery of the truth. I apprehend that Mr. Anderson would have been bound under subpoena, or by one means or another, to disclose the documents. The hon. Member asks why I did not reprimand Mr. Anderson for the letter he wrote to the *Times*, and he relies on the official rule under which Civil servants in a subordinate position are not allowed to write to the newspapers on matters connected with their departments without the sanction of the heads of those departments. That is a very sound rule and one which, in ordinary circumstances, I certainly think it is right to enforce with more or less of censure; but in Mr. Anderson's case the circumstances were so exceptional that I think my duty was best discharged by not passing any censure at all. A right hon. Gentleman who had been Mr. Anderson's official chief thought fit, not only in this House but on a public platform, to assail Mr. Anderson in terms of violent abuse; and in those circumstances to have stopped that gentleman's mouth, or to have prevented him from making an

answer to such an attack, would have been simply impossible. In this House the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby (Sir W. Harcourt) condescended to speak of Mr. Anderson as the "tout of the *Times*." [Mr. J. MORLEY: Hear, hear, and an hon. Member, "So he was."] The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle, who is generally a fair and honourable opponent, cheers that phrase. I am not quite sure that Mr. Anderson did not go too far in trying to prevent Le Caron from giving information; but to describe him as a tout for the *Times* was unworthy of the right hon. Gentleman, and was a gross injustice to Mr. Anderson, and to have prevented that gentleman from vindicating his character from the attack of a man in the position of the right hon. Member for Derby would have been most unfair, and almost a gross abuse of an official regulation which, as a general rule, is very sound and wise. The hon. Member for Northampton says that I dismissed Sir C. Warren for writing to the Press. That is quite a mistake. All I did was simply to address a letter calling Sir C. Warren's attention to the existence of a rule which was adopted before he was in office and requesting him to observe it in future. Sir C. Warren's view was that, as that official rule was not applicable to him, he declined to be bound by it; and he accordingly tendered his resignation. That resignation was accepted. With regard to the case of Delaney, the hon. Member has, no doubt unintentionally, misrepresented the facts. Mr. Shannon was not introduced to the governor of the gaol as a Treasury official, and the governor of the gaol never represented Mr. Shannon as a Treasury official. The interview between Mr. Shannon and Delaney was obtained on the application of Mr. Soames, the solicitor to the *Times*, who desired his representative, Mr. Shannon, to see Delaney in order to take his proof. That was not a visit as a matter of private friendship, but it was an application of a kind that is daily received. There are numerous cases in which the testimony of prisoners undergoing sentence is necessary not only in criminal, but also in civil proceedings, and the governor of the gaol in this instance merely acted in accordance with the common practice. If Mr. Shannon

Mr. Matthews

represented himself as a Treasury official I am not responsible for the statement, though I have great difficulty in believing it.

MR. LABOUCHERE: Delaney says so.

MR. MATTHEWS: I do not think the hon. Member would accept Delaney's testimony in other matters.

MR. LABOUCHERE: I do not accept Shannon's.

MR. MATTHEWS: I do not ask the hon. Member to accept it. All I say is that I think it is extremely unlikely that Mr. Shannon made such a statement; but if Mr. Shannon did, neither I nor the governor of the gaol are responsible for the statement, and therefore I cannot understand why it should be a reason for docking my salary. I am unable to follow the hon. Member for Fermanagh (Mr. W. Redmond) in his persistent attempts to introduce matters which were out of order. The repeated ruling of the Chairman should induce the hon. Member to abstain from making imperfect statements to the House which I am unable to answer.

MR. J. MORLEY (Newcastle-upon-Tyne): As the right hon. Gentleman has made a reference to me, perhaps I may be allowed to make one or two remarks. With regard to Delaney the right hon. Gentleman does not seem to have understood the point of my right hon. Friend the Member for Derby's criticism. My right hon. friend did not attack subordinate officers of prisons, but the Government. The subordinate officers of Maryborough and Millbank prisons are not responsible to the House, but the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary is. The Home Secretary asks the House not to believe Delaney's testimony in regard to Shannon; but the Attorney-General and his colleagues produced Delaney as a credible and trustworthy witness in the matter of Molloy. Why is Delaney to be believed when his testimony was given in the direction desired by the Attorney-General, and not to be believed when he said that he was led to think that Mr. Shannon was a Crown official, and that if he had not so thought he would not have given a word of information?

MR. MATTHEWS: When did Delaney say that?

MR. J. MORLEY: He said it before the court.

MR. J. ELLIS: Yes, upon oath.

MR. J. MORLEY: It is notorious that Delaney made that statement in the Court upon oath. Delaney, again, was produced in the Molloy case, and he said that he had been allowed to roam about Mr. Soames's office, and had there picked up an old almanac which had enabled him to correct the evidence he had given before the three Judges. Is it to be endured, that a life convict brought up to London for the purpose of giving evidence before the Commission should be allowed to roam about Mr. Soames's office and re-adjust his evidence given before the Commission? Is that the Home Secretary's view of what is right, that a life convict should have such opportunities of correcting and adjusting and creating evidence which might have the effect of swearing away the characters if not the lives of men? As to the conduct of Mr. Anderson, I wish that my right hon. Friend the Member for Derby were present [MR. MATTHEWS: Hear, hear], but I am perfectly prepared to endorse and ratify what my right hon. Friend has said. It is amazing to me that a Minister of State—a Cabinet Minister, the head of one of the most important departments of the Government, should take the line actually taken by the Home Secretary to-night with reference to Mr. Anderson's letter to the *Times*. It is quite true that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby used some very strong language about Mr. Anderson, and for my own part I should not have been surprised if Mr. Anderson had written a straightforward denial of any charge made against him; but he has not done so. He wrote no straightforward denial. His letter was one of the meanest as well as one of the most insolent documents ever written. It was one of the meanest because, instead of saying distinctly and openly what he had to say about the right hon. Member for Derby, Mr. Anderson permitted himself to indulge in a number of insinuations and inuendoes which might convey the very gravest charges against his former official chief. The Home Secretary would have been acting more in consonance with the traditions of English Government Departments if he had said that all the relations between a chief and any subordinate were prac-

tically sacred, and that Mr. Anderson, especially by referring to them in this mean and insolent way, had been guilty of a grave departure from a most salutary tradition. The right hon. Gentleman quarrelled with the expression of my right hon. Friend, "a tout for the *Times*." What else was Mr. Anderson? The right hon. Gentleman omitted one very important fact in the history of Mr. Anderson's action in the case; he had forgotten for the moment that it was Mr. Anderson who first put Mr. Macdonald on the track of Le Caron, and that it was Mr. Anderson who told Mr. Macdonald of the existence of Le Caron. If that is not touting for the *Times* I do not know what is. Then the right hon. Gentleman takes an extraordinary view of the documents. He says that they were private, and Mr. Anderson in his letter took the same view. Would any Member of the House in a quiet moment contend that documents paid for by public money and acquired by a public servant for the public service are anything but public documents? Then the right hon. Gentleman said that Mr. Anderson would have been subpoenaed by the Commission and would have been obliged to produce the documents, which would have been but a roundabout way of arriving at the same result. Instead of being a roundabout way it would have been the most direct and proper way, and if Mr. Anderson had produced those documents in obedience to a subpoena from the Commission nothing would have been said, and none of us would have been entitled to object. He would have been acting in obedience to the law. But he did not so act; and the contention that these documents were private property is a contention that cannot be seriously maintained. On that ground, if there were no other—though I have my opinion about the weighing machine matter which has been raised by the hon. Member for the Rushcliffe division (Mr. J. Ellis), but on the ground which has been taken by the right hon. Gentleman to night—namely, the extraordinary facilities given to life convicts to go to and fro acquiring opportunities for the re-adjustment of their evidence—I shall vote for the reduction of the vote.

*THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (MR. A. J. BALFOUR, Man-

chester, E.): The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle has raised an interesting question as to whether the documents supplied to Major Le Caron were or were not public documents. That is a controversy upon which I need not enter, because it is wholly irrelevant to the issue before the Committee. Whether the documents were public or private, they ought to have been supplied to Major Le Caron; and, if that be so, what does it matter whether they were public or private? Does the right hon. Gentleman maintain that Le Caron, a witness before the Commission, was to be refused the use of documents which were required to make his evidence valuable because those documents had been paid for out of the public funds? If that is the right hon. Gentleman's position, I traverse it entirely, and if it is not, what is the use of entering into abstract discussions as to whether the documents were or were not public? The right hon. Gentleman has fallen foul of the Home Secretary for defending Mr. Anderson for the conduct he thought it his duty to pursue in reply to the attacks of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle said that in so doing the Home Secretary departed from a healthy, useful, and necessary tradition of the public service. I quite admit that it is contrary to the traditions of the public service that permanent officials should enter into controversies with Members of Parliament and former chiefs. But on what principle is that rule based? On the principle that such Members of Parliament and ex-officials shall not abuse their position in the House of Commons by uttering calumnious accusations against their former subordinates. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby, taking advantage of his position in the House of Commons, used language against Mr. Anderson which ought not to have been used against any man, however humble his position in the public service. He has exhausted a vocabulary not easily exhausted to describe the conduct of Mr. Anderson, and yet we know that this gentleman was for many years the trusted subordinate of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby. When a man's former chief uses the position which a seat in this

House gives him to make these attacks upon a subordinate, all previous rules in regard to the action of subordinates are necessarily thrown to the wind, because they have been previously thrown to the wind by the action of his superior. If the right hon. Member for Derby had followed the invariable tradition of English official life, I fully agree that Mr. Anderson in writing the letter might have been blamed for departing from tradition and the course marked out for the permanent Civil Service. But the example has been set by the right hon. Member for Derby, and I think my right hon. Friend was only doing his duty when he refused to censure Mr. Anderson for using the only means of defence which the attack of the right hon. Member for Derby had left him.

*SIR G. O. TREVELYAN (Glasgow, Bridgeton): The speech of the right hon. Gentleman, the Chief Secretary, is certainly very good rhetoric, but it is exceedingly important that the Committee should not be led away by that from observation of what seems to me to be the entirely new doctrine laid down, and containing the most dangerous principles. For what does the speech of the right hon. Gentleman come to? It comes to this:—That a very severe attack having been made on a permanent public servant, consequently the permanent civil servant is justified officially in writing an extremely controversial letter in the newspapers in reply to a member of Parliament. That I take to be the position of the Chief Secretary, and that is a position I entirely controvert, and I say it is one of the most dangerous positions that could be laid down. What is more—and here I appeal to the Chancellor of the Exchequer with regard to something that was done by the Government in which he held office a great number of years ago, and which appears to me to be exactly on all fours with this case. This violent language complained of, so far as I gather from the speech of the Home Secretary, consisted in my right hon. Friend the member for Derby describing Mr. Anderson as “touting for the *Times*.” Now that is a strong way of putting the statement that a permanent servant of the Government was allowed to assist the *Times* in getting up their case against the Irish members. It is a very serious charge; but it is a charge

not against Mr. Anderson and the subordinate servants of the Government; it is a charge against the Government itself. I maintain that it is not an abuse of the position of a Member of Parliament to complain that the permanent servants of the State were allowed to assist the *Times*. I am not entering into the question whether they ought to have assisted the *Times* in this manner or not; but, as regards the language of the charge, Mr. Anderson has nothing to do with it. The expression, "tout for the *Times*," is in itself an expression admissible in controversy, and I maintain that if I were to say at this moment across the table that the Government had allowed their subordinates to "tout for the *Times*," I should, it may be, be stating a charge I could not make out, but I should not be making that charge in an unparliamentary manner. Well, the charge having been made, what was the course Mr. Anderson ought to have taken? It is quite plain what action he ought to have taken; he ought to have written a letter to the head of his own department stating his case, and asking that it might be made public or embodied in a speech by the chief of that department. And now if the Chancellor of the Exchequer will give me his attention, I will state a case that I believe to be "on all fours" with this under discussion, and which from first to last was dealt with by the Government at the time as such a case ought to be dealt with. During the controversies that followed the terrible Jamaica riots, a very honoured member of Parliament—I do not think I need name names—used strong and even contemptuous language in referring to the officer at the head of the court-martial, which had condemned to death such a large number of negroes. That officer took exception to the words of the member of Parliament, and, instead of sending a decent and proper remonstrance to the heads of his own department, he addressed a letter to the member of Parliament. That letter was the production of a hot and angry young man, but it was exactly in the spirit of the letter addressed to the *Times* by Mr. Anderson. The Government of the day at once removed this officer from the position which he then held, and placed him on half-pay. I am not sure if he was not

put in even a more unsatisfactory position, if that is possible. He remained on half-pay until he came to the member of Parliament whom he had offended, and asked him to intercede with the Admiralty for reinstatement. The member, who was one of the kindest of men, did use his influence, and the young man was reinstated in his position. That was the manner in which a Government which was careful of precedent and of the future relations between heads of departments, subordinate officials, and representatives of the people acted and should act; but such is not the course followed by the Government in the present instance. I think it is a most serious matter that permanent Civil Servants, who have great impunity when once they are allowed to take that course, should be permitted, either in speech or in the columns of a newspaper, to reply in a controversial manner to attacks made upon them in this House, because from that to a much more serious state of things there is a very short step. If once you allow a permanent official to adopt this course, you leave it open to the political head of a Department to go to a subordinate and say—"Here is a capital opportunity to pay off a political adversary if you come forward, and, in your position of non-political servant, write a letter that will damage his political position." I earnestly trust that from the Treasury Bench we shall, before this debate closes, have a repudiation of the doctrine laid down, or, at any rate, a declaration that the doctrine shall not be applied beyond the present case. To establish a precedent that permanent Civil Servants may engage in the controversies of this House, is fraught with dangerous consequences for the future.

MR. MOLLOY: It seems to me the Home Secretary has laid down a doctrine, one of the most extraordinary ever heard from a responsible Minister. What did it matter, said the right hon. Gentleman, whether Mr. Anderson gave these documents to Le Caron, or whether Mr. Anderson received a subpoena to produce them. Does the Home Secretary mean to lay down the doctrine that if I am engaged in a law suit, and consider the production of official documents useful for my case, I have but to serve one of the permanent officials with a subpoena and he

must produce secret and confidential documents?

MR. MATTHEWS: No; I maintain no such doctrine.

MR. MOLLOY: Then what was the meaning of the right hon. Gentleman's statement, and what is the use of his argument which he puts forward and then abandons ten minutes afterwards? I can understand this from an inexperienced and irresponsible Member of the House, but it is quite unworthy of a Minister of the Crown, and is a discredit to the Treasury Bench. First it was argued that these documents were private, and now the Chief Secretary says they were public, but that it matters not which they were seeing that they had to be produced. Here again is a new doctrine from the Chief Secretary, who is good at starting hares, for the purpose of drawing a red herring across debate. [*Laughter.*] Well, we will drop the simile. The right hon. Gentleman lays down a doctrine as extraordinary as that of the Home Secretary, that Mr. Anderson was bound to produce these documents. Does the Home Secretary mean to say that Mr. Anderson was entitled to produce any document in his possession without the permission of the Chief of his office? Mr. Anderson had no authority of any sort to hand over any of these documents to Le Caron or anybody else. We have it from the Home Secretary that he was never consulted. Here is an admission that a subordinate official is entitled to so dispose in this way of Home Office documents that are in his possession, without the previous consent of the Home Secretary.

*MR. GOSCHEN: I do not see the right hon. Gentleman who has made an appeal to me (Sir G. Trevelyan) in his place, but if hon. Members desire I will answer him. The Committee have had an illustration this very evening of right hon. Gentlemen opposite taking advantage of their position to use most violent language with regard to Civil servants at the very time they were contending for the rule that those Civil servants ought not to defend themselves in the Press against attacks. There is the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle, who spoke of Mr. Anderson as having written a mean and insolent letter. If Mr. Anderson writes to the Press to defend himself against the right hon.

Gentleman, then we shall be told that he has offended against the rule that Civil servants may not write to the Press. Is it, then, to be the fate of Civil servants that they are to be abused in this House with language applying not only to their conduct as Civil servants, but to their moral characters. ("No.") Yes, because it will be remembered in the speech of the right hon. Member for Derby the phrases ran, "I will not say it is against his character," "I will not say it is against his honour." That went through the whole of his speech, and then the language used by the right hon. Gentleman opposite is language which any gentleman would resent to have applied to him. We must feel that Civil servants are but human, and no more impervious than hon. Members in this House to attacks made upon them. It is deplorable that this controversy should take place between ex-chiefs and their subordinates, but this imposes as much obligation on the ex-chief as on the Civil servant. While I regret that such a letter should have been written, and nothing has been said to applaud the action of the writer, yet I say it was excusable under the extraordinary circumstances of the case, and I trust that both sides will agree not only that subordinate officials should not write to the Press, but that there is some obligation imposed, that some regard should be paid to moderation of language in making attacks upon men who are denied this means of defending themselves when attacked. The suggestion of the right hon. Member for Bridgeton—that subordinates might be used for the purpose of writing letters to the Press against their ex-chiefs, is a most unworthy suggestion, one that should never have been made in the House. But, depend upon it, if there is some moderation shown in the treatment of Civil servants, the Government fully recognize the wisdom of enforcing the excellent rule that Civil servants should not embark in newspaper controversy. The case cited by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bridgeton does not bear on the point at all; it was a case in which the conduct of a Naval Officer was dealt with by the Admiralty and not by the Government as a whole. I have replied to the appeal made to me, and I do not wish to continue this controversy; but I am not sorry it has been raised,

for I think it will have brought home to the minds of many hon. Members that if Civil Servants are to be tongue-tied and pen-tied that rule does carry with it a corresponding obligation on hon. and right hon. Gentlemen who criticize them to observe some moderation in the language in which their criticisms are expressed.

*MR. H. H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.): The right hon. Gentleman says the precedent quoted by my right hon. Friend does not touch the case because it was a question of naval discipline, but I say equally this is a case of Home Office discipline. A subordinate of the Admiralty addressed an offensive letter to a Member of this House, and for that the Admiralty punished the official until on the intervention of the Member whose name we all reverence and respect, the punishment was remitted. I quite agree with the right hon. Gentleman as to the peculiar position in which Civil servants are placed. They are a class of men to whom Ministers and Parliament are under the greatest debt of obligation; but one essential condition of the Civil servant retaining the hold which he has on the confidence of the House and the country is his positive abstention from all interference in party politics in any shape or form.

What, asks the Chief Secretary and the Chancellor of the Exchequer, is the Civil servant to do if he is unfairly and unjustly attacked, either in this House or outside, in respect of his conduct as a Civil servant? The tradition is perfectly well understood—he is to intrust his defence to the head of his department in this House. If Mr. Anderson is unjustly attacked from this side of the Table, there are his chiefs on that side to defend him. I can remember a very severe attack being made by the Party which sat below the Gangway against Civil servants, when the late Government were in office, and the defence was undertaken by the then Prime Minister (Mr. Gladstone) and Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Childers). On that occasion the Civil servants did not write a letter to the *Times* attacking the Member who attacked them, they trusted to the goodness of their case and had the satisfaction of seeing the charges withdrawn. I think the position of a Civil servant is far safer

if he leaves his defence in the hands of his official superior. If his official chief does not see fit to defend him, then let him write to his chief and ask sanction for the publication of his defence. But the Home Secretary never saw or sanctioned this letter before publication, though he thinks it is justifiable under the circumstances. But it is just the hard cases that make bad law, and it is this allowing a Civil servant to interfere in our controversies, that must lead to much mischief. I do not argue upon the language used by Mr. Anderson in his letter, though I think his letter to the *Times*, even in self-defence, was full of insinuations against a former chief, which had far better have been omitted. The relations of chiefs to their servants will be seriously modified on both sides if, when Ministers are out of office, the subordinates are to attack them under the auspices of those then in office; and no man knows better than the Chancellor of the Exchequer the absolute impropriety and danger of such a course. When Sir Charles Warren was attacked mercilessly in this House and in the Press—and I do not remember any public servant who in recent times has been subjected to such severe attack as Sir Charles Warren—I do not say whether rightly or wrongly—and when Sir Charles Warren broke the rule of the Service and defended himself in a way the Home Secretary thought unwise and inconsistent with the traditions of the public service he reproved Sir Charles Warren, and in so doing, had the support of his colleagues and of the House of Commons. If Members will for the moment dismiss from their minds the excited angry feelings that attach to this Irish Question, they will see the danger of allowing a public servant when he feels aggrieved, to enter into public controversy, the danger of a disruption of those relations that ought to prevail between the permanent officials and their political chiefs, and the importance of maintaining the principle that it is the political chief who is responsible for his department to the House. And now to turn to another branch of the discussion. The Chief Secretary says it is totally irrelevant whether these documents are public or private, but I venture to say that there is much differ-

ence. A spy in the pay of the English Government sends his reports to the English Government, and for those reports he is paid by the English Government out of moneys voted by Parliament. Can it be maintained that these are private documents? The Home Secretary says not only were they private documents, but the individual you have paid for the information has a right to make such use of them as he thinks proper, and that in a roundabout way their production would have been compelled. If those documents had been produced in the round-about way the Home Secretary described—viz., by a subpoena—they would never have passed out of the custody of the Home Office. They would have brought them as they were into Court, and the Court would have known, and the public would have known, that those documents could not have been tampered with. Instead of that, the documents were handed over by Mr. Anderson to this spy, who took them away to Mr. Houston, and at Mr. Houston's chambers I believe they were seen by Mr. Pigott. And how does the Home Secretary know those documents were not tampered with? Major Le Caron, or rather Mr. Beach—he is no major, to call him so is an insult to every major in the British Army—took the documents to refresh his memory. But suppose some of those documents disclosed what would have been a complete contradiction of his evidence, and showed that he was imposing on the Court, he had the power to destroy any one of those documents. We know that Mr. Houston had a weakness for destroying documents. These were public documents, which Mr. Anderson ought never to have parted with under any circumstances whatever. If they were brought into Court, it ought to have been by Mr. Anderson himself, and the Court would then have known how to deal with them. I think myself that the defence of the Home Secretary in this matter if unsound. The relationship existing between the Civil Servants of the Crown, the House of Commons, and the Political Chiefs, past and present, is a matter of the greatest importance to the purity of our administration and the mode of carrying on the Government of the country. My own experience has been that the permanent servants are most loyal to their chiefs and know no

politics, and I want to keep that position intact. I think that Mr. Anderson acted improperly in this case and that, even if the Home Secretary had thought it his duty to temper his censure with any modification he pleased, he ought to have censured him as he censured Sir Chas. Warren in a much less important matter.

*MR. BARTLEY (Islington, N.): As an old public servant—having been in the Civil Service for 20 years—I should like to say I believe it is a well-recognized rule that a public servant should not enter into any correspondence in the newspapers with regard to his duties, and I do not think it would conduce to the public interest that he should do so. I am afraid that the system of attacking the public servants is largely developing. This is only one of the cases in which Members of the House have given very clear statements of their views as to the manner in which public servants have acted. It can hardly be expected that when public servants are attacked with so much severity they should stand by without saying a word in their own defence, and I think that if the system of attacking them increases as it is doing, the result will be disastrous. If public servants are absolutely prevented from openly writing to the Press, they can reply in other ways without making their names known at all, and the result will be the breaking up of a loyal system which is the great glory of our Civil Service. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle (Mr. J. Morley) has expressed a strong opinion as to the motives by which Mr. Anderson was actuated, and I think I should not be loyal to the old service, to which I am very proud of having belonged so long, if I did not protest against the further extension of the system of attacking the civil servants in this House.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland): It has not been contended by right hon. Gentlemen on this side that public servants should quietly submit to the attacks made upon them, but that the proper way of replying was to do so through their chiefs who have seats in this House. I do not think the right hon. Gentleman (the Chancellor of the Exchequer) can really have seen, or at all events have mastered, the contents

of Mr. Anderson's letter. The right hon. Gentleman says a civil servant may be excused if he displays a certain amount of warmth in replying to strong attacks. But what Mr. Anderson did was to threaten to betray the secrets of his official life as a means of damaging his former chief. I wish to ask the right hon. gentleman the Home Secretary whether he thinks any attack whatever justifies a public official in threatening to betray a public trust? I say that if the Disclosure of Official Secrets Bill had passed into law, Mr. Anderson would have been the very first person who should have been brought under its penal consequences. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) imported into the discussion an amount of that empty and irrelevant rhetoric to which he always treats the Committee whenever he finds the case going against the Government. He tried to make out that Major Le Caron was entitled to the letters, and the Home Secretary said the same thing. I should like to know by what rule he was so entitled. The letters were written in discharge of a public duty, for which he was paid by public money. They belonged to a public department, and he had just as much right to them as I or any other private individual in the country had. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler) has adverted, very justly, to the kind of custody into which these letters were allowed to get. Houston admitted in the witness box that he had destroyed every document he had received from Pigott, and yet that unprincipled and unscrupulous agent of the *Times* was the man who was entrusted by a servant of the Government with the most perilous and secret documents that could be entrusted to anybody, and the other man entrusted with them was Le Caron, who was described by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle very properly as a professional perjurer. This professional perjurer was given the custody of documents which endangered the lives of perhaps scores of people in America. The documents were brought into Court in a mutilated condition and the hon. Member for Hackney (Sir C. Russell) had to draw attention to the fact that extracts had been cut from them. I think

myself that the Government have laid down a most extraordinary and dangerous doctrine with regard to the future relation of official chiefs and official subordinates in this country. I do not know whether it will be for their advantage or not, but I would look with some curiosity to revelations that might be made or at least threatened by some of the chief subordinates of the present Home Secretary and the Chief Secretary for Ireland.

The Committee divided: Ayes 70; Noes 119.—(Division List No. 82.)

Original question again proposed.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE (Bradford, Central): I wish to ask the Home Secretary with reference to the proposed Committee or Commission respecting the prison rules, whether it will consider the English as well as the Irish prison rules and whether it will rest with him to give instructions to the Committee. I shall take another opportunity of raising the question as to the sufficiency of the enquiry.

MR. MATTHEWS: The Committee will not directly take into consideration the English prison rules, which are laid down by statute and can only be altered by legislation, but, of course, inasmuch as the prison rules of the two countries are identical, it would be impossible that the representations of the Commission should not have a large amount of influence on my mind, although the Commission is only appointed to deal with the Irish prisons. No doubt the recommendations of the Commission will have an indirect bearing on the prison system generally.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: I put the question because I understood from the Chief Secretary for Ireland that the enquiry was to have regard to the whole of the prison rules.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: I should like this point to be perfectly clear, because I believe this Commission to be a fraud and a sham, and to be inconsistent with the undertaking given to the House. I wish to ask the Home Secretary whether we are to understand that this Commission has nothing to do with English prisons and English rules.

MR. MATTHEWS: I did not say that.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: Well, if this is a Commission which will inquire

as to the rules in England, I submit that we have a right to discuss the terms of reference of the Commission.

THE CHAIRMAN: If I understand the matter aright, it is a Departmental Committee appointed by the Irish Government to inquire into prison rules in Ireland. In the course of the inquiry they may have to consider the English rules, but, as the Departmental Committee is appointed by the Irish Government, a discussion on the subject will not be at all relevant to the vote.

MR. FENWICK (Northumberland, Wansbeck): I wish to call the attention of the Home Secretary to a point arising out of the administration of the Mines Act of 1887.

THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order!

MR. MATTHEWS: If I may be allowed to refer to what was said just now, I should like to say I have seen the letter which my right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary for Ireland addressed to Lord Aberdare, the Chairman of the Committee appointed to inquire into the question of prison administration, a copy of which was laid on the table of this House on the 16th of this month. If hon. Gentlemen opposite will refer to it they will see that although the Committee was appointed by my right hon. Friend, yet the terms of reference are not connected with the special circumstances of Ireland or Irish prison rules, but refer to prison discipline and prison rules generally. Therefore the investigation of the Committee will be of a general character.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: It now appears then, Sir, that this Committee is to inquire into the prison rules of England, and under these circumstances, it seems to me that the proper authority to appoint the Committee or Commission would be the Home Secretary. I was very much surprised when I saw that the instructions to Lord Aberdare were signed by the Chief Secretary for Ireland, because I thought that such instructions, emanating from such a Minister, were altogether without precedent. It appears to me that the enquiry is practically a sham, for the purpose of enabling the Chief Secretary to get rid of the question of the treatment of political prisoners. My contention is that no alteration should be made in respect of the treatment of ordinary criminals—of

persons who have committed crimes of a disgraceful character. So far as I am aware, no complaint has been raised in respect of the treatment of those persons. It is not desirable to make any exemption in their case from wearing the prison dress, and if people in a superior position of life do commit crimes of a disgraceful character, they ought to be subjected to all the ordinary indignities of a gaol. I think we have a right to complain that the Home Secretary has allowed a Minister having charge of another department to issue orders specially affecting the prison legislation of England. If anyone ordered the issue of a Commission, or nominated the Members, it should have been the Home Secretary himself.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: I rise, Sir, on a point of order. I wish to invite your ruling upon it. The right hon. Gentleman has stated that this enquiry will deal with the treatment of prisoners in England, and I wish to ask whether a Commission to conduct such an inquiry can be constitutionally appointed by the Chief Secretary for Ireland, without being countersigned by the Home Secretary.

THE CHAIRMAN: That is a point no doubt of great importance, but it relates solely to the action of the Chief Secretary for Ireland, and it really cannot be raised on this Vote.

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.): I wish, Sir, to challenge the decision of the Home Secretary on a very important question. It will probably be remembered that early last year there was published a report of a Committee, which had been appointed to investigate the accommodation provided for prisoners at places where Courts of Summary Jurisdiction are held in London and in the provinces; and I think I am not using exaggerated language when I say that the report of that Committee startled the country, by revealing the existence amongst us of a state of things which we imagined had been abolished nearly a century ago by the labours of John Howard and his friends. I believe that, in consequence of the revelations then made, steps have been taken, more or less adequate, to deal with the deplorable mischiefs which were set forth in the report of that Commission. Now, I do not desire to deal with that particular aspect of

the case; I wish rather to call attention to a somewhat different question, which, I am afraid, has escaped the notice of the right hon. Gentleman. I do not know whether he is aware that before that Committee a Governor of a gaol gave evidence that prisoners had to be taken a considerable distance from the gaol to the Court in a non-cellular van, and he said that any decent man would gladly compound for that ride by a month's imprisonment. I wish to know whether any steps have been taken to prevent the inter-communication of prisoners during their conveyance from that gaol to the Court and back again, thereby obviating the demoralization of comparatively innocent people by bringing them into contact with the vilest portion of the criminal community. But, Sir, the main object of my rising to-night was to draw attention to a matter of a cognate character. The right hon. Gentleman is aware, of course, that the Committee over which Sir Alfred Wills presided recommended the appointment of matrons to take charge of female prisoners at police courts, and I believe steps, more or less adequate, are being taken to comply with the letter of that recommendation. A few weeks before the recess, I drew the attention of the right hon. Gentleman to the case of the police stations as distinct from the case of the police courts, and I endeavoured to indicate to him that a stronger case was made out for the appointment of police matrons at police stations than for their appointment at police courts. The right hon. Gentleman, in his reply, relied on the letter of the recommendation of the Committee, and said that the recommendation was limited to the appointment of matrons at police courts. Yes, Sir, of course it was so limited, for the case of the police stations was not before the Committee, and they would have been travelling out of their province if they had dealt with it. But I wish to point out that the recommendation of the Committee applies with even greater force to the case of the police stations than to that of the police courts, for at the latter place, female prisoners are kept in custody only during the day-time, and for a period perhaps of six, eight, or 10 hours, but at the police stations, if they are arrested in the evening, they are detained in the cells until

nine or 10 o'clock the next morning, and are absolutely in the custody of men and without the protection of a woman, while, should they be arrested, as many are, on Saturday nights, they are kept at the station under the custody of men for two nights and one day. I am sure the principle of the recommendation of Sir Alfred Wills' Committee was intended to cover cases such as these, and I have to ask the Home Secretary what he intends to do in the matter. Surely the present position is illogical. If women warders are necessary at police courts they must be equally necessary at police stations, and I believe that if hon. Members will read the Report of Sir Alfred Wills' Committee, contained in the blue book issued at the beginning of this year, they will see that precisely the same objections which are pointed out in the Report apply to the present condition of things at police stations. I hope the right hon. Gentleman will reconsider his decision in this matter. In the first place it is unfair to women, who have a right, even when they bring themselves within the reach of the criminal law, to be placed in the custody of women. But, apart from the question of unfairness as it affects one sex, I think that, on the grounds of public decency and public decorum, the present condition of things is absolutely indefensible. I therefore beg to move the reduction of the salary of the Home Secretary by a sum of £100.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item A, of £28,205, for Salaries, &c., be reduced by £100, part of the Salary of the Secretary of State" (*Mr. Pickersgill*).

MR. MATTHEWS: I think the hon. Gentleman is a little too severe upon me. I think he might take it for granted that I am not opposed in principle to his suggestion, and if I had the money at my command I would before this have introduced into police stations those alterations which have been introduced at police courts. I should be extremely glad if, at every police station in the Metropolis, there were a female warder to attend to female prisoners in all cases in which the assistance of women is desirable. But it must be remembered that there are something like two hundred stations, and it becomes consequently a question of finance, for it would be necessary to

expend large sums of money in structural alterations at the various police stations, because the female warder would have to be provided with special quarters, as she could not be expected to use the same rooms as the men at the station. I have made enquiries and find that at many stations there is not the space requisite for providing this separate accommodation even if I had the money at my command. In the present condition of police finance it is the want of money and no other consideration which delays many desirable reforms. At the same time I believe that these female prisoners are treated with much consideration by the male warders, and often with as much tenderness as sailors show to women on board ships, but still I admit that, on the whole, it would be more satisfactory if a woman who was taken to a police station was there attended to by a female warder. I am happy to say that I cannot charge my memory with a single instance in which any complaint has been made by a woman, that she has been treated otherwise than with consideration and kindness at a police station. I hope the hon. Gentleman will see that I am not opposing his suggestion—that I am not in any sense hostile to the principle of his proposal—but simply my case is that the large number of police stations, the limited space at my command, and the lack of funds, prevent my doing what I am sure we all desire to see done.

MR. CHANNING (Northampton, E.): I am very glad to recognise the spirit in which the Home Secretary has received the suggestion of my hon. Friend, although I am surprised that he should treat it as a question merely of money. I should like to make two suggestions to the right hon. Gentleman. In the first place, I understand that there are women employed at all police stations for the purpose of searching females who may be taken into custody on charges of pocket-picking and robbery. It is perfectly obvious that the women selected as searchers must be trustworthy in order to be entrusted with the performance of these functions, and it appears to me therefore that the Home Secretary and police authorities have in these female searchers a class of women who can be appointed to look after women detained temporarily at police stations,

while the accommodation that might be necessary to enable these searchers to remain on the premises during the night, or from Saturday night to Monday morning, when women are in custody at the police stations, does not seem to me to be absolutely unattainable. Another suggestion I would make is that female prisoners might be taken to certain stations in the Metropolis, where there is proper accommodation for them. I hope that as the Home Secretary realizes the advantage of the principle upon which my hon. Friend's Motion is based, he will in the performance of his duty as guardian of the public morality, and protector as well as prosecutor of prisoners, endeavour to overcome the difficulties which surround this question.

*MR. McLAREN (Cheshire, Crewe): I am glad to notice that the Home Secretary did not express himself as opposed to the principle of the question raised by my hon. Friend, and if his own opposition is merely based on the question of finance, I must say I think it is most discreditable that the Government should not boldly make up its mind to incur the expenditure. The women of London pay taxes as well as the men of London, and they have as much right to have their convenience in elementary matters of decency attended to at police stations as have the men. The Report of Sir Alfred Wills' Committee properly says that it is very wrong that women prisoners at police stations should not be able to apply to females in regard to matters affecting their private convenience, and I think it is melancholy that the Government should give as an excuse for neglecting this urgent reform, the plea that they have not the money to carry it out. I must say it seems to me to be in the interest of female prisoners that women warders should be appointed to attend them. The Home Secretary has admitted that the report applies equally in principle to both police stations and police courts, and therefore it is probably unnecessary to suggest that an enquiry should be made into the matter as it affects the police stations. I trust that he will soon take such steps as are in his power to remedy the evils of which we have complained, and that he will incur the expenditure which is necessary. Surely it is in his power to bring in a supplementary estimate to

enable him to carry out the suggestions of my hon. Friend.

MR. MATTHEWS: It is not a question of supplementary estimate; it is a matter of rating.

*MR. McLAREN: Then is it a matter for the County Council to decide?

MR. MATTHEWS: Oh! no. The hon. Member forgets that the police rate is limited by statute. I cannot go beyond that.

*MR. McLAREN: Well, where there's a will there's a way, and I sure that if the Government brought forward a Bill to enable them to apply funds for the carrying out of this much needed improvement, there is not a single man in this House, who would have the indecency to stand up and object to the Bill becoming law immediately upon its introduction. The Home Secretary says he cannot charge his memory with any complaint by female prisoners, of improper treatment at police stations. I cannot quote any specific case, but I believe if I looked into the matter, I could bring before the Home Secretary cases in which women have alleged, that they have been badly treated in the police cells by male warders. But whether that be so or not, I venture to hope that the Home Secretary will, at the earliest possible moment, obtain from Parliament the powers which are necessary to enable him to carry out this reform.

*MR. H. J. WILSON (York, W. R., Holmfirth): I should like to elucidate this matter a little further, and to get some additional information from the Home Secretary. I put a question to the right hon. Gentleman on the 10th July last year with reference to female searchers at police stations, and he was then good enough to tell me that there were female searchers resident at 22 Metropolitan stations, and that at 146 other Stations there were female searchers residing within a short distance of the building. Now to-day the right hon. Gentleman has said that there are some 200 police stations. The figures which I have quoted account for 168, and I should like to know what is done in the case of the 32 other stations, or how the discrepancy arises. I think some arrangement could be made whereby female prisoners might be detained in some of the larger police

stations. No doubt there are times when there is not a single female prisoner in some of the smaller stations, and therefore, it may not be reasonable to suggest that there should be female warders at all of the stations. I also want to remind the Home Secretary that in July last he promised to consider the question of the appointment of police matrons.

GENERAL GOLDSWORTHY (Hammersmith): The questions which have been raised are most important, and, I hope they will receive attention at the hands of the Home Secretary.

MR. J. HOWARD (Middlesex, Tottenham): I have known a case in which a female prisoner has charged the police with committing an outrage upon her. The woman was of bad character, and the charge was ultimately dismissed; notwithstanding that, the case shows that in the interest of the police themselves it is very desirable that some alteration of the kind suggested should be made if possible.

MR. MATTHEWS: The hon. Gentleman the Member for Bethnal Green (Mr. Pickersgill) did not say what gaol he referred to just now. I think that it must have been a country gaol, because in the Metropolis—

MR. PICKERSGILL: It is a country gaol.

*MR. MATTHEWS: It is the metropolis alone for which I am responsible. I really was at a loss to understand how anything could have occurred of the nature he has stated without my hearing of it. With regard to the appeal made to me by hon. Gentlemen opposite, I shall cheerfully welcome and most carefully consider any suggestion made by them. Certainly one of the most suitable suggestions is that some of the larger stations might be selected in which female prisoners should be detained, and that at such stations there should be female warders stationed the whole night. The difficulty is to have women present at all times. Generally there is a female searcher provided. She is generally the wife of a constable and lives close at hand. But at most police stations there is really no place where one could ask a decent woman to spend the night. I will not be certain whether the proportion of 168 female searchers to 200 stations prevails now, or whether we have not

got a larger proportion—assuredly we have not got less. We have provided female searchers wherever it is possible to do so, but, as I have already said, the difficulty in the enormous majority of cases is to have women stationed on the premises. There are a great many matters in which police administration might be well improved if the margin of possible expenditure were a little larger.

MR. HANDEL COSSHAM: It strikes me that if the police were handed over to the County Council, proper provision would soon be made in the direction desired.

***MR. PICKERSGILL:** I am much obliged to the right hon. Gentleman for his expression of sympathy with my object, but I confess I am not very much impressed by the practical objections he has raised. He appears to rely mainly on the objection that there is not room. It is not for me to say that room could be found even with the present accommodation if the right hon. Gentleman insisted upon application of this principle, but I may point out that a very large expenditure is now being made, and has for some years past been made, upon the provision of police stations. I think that the right hon. Gentleman might, when new police stations are being erected, insist that accommodation should be provided for a matron upon the premises. Notwithstanding the sympathy which I have received, it is well I should go to a division upon the question, because I fancy that however good the intentions of the right hon. Gentleman may be, his intentions will be quickened by a Vote in which I think I shall receive a considerable measure of support, although I cannot, of course, hope to be successful.

The Committee divided: Ayes 46; Noes 90.—(Divison List, No. 83.)

Original question again proposed.

***MR. B. COLERIDGE** (Sheffield, Attercliffe Div.): I beg leave to move the reduction of the Home Secretary's salary by £100 for the purpose of calling attention to a case which the right hon. Gentleman is fully conversant with, namely, the case of Messrs. Walford and Hardwick, who were convicted of shooting at Duddo Hill Farm, in the County of

Northumberland. I will pass by the main events of the trial. It is sufficient to say that the men were tried in the year 1879. I also pass by the fact that out of the nine persons who were present to swear to the identity of the two men, five were not called by the prosecution. The Home Office has since had a statutory declaration made by the five persons, showing that in their judgment the night was too dark, and other circumstances, such as to preclude the possibility of any identification on the part of those who swore on behalf of the prosecution. Neither do I propose to go into the question, whether the jury were justified in arriving at the conclusion they did, in the face of the fourteen respectable witnesses who swore to an *alibi*—who swore that the two men were at least 7 or 8 miles away at the time the burglary was committed. The Home Office have had doubts as to the guilt of these men; indeed, a gentleman had been sent to Northumberland to enquire into the circumstances. The Home Secretary will not dispute that, as a result of the enquiry, Walford and Hardwick were released. But they were released on ticket-of-leave, and from that day to this a free pardon has been refused them. So much doubt did the Home Office entertain, that they went the extraordinary length of permitting these men to report themselves by letter. The men were sentenced, one to 20 years' penal servitude, and the other to 15 years' penal servitude, and the reason why they were released was, as we assert, the confession of two men who were undergoing sentences of penal servitude for other offences, that they, in company with another man committed the crime for which Walford and Hardwick were sent to prison. I understood from the right hon. Gentleman's answer to a question I put to him last year that the confessions were denied by the Home Office. The two men whom we say have confessed to the crime are men of the name of Whiteman and Hartshorne. It was said these men had not confessed, but since I asked the question last year I have been to the trouble of inquiring from these men themselves and I have forwarded to the Home Office a statutory declaration sworn by Francis Hartshorne on the 20th of June last, in which he certified

that he had on three occasions while in prison made confession in writing, that he, in company with Richard Whiteman and Richard Dixon, had committed the crime of shooting at the Robsons of Duddo Hill Farm, county Northumberland, for which Henry Harwick and Richard Walford were convicted at the Spring Assizes at Newcastle, in 1879. Hartshorne added that while in Chat-ham Prison he sent the three confessions on to the Home Office. I then had Whiteman interviewed, and he stated that he likewise had sent in to the Home Office a statement in writing admitting his guilt. I then had Dixon interviewed, but although he was spoken to for two hours he remained silent. The reasonable conclusion is that Dixon did not deny the crime because he could not, and that he would not confess it for fear of the consequences. I have to ask the Home Secretary whether the Home Office has received these statements—he may not call them confessions—and if so, whether he will lay them on the Table of the House and let us and the public judge as to whether the statements are or are not confessions. Every one must know that a man who has a ticket-of-leave must and does carry about with him a very great burden of guilt. Indeed, one of these poor men has been so hampered in pursuing an honest calling that he has left the country, writing before he left what I cannot but characterise as a most pathetic statement. That statement in itself is a justification for me urging on his behalf, he having lived in my constituency, that the right hon. Gentleman should at any rate do what I ask of him.

THE CHAIRMAN: The reduction last negatived was £100, therefore the hon. Gentleman had better move some other reduction.

*MR. B. COLERIDGE: £50.

Motion made, and Question proposed, “That Item A, of £28,205, for Salaries, be reduced by £50, part of the Salary of the Secretary of State.”—(*Mr. Bernard Coleridge.*)

MR. BURT (Morpeth): I heartily join in the appeal my hon. and learned Friend has made to the right hon. Gentleman to make special inquiry into this matter. I have for some time taken considerable interest in the subject. I was not acquainted with these men be-

fore they were convicted, but I became intimately acquainted with them afterwards, and I am personally acquainted with the locality in which the offence was committed. In the village in which these men resided the unanimous opinion of the inhabitants is that Walford and Hardwick are innocent, and that opinion gained strength by the fact that the men suspected immediately cleared out of the neighbourhood. Under all the circumstances it is quite evident that the subject demands more thorough investigation than it has yet received, and I do not think I can do more than join as I heartily do in the appeal that has been made to the Home Secretary. I know the difficulty of deciding these cases is increased by the fact that you have no Court of Criminal Appeal in this country. The Home Secretary is, I know, placed in a peculiar position, but I think these men either ought not to be free at all, or they ought not to be burdened with the stigma of a ticket-of-leave.

*MR. H. J. WILSON (York, W.R., Holmfirth): I desire to say that these men have been neighbours of mine, and I can bear testimony to the respect in which they are held by those who know them. My hon. and learned Friend omitted reading a letter to which he referred which shows these men sought to live a decently respectable life, and to enjoy the confidence of their neighbours. I hope, therefore the Committee will allow me to read a letter from Richard Walford, to show the character of man he is. The letter appeared in the *Newcastle Chronicle* and *Newcastle Leader*, and it is as follows:—

“Sir,—After waiting five years for a free pardon and the clearing of my character from a stigma of guilt from which I shudder, hope seems to die within me. I cannot bear the burden any longer. I seemed to enjoy life while hope carried me on, but as time wears and nothing is done, I cannot bear the name of ex-convict any longer. I am resolved to leave the country; but I cannot go without thanking you and the many kind friends who have laboured so hard and earnestly on our behalf. When we have read the way in which you have placed our case before the public we felt sure of a free pardon and compensation for our unmerited punishment. I remember with gratitude the kindness of the Northumberland miners. There are many names too numerous to mention who have spared neither time nor money, and have shed many a tear, which makes us know to a certain extent they were

bearing part of our sorrows. When we appealed to their sympathy financially, £40 was contributed to our funds, chiefly by them fully knowing of our innocence. I am wanting in words to express my feelings on this occasion, especially to Messrs. Burt and Fenwick, M.P's., and the Committee, but as you bore and helped us before, so I hope and trust you will bear with my shortcomings to express myself. I do not know how my friend Hardwick will feel when he is left to himself. Our parting was very hard, but as our case is being renewed by some very influential gentlemen, I hope the time is not very short, when, by their combined efforts, it will be brought to a true issue.

"Yours, &c.,

"RICHARD WALFORD."

I do not wish to take up the time of the Committee by attempting to enforce the case made out by my hon. and learned Friend, but I do hope the Home Secretary will even now reconsider the case of these men, and if he cannot give them a free pardon will at least state the grounds on which he refuses to do so.

MR. MATTHEWS: I cannot complain of the way in which the hon. and learned Member has brought this case forward, for he has taken a lively interest in it. I can however assure him that no pains have been spared on my part to investigate this case as fully and as completely as my faculties enable me to do. I have devoted my attention to it for days, and have gone through every item of the evidence, and if I could have seen my way to a conclusion more favourable to the men whose cause the hon. and learned Member for Sheffield has advocated, I trust I should not have been wanting in the courage that is necessary to reverse the decision of my three predecessors at the Home Office who have considered the case. I may say that the first of my predecessors who considered the case took the highest advice that was accessible at the time. The conclusion at which my three predecessors arrived was that it was a case of extraordinary doubt—a case in which no candid man would assert positively that the verdict of the jury was right, and in which, therefore, it was extremely difficult to keep the men in prison under a sentence of penal servitude; but that, on the other hand, it was a case in which the evidence of the identification of the men was so strong and positive that it was impossible to say that the verdict was absolutely wrong, and that therefore a

free pardon should be granted. I cannot say that the verdict was wrong, yet the case is surrounded with so much doubt that if I had been on the jury I should possibly have acquitted the accused; and, illogical though it may be, as put by the hon. Member for Northampton, to grant them a ticket-of-leave, and not a free pardon, yet I felt I could not keep them in penal servitude under the circumstances. I do not rely on my own authority. The right hon. Gentlemen to whom the hon. and learned Member looks as his leaders have concurred with me in this view. It is said, indeed, that there were confessions from other men; but those so-called confessions were not confessions of the crime charged—namely, shooting with intent to kill or with intent to inflict grievous bodily harm. They were only statements that those other men were indeed on the spot, and not the prisoners; but they all asserted that the gun went off accidentally; and if those statements had been put before a jury, those other men could not have been punished or convicted of any offence whatever. The evidence against the men who were convicted was that a gun was discharged—three times I think—at the family of the prosecutor, several of whom were in the road challenging persons who were undoubtedly armed with a gun, and apparently had been in the pursuit of birds. By one of the shots fired, a dog was struck. I think the so-called confession makes no mention of a dog.

*MR. B. COLERIDGE: Pardon me; I think the incident of the dog was one of the most important items relied on.

MR. MATTHEWS: That was another dog. I am not suggesting that the poachers fired at their own dog, but they fired at the farm dog, which ran out and barked at them, and one of their shots drove the dog home yelping. It would be extremely dangerous if on such a confession as this, in which there was no admission of having committed a criminal offence, I were to grant a free pardon to the men who were convicted by the jury. The case is, however, by no means clear, and I therefore entirely assent to what my predecessor did in letting the men out on licence. I know elaborate inquiries have been made by a variety of persons as well as by the Solicitor to the Treasury, with the utmost desire of getting at the

full truth, and although a good deal has been elicited in favour of the men, on the other hand, corroborative evidence of identification was very strong. Remember that although the *alibi* set up was a very strong one, the jury, who had the advantage of seeing and hearing the witnesses, disbelieved it. I should be extremely glad if I could come to a conclusion definitely as to the guilt or innocence of these men; and I can assure the hon. and learned Member that if he could give me any additional information calculated to throw light on the case I shall be very happy to consider it thoroughly.

*MR. B. COLERIDGE: I will not detain the Committee long with my answer. The right hon. Gentleman says that no candid man could come to a clear conviction that the verdict of the jury was right. I cordially agree with that, especially as this case was tried at the same Assizes as and, I believe, in immediate sequence to, the Edlingham burglary case—by the same Judge and, I think, by the same jury. I, therefore, do not wonder that the right hon. Gentleman has some hesitation in affirming the decision of the jury. The right hon. Gentleman also says these three men admit that they were on the spot; they confess that they were there and that a gun was fired, although they assert that it was not fired with any criminal intent. But it is not suggested that there were six men on the spot, and surely it must have occurred to the right hon. Gentleman that if he believed the three men who had confessed that they were there, and if he believed the confession of one of them that he did fire a gun (although he may claim that he had no criminal intent) he must come to the conclusion that the convicted men were not present, and are therefore innocent. Now, I wish to ask him will he for the satisfaction of the men and of their friends lay on the Table of the House, the statements of these men which have been forwarded to him, because it might clear up several discrepancies. I do hope the right hon. Gentleman will produce these statements.

The Committee divided:—Ayes 52; Noes 112; majority 60.—(Div. List, No. 384.)

Original Question again proposed.

*MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton): I beg to move a reduction of this vote by £1,000 made up of £500, part of the salary of the Secretary of State, £250, part of the salary of the Chief Inspector of Factories, and £250, part of the salaries of superintendents and other inspectors. I desire to bring before the Committee the question of the non-enforcement of the Truck Act passed in 1887. Naturally I desire to see that Act—which Members without distinction of Party assisted me in passing—enforced as much as possible. In Ireland the Act has almost entirely broken down, and this is partly due to a very simple reason, but its enforcement has almost entirely broken down in the Metropolis, and there I shall have to lay special blame personally on the Home Secretary. In regard to the regular enforcement of the Truck Act, it may be necessary to remind the Committee that the duty was put into the hands of the Inspectors of Mines and Factories in England, Wales, and Ireland, and on Procurators Fiscal as well as these inspectors in Scotland. The enforcement of the Act has been very irregular, in some places there has been no enforcement at all, and as I shall allege, in consequence of the age of supervising inspectors. There are two inspectors whose ages are 73 and 74 respectively, and at that age they are not likely to attend thoroughly to their duties. Mr. R. W. Coles had the supervision of the whole of Ireland, North Wales, Lancashire, and the West Riding of Yorkshire. That gentleman has only been to Ireland twice during the last three years. I should like to know how often Mr. Coles has been absent from his duties on account of illness since the passing of the Truck Act; whether the medical officer who certified was his own son; and whether the Home Secretary has taken any pains to satisfy himself that cases have broken down, not because of want of evidence, but because of want of physical ability on the part of the Supervising Inspector. Mr. Rickards, the senior inspector at Leeds, is nearly 74 years of age. I have no means of knowing if these gentlemen have the physical ability to perform their duties. I have no means of guessing what occult influence keeps them in their position, whether it is they are kept there to preserve a possible vacancy

for somebody else already connected with the Department. These are matters on which I think the Home Secretary ought to give us some information, but it seems to me to be a monstrous thing that two gentlemen entrusted with the duty of inspecting factories and supervising matters connected with them should occupy that position at an age which must incapacitate them from the ordinary physical activity demanded of them in such a matter. Any inspection by them must be a complete farce. That is the first portion of the case I wish to submit to the Committee, but the whole of the method connected with the inspection of factories seems to me radically wrong. The expense of the supervision is great, being $33\frac{1}{2}$ per cent of the whole cost of factory inspection. This, surely, is an extravagant proportion. One of the great difficulties in the enforcement of the Truck Act in Ireland has been in connection with fines imposed on weavers. I have brought cases before the Home Secretary until I am absolutely tired of raising the Irish question at all. They break down in this way—I speak from careful verification of matters already decided in the courts. The employers in the weaving trade have been in the habit of giving a certificate of discharge in these words—“A D has been in our employment for the past five months, and is now discharged, all wages being paid.” That is not a certificate of character, but only of discharge; and the consequence of not having that certificate of discharge is that a person cannot get employment elsewhere. When these poor weavers complained or appealed to the law the discharged certificate was withheld, and the fear of starvation compelled the weavers to submit to the illegality and fraud. In Lurgan a woman was fined by her employers, and in the course of the Petty Sessions investigation the employers’ book was produced, which showed that no less than £8 6s. 8d. in fines had been inflicted in one week on the poor people in their employ. I have made this the subject of special communication to the Home Secretary, and a difference of legal opinion arose, if I may be allowed to say so, between us. The Home Secretary answered as Home Secretary, but we all know he is a great lawyer. However, he referred to the Law Officers

of the Crown, and they took the view I happened to hold, that these fines when not stoppages of unearned wage but penalties were illegal fines or deductions under the Truck Act. The Home Secretary explicitly promised me, both in the House and when I placed in his hands a list of fines occupying 32 printed pages inflicted at Whiteley’s establishment, that he would have a test case tried to see if the view I insisted upon, and which the Attorney General endorsed, was correct. But from that moment to now such a case has not been tried.

MR. MATTHEWS: Yes.

*MR. BRADLAUGH: I am sorry to disagree with the right hon. Gentleman. Does he mean there has been a conviction?

MR. MATTHEWS: No; but a case is to be stated.

*MR. BRADLAUGH: Ah! but the phrase I used was—it never had been tried, and the offence is now three months old.

MR. MATTHEWS: The case has been before a Magistrate and dismissed, because he did not think the evidence was sufficient; but he has stated a case, which is now pending.

*MR. BRADLAUGH: I am glad to hear that, though I may say it is opposed by the answer given me by the Solicitor to the Treasury.

MR. MATTHEWS: This is not Whiteley’s case, but a similar case.

*MR. BRADLAUGH: But I was confining myself to Whiteley’s case, strongly supported as it was by 32 pages of evidence. If the Home Secretary selected a weaker case to try, then I have the more reason to complain of him. The right hon. Gentleman thinks it a laughing matter; I do not.

MR. MATTHEWS: I do not consider it a laughing matter at all; I only smiled at the hon. member’s unfair inference, before he knows what the case is, that I have selected a weaker case.

*MR. BRADLAUGH: I supplied the right hon. Gentleman with the facts and correspondence, and nothing was attempted until after three months, when the people are clear from prosecution under the Act. I admit I was wrong in saying the right hon. Gentleman had selected a weaker case, but I submit that the right hon. Gentleman could not have had a stronger case than that.

which I laid before him, because in it the evidence was overwhelming and complete. There was also a case at Alpertou, near Harlesden, in which the payment was by metal check, instead of coin. I sent those metal checks to the right hon. Gentleman, and he acknowledged their receipt. Detectives were sent down to the district, and there was full corroboration of the evidence; but the three statutory months were allowed to pass, and then the Home Office coolly wrote to me stating that there was not enough evidence to insure a conviction. There was another case in the City of London, in which payment was made by metal check, whereby poor men were robbed of 2d. out of every shilling. In this case the real offender was the ultimate employer, a magistrate of the City of London, and the checks were stamped with the initial letter of his name. The evidence was also overwhelming in this case; but there has been no prosecution. I admit the difficulties, and I am bound to say I have received every courtesy from the Solicitor to the Treasury, but that is not enough. I want the enforcement of the law. I intend to have it enforced, and I hope to be assisted by public opinion on both sides. I have put into the hands of the Home Secretary many pages of evidence relating to cases that were undoubtedly breaches of the law, and it is no answer to mention to me other cases of which I know nothing. If he has a stronger case, I think, after the trouble I have taken, he might have done me the courtesy to give me information. There is another grave difficulty that does not rest with the Home Office. The Truck Act for a first offence makes the maximum and minimum penalty £20 and £5, but under the Summary Jurisdiction Act of 1879 magistrates have the power of inflicting a nominal fine for the first offence, and they invariably exercise it. The chairman of the Rhymney Ironworks in Wales boasted that it paid the company better to pay the fines that were inflicted and the expenses than to comply with the law. This is a monstrous state of things. If fines are not enough to secure obedience to the law, the Home Secretary should pay attention to the recommendations that had reached him—that a first offence should in grave cases be

treated as misdemeanour and be punished with imprisonment. If it is always to be a fine for a first offence, men may be bought off to avoid a conviction for the second, and if inspectors are old and incapable, and employers unscrupulous, men will be so demoralized that the whole statute will become a dead letter. At Bristol several cases were brought to the notice of the Home Office, prosecutions followed, and convictions were obtained; but all the magistrates were employers of labour, and the fines inflicted were so ridiculously small that they amounted to far less than the cost of the prosecutions. It was reported in 1876 that truck practices prevailed to an extent which amounted to a most unjustifiable robbery from wage-earners, and the House united with me in an endeavour to make the law more effective; but the practices still continue in England, Wales, and Ireland. In Scotland the law is fairly well enforced, and a great change has followed the passing of the Act of 1887. The case of the fruit porters is one that is going on day by day, but the checks I have put into the hands of the Home Secretary are now more than three months old. I do not like to see the law made a dead letter by the indifference of those whose duty it is to enforce it, and I therefore move the reduction of the Vote.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member moves a reduction of several items. That is an inconvenient course. Perhaps he will take a decision on the first?

MR. BRADLAUGH: I do not wish to put the Committee to the trouble of several divisions, and will simply move a reduction of the Home Secretary's salary by £500.

Motion made, and question proposed,

"That Item A, of £28,205, for Salaries, be reduced by £500, part of the salary of the Secretary of State."—(*Mr. Bradlaugh.*)

***THE UNDER SECRETARY FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (MR. STUART WORTLEY, Sheffield, Hallam):** The hon. Member first complains that some of the Inspectors are by age incapable of duty. All the Inspectors are under the age of 60 with the exception of two, who are respectively 73 and 70. One of these was absent from duty only three weeks in 1887 and five weeks in 1888.

The Superintendence charge had been reduced to 20 per cent of the whole cost of inspection, and the ratio will be still further diminished by the non-filling up of the next vacancy in the superintending staff.

*MR. BRADLAUGH: I have gone carefully through the figures and make the proportion $33\frac{1}{3}$ per cent.

*MR. STUART WORTLEY: There is some difference between us, but the proportion is, I think, not so high as the hon. Gentleman puts it, and it has been materially reduced during the time the staff has been in existence. Inquiry was made into the Whiteley case, and the difficulty was that it turned out upon inquiry that the wages were paid in full, and fines were exacted for certain breaches of rules. The fines were paid under the threat of process to recover them, and at all events they were not deducted from the wages.

*MR. BRADLAUGH: I was prepared to prove instances of absolute deduction. I believe it is true that since the matter has been mentioned the wages are paid and then the stoppages are demanded.

*MR. STUART WORTLEY: If the hon. Member is right, inquiry has had the effect of getting rid of the illegal practice. Proceedings were taken against a confectioner in South London, and the magistrate dismissed the charge, but granted a case for a superior Court, on which it is hoped an authoritative decision will be obtained. Inquiries were instituted as to the issue of brass checks to the Harlesden brick-makers, but the greatest difficulty was experienced in getting the necessary evidence; but the practice has been discontinued, and so far as I know it has not been resumed. The Treasury Solicitors have been given to understand that they are not to exhibit undue squeamishness in undertaking prosecutions, but by instituting them to make it evident that the Government are determined that the law should be enforced. Experience shows that the action taken by the Home Office in one form or another has brought about a cessation of the practice complained of. In the case of the Orange porters, there again was a difficulty in establishing by evidence an infringement of the Act. The difficulty in the case was that the men did a certain duty and received a check, which they took to another

person who gave them payment, and the legal question is as to who it was that made the payment.

*MR. BRADLAUGH: The Act expressly lays down that the wage should be paid in the current coin of the realm. Therefore, payment by token is an offence whether the payment is made by the employer himself or by an agent.

*MR. STUART WORTLEY: The question still remains who it was that made the payment. There was also an attempt to make a deduction for beer supplied, but the proceeding was resisted by the men themselves, and was not pressed. From the efforts we are making to prevent the resumption of the practice complained of, I hope we shall arrive soon at some means of overcoming the difficulty that the case presents. We have to avoid, as far as possible, the evil of exposing the men to the certainty of the loss of their employment; and, on the other hand, the danger of making it appear as if the Act is not intended to have effective operation. It is not our intention that the Act shall have no operation. If Parliament passes an Act it should be carried into effect, and if there are hardships brought to light in the course of carrying it into effect that is ground for an alteration of the law, but not for the exercise of the dispensing power. The same observation applies to the exercise of the determination on the part of the Magistrates to disregard certain provisions of the Act creating a penalty under the Truck Act. No doubt, in the case of a second offence in the country, they have no power to mitigate the minimum penalty that the Act prescribes; but it is true, on the other hand, that in the London districts the Magistrates have power to mitigate the penalty even for a second offence. Unfortunately, however, the law does not provide means by which the decisions of Magistrates who may choose to disregard the provisions as to the minimum penalty can be reviewed by a Court of Law or Executive official. I hope it will be seen that in one of the cases I have dealt with legal difficulties have presented themselves, that in the case of the brickmakers the practice complained of has been discontinued, and that in the case of Whiteley's we are awaiting a decision of the Court.

*MR. BRADLAUGH: I am very much obliged to the hon. Gentleman for the spirit in which he has met what I urged to the Committee, and I trust that neither the Government nor the Committee will think that I have thrown undue warmth into the matter. It has been my duty to put 70 or 80 questions about some 30 cases, and in no instance did I ask the Home Secretary a question until I had written to the Home Office on the subject and believed I had a *prima facie* case. With regard to Whiteley's case, if the difficulty which is said to have arisen had been mentioned to me at the time I was bringing the matter before the Home Office, I believe I possessed evidence which would have proved the deduction prior to the payment of the wage. But, I admit, that when these cases are investigated, the men are found unwilling to place their complaint before a Court as readily as they place them before Parliament. There, however, should be no hesitancy on the part of the Home Office in enforcing the law. There is one point upon which I have had no answer. It is admitted that two gentlemen placed in the position of administering this important department are advanced in years, one being 70 and the other 73 years of age. The Home Secretary ought to state why these gentlemen should be continued in a position in which they hinder the work they have been appointed to perform.

MR. MATTHEWS: It would be a painful thing to mention in the House of Commons the names of persons who, in the opinion of the hon. Gentleman, ought to be dismissed.

*MR. BRADLAUGH: Mr. Coles, who has the superintendence in Ireland, is 73; he has been only twice in Ireland during the last two years, and on one of those occasions was certified to be ill.

MR. MATTHEWS: Mr. Coles was ill for three months in 1887, and for five weeks in 1888. When a public servant has for many years given the good service which Mr. Coles has done it would be extremely hard to dismiss him until it is perfectly clear that he is not able to do the work. If the law said that a gentleman should be called upon to retire at a given age, say 65, I should be very glad.

*MR. BRADLAUGH: I did not ask the right hon. Gentleman to pledge himself to dismissal, but to pledge himself to inquire.

MR. MATTHEWS: I have inquired, and I have given the hon. Gentleman the results of my inquiry.

*MR. BRADLAUGH: As to the case of the gentleman whose duty it is to visit Ireland?

MR. MATTHEWS: No, I have not inquired as to that matter, but I certainly will do so.

*MR. BRADLAUGH: Is it not the fact that the medical gentleman who has given certificates of illness in this case is the son of Mr. Coles?

MR. MATTHEWS: No, that is not the case.

*MR. BRADLAUGH: Then if the right hon. Gentleman will extend his inquiry still further he will find in the office a number of certificates as to Mr. Coles' inability to attend for short periods—two or three days—signed by his son.

MR. MATTHEWS: The medical gentleman who has given the certificates is not the son of Mr. Coles. I know the name of the medical gentleman who gave the certificates.

*MR. BRADLAUGH: I think if the right hon. Gentleman will make further inquiry he will see that I am right in my suggestion. My information differs from that of the right hon. Gentleman and I may say that I am in a position to prove that there are several certificates signed by this gentleman's son in addition to those relating to long periods of illness which have been referred to. I trust the right hon. Gentleman will inquire into this matter.

MR. MATTHEWS: Certainly I will inquire.

*MR. BRADLAUGH: I will not put the Committee to the trouble of dividing on the matter. I only wanted to raise these points.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Original question again proposed.

*MR. W. McLAREN (Cheshire, Crewe): I wish to move the reduction of the vote by £100 for the purpose of calling the attention of the Committee to the subject of the conduct of the Inspectors of Mines in Lanarkshire, Ayrshire, and the South-West of Scotland, and I regret that I have been unable to give notice

of my intention to bring the matter forward. I hardly thought that the Vote would be reached to-night, and was waiting for fuller information, before dealing with the subject from Mr. Keir Hardy, who has recently addressed a letter on the question to the *Pall Mall Gazette*. There is nothing that the working men of this country feel more strongly about than the necessity of appointing working men as assistant inspectors. Some of the men appointed are, no doubt, very well qualified and thoroughly conscientious; but there are others who are not equal to them, who do their work in a perfunctory manner, and are always inclined to side with the masters, and, no doubt, it would be a right thing to appoint working miners as assistant inspectors, to go down the pits and see that the mines are thoroughly and properly overhauled. As an instance of the inadequate manner in which the inspectors do their duty, Mr. Keir Hardy mentions a case—a type of many—in which he went down a pit and found that the ventilation was faulty, and reported the matter to the inspector, who went to the in-take and measured the current, and then to the out-let and did the same thing, and then drove away saying that there was nothing the matter. If the inspector in this case had been a practical man, he would have gone down the pit and examined the ventilation in the workings. But there is another thing at work in the South-West of Scotland that is even worse than this incompetency of the inspectors, and which is largely due, in my opinion, to the want of energy of these gentlemen and their want of sympathy with the miners, and it is this. When you have a man of sufficient courage to make a complaint, and substantiate a grievance against the manager or sub-manager of a mine, he is dismissed for doing so. It is the fault of the inspectors that this state of terrorism exists. Mr. Hardy has called attention to a case in which two miners complained that the part of a mine in which they were working, was excessively badly ventilated. The air they had to breathe was foul, but though they endeavoured to have it put right nothing was done officially. In order to prevent themselves from being poisoned, they got a piece of cloth and made an

apparatus by which a fresh current of air was brought into their workings. At a meeting of the men at which the under manager was present this circumstance was referred to, and the result was that the two men were dismissed, and although Mr. Hardy reported the matter, and an inspector was sent to make inquiries, nothing came of it. There is another instance in which the inspectors have neglected their duty. The Coal Mines Regulation Act, requires that there shall be at each mine, two shafts, each available for raising and lowering the miners, but in some of the Scotch Mines only one of the shafts is so available, the other having a furnace at the bottom, and no appliances for raising and lowering. This condition of things has been brought under the notice of the inspector who has reported that these mines fulfil the requirements of the Act. In another case an inspector refused to allow Mr. Hardy to be appointed as the representative of the men to make application for the appointment of a check weigher—although it is difficult to understand why, in this case, the inspector interfered. The men subsequently held a meeting and appointed two of their number to go and give notice on their own account that they desired a check weigher appointed. The next morning those two workmen were dismissed along with twelve others who were suspected of complicity in the election. It seems to me these cases show that the inspector, instead of being strictly impartial or of taking the side of the men, who are usually the weaker body, actively sided with the employers. There is one other case which I will mention, in which the men complained that they were being cheated in the weighing of the empty hutches. They were weighed as $2\frac{1}{2}$ cwt., whereas the men said the actual weight was $2\frac{1}{4}$ cwt. The manager refused to pay attention to the representations of the men on the subject, and the men offered to have the case submitted to arbitration, and the manager refused. The matter was brought under the notice of the Home Secretary, who remitted it to the inspector to report upon. The inspector reported that the manager had offered to submit the case to arbitration but the men had refused, the very opposite being the case. I have not yet in my posses-

sion the names, but I shall receive the information before many days, and I will then furnish the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary with any further details that may be required. In the meantime I think it is improper that the inspector should act in this way in the interests of the mine-owners rather than in those of the men. It is quite evident that this particular inspector, at any rate, has not been doing his duty, and I desire in moving this reduction to ask the House to protest against his conduct.

Motion made, "That Item R. of £17,401 for Inspector of Mines, Salaries, be reduced by £100."—(*Mr. W. McLaren*).

**Mr. MATTHEWS*: I am bound to complain a little of the manner in which the hon. Member has brought forward this matter. He has made various charges without specifying them. He does not even tell me what mine he refers to, and I am unable to say who is the inspector to whom he alludes. It is, of course, impossible for me, under the circumstances, to reply to him. With regard to *Mr. Hardy*, I really think that when he comes to consider the matter he will consider that that gentleman's zeal has outrun his discretion. No rule is enforced more strictly than that the inspectors are not to interfere in cases of contract between masters and men. It would be intolerable, in my judgment, if they were to do so. If the master dismisses his men simply because they complain of something wrong, I should not refrain from expressing my opinion about it, but it is not for the inspector to interfere. As far as I know, I am sure the inspectors do not champion the cause of the masters rather than that of the men. The influence, such as it is, which I have with the inspectors has been brought to bear in the other direction, and they know that they are always to look after the interests of the men, because the masters are better able to protect themselves. I have always impressed upon the inspectors that their business was to look after the health of the men and their comfort while always abstaining from interference in other matters. As regards the complaint from Scotland, the Trades Union in that district is not very powerful and not very numerous;

and *Mr. Hardy* puts himself forward as the representative of the men on all occasions. He assumes that Trades Unions have the right to come forward and to tell the master that the workmen, one of whom *Mr. Hardy* was not, had appointed, a check weighman. The master naturally asked—Who is this stranger that comes to tell us that a workman is appointed; I think that the workmen might tell me themselves; if they have appointed as check weighman they might tell us so. But here is a stranger purporting to come behind the workmen—coming from a distance, and telling us that a check weighman has been appointed. That was a very reasonable answer of the master. To my knowledge, the Inspector took no part in the dispute. The masters are bound at their peril to recognize any check weighman, whether they have received notice of him or not; at the same time there was naturally some feeling that the intimation should come from a stranger. All the part I took in the matter was to tell the masters that no notice at all was necessary, and that, therefore, the notice must be regarded as perfectly immaterial in the matter. Ultimately the matter went before the Sheriff's Court, and that Court decided rightly or wrongly, it is not for me to presume to say, and the matter has gone to the Superior Court. The Sheriff's Court decided that the masters not having had notice of the appointment of the check weighman could not be made liable for damages by reason of the action of check weighman. The question is now before the Superior Court. I rather think the Court of Sessions, though I am not quite certain, where it pends decision. That is how the matter stands. The Inspector has nothing to do with the matter, and he could not have prevented the dismissal of the men which has taken place, which occurred, as I think I stated to this House, on grounds totally unconnected with the check weighman. The hon. Member alleged that the Inspector had been misled by the information he had given me. Well, hon. Members know how questions are asked in this House, with four and twenty hours' notice. When I was asked that question I at once telegraphed to the Inspector who applied to the manager. The manager might be wrong, but the Inspector is not to blame. The

poor man did the best he could. He went over to the pit, he saw nobody there, and went to the manager. The question was put in this House, and the hon. Member would have been extremely angry if I had not answered it. I was, therefore, obliged to send a telegram to obtain the best information I could. The Inspector, I am sure, was not to blame. The hon. Member said that the shaft of this pit had no raising or lowering apparatus. I can only say that I have no recollection of such a case; and I am sure the Inspector could not be aware of the circumstance without referring the matter to me. I think there must be some misunderstanding in the matter.

Mr. PHILLIPS (Lanark, Mid): There are one or two questions I should have asked had the forms of the House permitted, but as they do not, I am compelled to vote for a reduction when I should have preferred to have voted for a very large increase. It seems to me that those who represent the mining constituencies have to complain that there is not anything like a sufficient number of Inspectors. With regard to what the Home Secretary said respecting the check weighman and Mr. Hardy, it is a very plausible thing to say that the masters do not like strangers to interfere, but every mine owner in Ayrshire knows perfectly well that Mr. Hardy did represent the men. And one reason why the miners wish their Secretary to speak for them is that they are afraid if they make complaints they will be dismissed, or, at any rate, that they will get the reputation of being cantankerous, and will be caused to suffer one way or another. Why is there a decrease in the Vote this year? I notice that for the additional inspecting staff £900 was voted last year. That £900 is struck out this year. And another item of £1,000 for expenses last year has been reduced this year. The Vote was only a small one last year, £27,000, and it is a very serious matter to have it reduced by nearly £2,000. I should like some explanation of that very considerable reduction. When we consider the immense wealth that is produced by the miners of Great Britain, £27,000 is a very small sum to expend in making the lives of the miners a little bit safer than they would otherwise be. The amount is not any-

thing like sufficient, and I very much regret that it has been reduced. I notice in the Votes that the amount received for fines is £352 5s. 8d. That seems a small sum, but I should not regret that circumstance if we could feel assured that the condition of things is very much improved. I cannot, however, believe that, and I am afraid the smallness of the amount is due to the fact that we have not nearly sufficient inspectors of mines to look into matters. With regard to the district of Lanarkshire which I have the honour of representing, I have had no specific grievance against inspectors or sub-inspectors brought to my notice. The only grievance I have heard against them in my district is that there are not enough of them, and that consequently there is not enough time given to inspection. Then, Sir, there is a very strong, almost unanimous feeling, that the inspectors ought to be drawn only from the ranks of men who have been practical working miners. That is what the people of Mid-Lanark want, and I tell the right hon. Gentleman that that is the wish not only of the miners, but of men much above them in station. It seems to be the feeling in my district, among men of all political opinions, that it is a fair thing that the inspectors should be men of practical experience as miners. It is not only accidents which have to be guarded against. There are other things much more serious. There are such questions as that of ventilation. Proper ventilation of the mine makes the miners' position more bearable. A certain number of men are killed in accidents, but a very much larger number every year are injured by bad ventilation. Miners grow old very early in life. It is a shocking thing to see young men looking prematurely old by a bad atmosphere and unhealthy work. It is, therefore, necessary that you should have practical men, men of experience, as inspectors, so that the men may be enabled to pursue their calling under healthier conditions. The miners of Great Britain have a right to ask that the very small sum which is voted shall at any rate be spent in a way which shall satisfy them. Rightly or wrongly they and their friends think things would be better if none but practical men were appointed. That is why I wish to urge the right hon.

Gentleman to give a pledge, or undertaking, that as vacancies occur during his tenure of office he will as far as possible fill them from the ranks of practical working miners.

MR. FENWICK (Northumberland, Wansbeck): I trust the right hon. Gentleman will consider the point raised by my right hon. Friend of sufficient importance to make some further inquiry in reference to the alleged case of a second shaft in a district of Scotland being left without the proper apparatus to withdraw the men from the mine in case of an accident to the other shaft. That is a matter of very great importance to the men concerned, and the Home Secretary can certainly certify whether it is the fact or not. As to Mr. K. Hardy, I do not know him personally, but my knowledge of that gentleman is such as to lead me to think that he would not have made such a statement as that in the public press had he not just grounds for it. With respect to the additional number of Inspectors demanded, we have frequently on this side of the House made the request, not only to the present Home Secretary, but to his predecessors, for an additional number of Mines Inspectors. When you take into consideration that in the mines of the United Kingdom the annual sacrifice of human life is something like 1,100—I am taking a series of years—I know that last year it was not so high, and that this year it is still less, and something like 995, which is nevertheless a very serious mortality—I think the Government ought to consider the advisability or otherwise of appointing an additional number of Inspectors, in order to see that the mines are properly conducted, and that the greatest amount of safety is guaranteed to those who have to pursue such a hazardous calling. Even with the utmost care, I fear that there will always be a very sad and very heavy mortality, considering that the men have to follow this occupation with a very imperfect light, and that dangers surround them at every turn. I sincerely trust that when the Government can see their way to spending such large sums of money on the Army, they will see their way also to guaranteeing safety to the miners in this country. There are 3,500 mines in the United Kingdom requiring inspection, and it is

an interesting fact that there are only about 30, or probably, 28 inspectors and sub-inspectors, whose duty it is to visit and inspect that large number of collieries. When we consider the time necessarily occupied by these gentlemen in clerical work and in attending inquiries, the Committee will see that they have very little time to devote to the actual work of inspection. I make no complaint whatever against the inspectors as to the way in which they perform their work, as I believe that, generally speaking, they discharge their functions in a very commendable manner, and do not attempt to shirk their duty; but I say that the duties imposed on them are too onerous to admit of the expectation that they can be efficiently performed by the staff they have under them; and, in making the request, I now urge upon the Government that an addition should be made to the number of inspectors, and that, where it can be done, those men should be practical working men, possessing sufficient knowledge to satisfy the Home Office of their efficiency for such a position. I am sure that such a concession would give great satisfaction, not only to the workmen, but also to the employers. I trust the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary will see his way to making some concession on this point. While I am upon my feet I hope I may be allowed to make a brief reference to the long hours of labour imposed on the pit-brow women in the West Lancashire district. When this question was under the consideration of the House at the time we were discussing the Coal Mines Act of 1887, hon. Members may remember the amount of interest then taken in the subject by Gentlemen on both sides. Indeed, such was the sympathy then displayed on behalf of these poor creatures that I am quite sure, that if it had been thought that the passing of that Act would have furnished an opportunity for increasing their hours of labour no such proceeding would have been sanctioned under cover of that piece of legislation. We know that the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary has repeatedly refused to answer questions put to him in this House on the ground that they involved the expression of a legal opinion on his part; and in taking that position he undoubtedly took one that was per-

fectly logical and reasonable. But I think that when the right hon. Gentleman allowed himself, as he has done, to depart from that position he made a very great mistake, and one from which a good deal of mischief has unfortunately followed. I refer to what has arisen out of an expression of opinion on the part of the Home Secretary in answer to a question put to him by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Southport (Mr. Curzon) who, in March 1888, asked the right hon. Gentleman whether the term of 54 hours during which women could be employed under the Coal Mines Regulation Act, 1887, was inclusive of the intervals allowed for meals, and the right hon. Gentleman's answer to that question, in which he undertook to give an interpretation of the meaning of the clause referred to, was, "As I read the Act, the answer to my hon. Friend's question is in the negative." On that answer being given, I immediately rose in my place and challenged the statement of the right hon. Gentleman. I asked him if he was aware that the answer he had just given to that question would involve an increase in the hours of labour on pit-brow; but the Home Secretary did not do me the favour of answering my query. Now, I put it to the Committee—what has been the result? Why, exactly what I then predicted. The Inspector for that district, in his report for 1888, calls attention to the fact that the hours of labour on the part of the women employed on the pit's-brow in West Lancashire have been increased by from one and a-half to two hours per day, thus exactly fulfilling the prediction I ventured to put before the House when the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary gave the answer I have quoted to the hon. Gentleman the Member for Southport, this addition to the hours of women's labour only being made after that answer had been given. The question was one that had been a matter of dispute in the West Lancashire district for a considerable period; the Inspector for that district had had it repeatedly brought under his notice and had attempted to solve it, but the magistrates would not enter into it, on account of a certain ambiguity in the construction to be put upon the law. Immediately,

Mr. Fenwick

however, the employers had obtained this expression of opinion on the part of the Home Secretary, they added to the hours of labour performed by the pit-brow women, a further servitude of from one-and-a-half to two hours a day. The right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary, in answer to a question put to him on another occasion, stated that the Act of 1887 did not alter the Act of 1872 in regard to the hours of labour on the part of women employed on the pit-brow; but why did the right hon. Gentleman say that, when he had refused to answer a question put to him on that very point with regard to Scotland, his refusal then being based on the fact that the answer would involve the expression of an opinion on a point of law? It certainly seems strange that after taking this position the right hon. Gentleman, upon a question of so much importance to the pit-brow women, should have given an opinion, not only involving a legal point, but settling that point to the satisfaction of the employers of labour in the West Lancashire district, thereby enabling them to make a substantial increase in the hours of labour on the part of women engaged at their pits. I say we have a right to complain of the action of the Home Secretary in giving expression to an opinion which has produced such a result; and I also say that if the effect of that answer could have been foreseen by the rest of the House as clearly as I saw it at the time, the right hon. Gentleman would not have escaped as easily as he did. Moreover, if this House had thought, when the subject of the pit-brow women was being discussed, that there would have been an attempt made to increase the hours of labour, it would not have permitted the Act to pass in the form it assumed, but would have so guarded it, as to have prevented these poor women suffering any additional hardship. I trust the Home Secretary will consider the question as to the shafts in Scotland not being properly arranged for the purposes of safety to the men; that he will endeavour to see that the Inspectors employed shall be, as far as possible, practical working men, of course possessing a sufficient amount of knowledge to satisfy him as to their competency for such a position, and that he will also seize some fitting opportunity for mitigating the evils from

which these poor pit-brow women have to suffer in West Lancashire.

*COLONEL BLUNDELL (Ince): I am also of opinion that the number of Mine Inspectors now employed is not sufficient, but at the same time I think it would be a greater error to take Inspectors from the ranks of the working men. It requires a great deal of knowledge and instruction to perform the duties of Inspectors of Mines; and before an ordinary working man can acquire that knowledge, even if he can acquire it he must have arrived at a time of life, when he would be practically unfitted by age to efficiently discharge the duties of such an office. I believe that no class of men could be more indefatigable than the present Inspectors, but in proposing to increase their numbers, I would draw the attention of the Home Secretary to this point, that they ought not to be increased to such an extent as to shift the responsibility from the shoulders of the employers to those of the Inspectors themselves. If that be done you will not have safety, but unsafety in your mines. With regard to the pit-brow women, I would only say that I believe the present Act defines the number of hours of labour, which were not defined in the previous Act; but I am not acquainted with the particulars of what has happened. I hope the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary, will state to the Committee what are the hours laid down in the Act.

*MR. CRAWFORD (Lanark, N.E.): I think the Home Secretary misunderstood the points of my hon. Friend's (Mr. M'Laren) complaint. He did not argue that the masters should be prosecuted for dismissing the men. The case put was that certain miners complained of the ventilation, and the Inspector's attention being drawn to the matter, some of the men, after the truth of the complaint had been established, were dismissed. My hon. Friend argued that the contravention of the Act, aggravated certainly by the dismissal of the men should have been prosecuted and not condoned. And as to the complaint of the right hon. Gentleman that he was not sufficiently advised of the cases to which reference has been made, the principal cases had admittedly been the subject of correspondence with the Home Office, and I must say that

in dealing with them to-night, the Home Secretary showed a minute and thorough acquaintance with the subject. I have thought it necessary to make this defence of the reasonable and proper complaints brought forward by my hon. Friend, but I admit that the more important part of this discussion was the point raised by my hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lanark, for it leads us to consider how far the present system of inspection is satisfactory. Personally I have received no complaints from East Lanarkshire as to the conduct of the inspectors, but my point is that we believe the number of inspectors to be insufficient. I quite agree that we ought not so to increase the numbers as to diminish the sense of responsibility now resting upon both masters and men; but the Government having once accepted the principle of appointing inspectors, we say it ought not to be carried out on so small a scale as to render the system illusory. There are plenty of pits which are never visited by an inspector, and very few I believe are visited more than once in, perhaps, two or three years. The system of inspection is undoubtedly inadequate, and I agree with my hon. Friend that the number of inspectors ought to be increased. I also agree with my hon. Friend that at least some of the inspectors and sub-inspectors should be men who as miners have acquired a practical acquaintance with the business. The last point I shall refer to is the sad and melancholy fact mentioned by my hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lanark that the men are afraid to make complaints lest they should lose their employment. I well know how difficult it is for Parliament to deal with any grievance of this kind, and indeed I do not now refer to any specific case from my own constituency. The men are the most uncomplaining race I have ever had to deal with, but they tell me, and have often told me, that if they make complaints they do so at the risk of losing their employment. They take a keen interest in our proceedings here, and should this discussion come under their notice—as no doubt it will—I only hope it will lead them further in the direction to which all our experience points—*i.e.* that their best protection is a strong union among themselves, for by that means they would be able most effectually to resist any unfair

proceedings on the part of their employers.

MR. ATHERLEY-JONES (Durham, N.W.): I only rise for the purpose of reminding the right hon. Gentleman of the assurance which he gave when he introduced the present Coal Mines Act. He then stated in answer to observations addressed to him from all sides of the House, that he would not lose sight of the claims which working men enjoyed for the purpose of obtaining positions as Mine Inspectors. So far as my knowledge goes, and on this subject it is not inconsiderable, there is a very large number of working miners in the county with which I am most familiar, who are quite competent to undertake the duties of inspectors. Indeed, rule 38 of the Coal Mines Regulation Act recognises that ability on the part of working men, because it provides among other things, that working miners shall be appointed for the purpose of inspecting mines and reporting upon their condition. I should like to ask the Home Secretary whether since the Act came into operation, working men had applied for the posts of Inspector or Assistant Inspector, and if so whether their applications had been entertained; and further, whether in his judgment, there is any practical reason for refusing to appoint these working men. May I, in conclusion, add my voice to the statements already made as to the non-sufficiency of the present number of inspectors, and may I point out that in the district which comprises the County of Durham, the County of Cumberland, and a large portion of the County of Yorkshire, including within its ambit many hundreds of coal mines and a considerable number of metalliferous mines, there is only one Chief Inspector, assisted by only one Sub-Inspector. I know that the right hon. Gentleman has given most anxious consideration to this matter, and I will ask him if he cannot at least concede the appointment of additional sub-inspectors from the ranks of the working classes.

MR. MATTHEWS: I hope that the Committee will pardon me if I only briefly notice the points which have been raised in this discussion. I have been urged to appoint working men as inspectors by hon. Members who frankly avow that these working men are their constituents. Those hon. Gentlemen will

understand why I am obliged to take somewhat harsher views of the matter. I agree with hon. Members that if the inspections are to be made periodically and if mines are to be regularly and constantly inspected as some hon. Members appear to desire, the present number of inspectors will have to be not merely increased, but multiplied tenfold. But such constant inspection is not considered necessary. It is not desirable to relieve the owners of all responsibility. What is required, and what has been done is that the inspectors should make surprise visits, should attend to complaints which they receive, ascertain the general system of working in their different districts, and satisfy themselves that it is satisfactory. I am in a position to state that these duties have been adequately discharged by the present staff, and the small extra expenditure that is proposed with a view of relieving the inspectors of certain clerical work which now occupies many hours of their time will largely increase their efficiency and their available time. With regard to the appointment of working men as inspectors of mines, I can assure hon. Members who are anxious on this point that I have no objection whatever to make such appointments provided that working men are found with that scientific knowledge which would render them competent to discharge the duties of an Inspector, and to secure that respect for their authority from mine owners and men which can only come from knowledge on their part, and the possession of the necessary qualifications. Under the Factories Act all the appointments I have made have been appointments of working men; but under the Mines Act the case is different, for scientific knowledge is required for the due discharge of the duties of an Inspector. I believe that on more than one occasion I have admitted working men into competition for these posts, and I can only repeat that if any such candidates are found to possess the necessary knowledge I shall be delighted to have them on the staff of Inspectors. As to the point which has been put to me with regard to the construction of the Act as to the calculation of hours for meals, all I can say is that the recent Act has made no change in the law. It

has merely made clear what under the previous Act was ambiguous. The only other point I have to refer to is the statement that men are afraid to complain lest they should lose their employment. I regret that it is the fact, as has been stated, that men are sometimes dismissed, especially in Scotland, for making complaints to the Inspectors. That is conduct on the part of owners which is to be deplored; it is most regrettable and most blameable, but I think that if the miners of Scotland were less invertebrate, and were banded more firmly together as in England, this practice would soon be stopped. That would prove a far better remedy than any I could introduce. With regard to the Scotch districts I may say that in order to remedy the complaints made by hon. Members, I have remodelled the districts so as to divide them more equally between the two chief Inspectors, so that each will have as nearly as possible the same amount of work to do.

*MR. McLAREN: May I before the division is taken, point out that the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary has not given any answer to the two distinct charges which have been made, as arising out of the Report of Mr. Kier-Hardy.

*MR. MATTHEWS: If the hon. Member will give me the date I will direct that an enquiry shall be held.

*MR. McLAREN: I shall be glad to forward the information to the right hon. Gentleman. Now with regard to the question of the number of inspectors, and the appointment of working men to these posts, allow me to point out that we do not desire anything approaching control by the inspectors. We do not ask that the number should be so enormously increased as to practically take the responsibility out of the hands of the masters. I admit that that would be an evil, but I do contend that there is room for the appointment of more inspectors, and that such appointments are necessary in order that the work of inspection may be efficiently performed. It is not enough for an inspector to go into a mine once in twelve or eighteen months, and we contend that this is not a sufficient inspection. The Home Secretary taunts us with urging him to

increase the expenditure of the country, and with seeking to secure the appointment of men who are to be found among our own constituents. Sir, we have no hesitation in urging an additional expenditure wherever it is necessary. I say that this increase of expenditure would be a cheap expenditure and would amply repay itself, because it would probably save the lives of many men who contribute their fair share to the taxation of the country. When there is a sort of illusory inspection, we consider it our duty to protest against it. With regard to the appointment of working men inspectors I do not think the Home Secretary ought to insist on these candidates possessing the high scientific attainments necessary to enable them to pass the severe technical examination. The right hon. Gentleman should remember that their practical experience, their knowledge of the tricks of the trade, as he calls them, amply compensate for any deficiency there may be with regard to the higher scientific branches of the work. It is because the Home Secretary has shown very little desire to meet the views of the working representatives that I feel it my duty to trouble the House with a division upon this vote.

The Committee divided:—Ayes 53; Noes 156. (Div. List, No. 85.)

Original question put, and agreed to.

Resolutions to be reported to-morrow.

Committee to sit again upon Wednesday 1st May.

SUPPLY.—REPORT.

Resolutions [16th April] reported.

CIVIL SERVICE.

CLASS II.

1. "That a sum, not exceeding £38,244, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1890, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Offices of the House of Lords."

2. "That a sum not exceeding £44,420, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1890, for the Salaries and Expenses in the Offices of the House of Commons."

MR. A. O'CONNOR: I should like to ask a question I was unable to ask in Committee with regard to the fees received by this House. There is a Fee Fund in the House of Lords which is, I believe, submitted to the Controller and Auditor-General for audit, and I desire to ask whether there is in connection with the House of Commons any Fee Fund, and if so, whether it is submitted to the Controller and Auditor General, and if it is, what is the condition of the Fund, and what is done with the money?

*SIR R. FOWLER (London): I should like to make an appeal to the Government to consider before next Session whether something ought not to be done to increase the salaries of the officers of the House. There must, I think, be a very general feeling on the part of Members in all parts of the House that the work of the officers of the House has been much increased. The autumn Session of last year was no doubt due to exceptional circumstances; but nevertheless it did occur, and it may occur again, entailing heavy additional work on the officers, who have to attend during very protracted sittings. The salaries of the officers of the House, which were never very high considering the duties they have to perform, were fixed by former Governments when the work was very much less than it is now. I therefore ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer to consider before next Session whether some addition may not be made to the inadequate remuneration of these gentlemen, who discharge most important public duties to the satisfaction of all sections of the House.

MR. BIGGAR: I would suggest that a Committee of the House be appointed to consider the question of the salaries paid in the two Houses of Parliament, and to report concerning it. It is preposterous that we should discuss year after year the question of salaries without having the facts before us. For the Ministry to recommend an increase of salaries in one House, and not pull down those in the other, would be unreasonable. I think that the aggregate of the salaries should be lower, but if the salaries paid in the

other House were lowered, those paid here might be increased.

*MR. JACKSON: In answer to the hon. Member for East Donegal (Mr. A. O'Connor), I have to say that the fees taken for business in this House are paid direct into the Exchequer. There is no Fee Fund.

MR. A. O'CONNOR: Are they audited?

*MR. JACKSON: Yes, under Statute, by the Speaker.

Resolutions agreed to.

PARLIAMENTARY FRANCHISE (EXTENSION TO WOMEN, (No. 2)

BILL. (No. 180.)

Order for Second Reading read, and discharged.

Bill withdrawn.

SMALL DEBTS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

(No. 153.)

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1.

Committee report Progress; to sit again on Monday 6th May.

ASSIZES RELIEF BILL. (No. 167.)

Read a second time, and committed for Tuesday 7th May.

WOODS AND FORESTS AND LAND REVENUES OF THE CROWN.

Ordered, That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the Administration of the Department of the Woods and Forests and Land Revenues of the Crown.—(Mr. Jackson.)

PIER AND HARBOUR PROVISIONAL ORDERS.

Copy ordered—

“Of Memorandum stating the nature of the Proposals contained in the Provisional Orders included in the Pier and Harbour Orders Confirmation Bill (No. 2).”—*Sir Michael Hicks-Beach.*

Copy presented accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 128.]

House adjourned at Twenty Minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HANSARD'S PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES.

No. 8.]

THIRD VOLUME OF SESSION 1889.

[MAY 8.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Tuesday, 30th April, 1889.

REPRESENTATIVE PEER FOR IRELAND.

Writs and Returns electing the Earl of Lucan a Representative Peer for Ireland in the room of the late Earl of Portarlington, deceased, with the Certificate of the Clerk of the Crown in Ireland annexed thereto: Delivered (on oath), and Certificate read.

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House that Her Majesty had (by Commission) appointed the Earl of Morley Speaker of the House in the absence of the Lord Chancellor: The said Commission was read.

COMMITTEE OF SELECTION FOR STANDING COMMITTEES.

Report from, That the Committee have added The Earl Brownlow and the Lord Ker (*Marquess of Lothian*) to the Standing Committee for Bills relating to Law, &c., for the consideration of the Reformatory Schools Bill [H.L.]; That the Committee have added the Lord Stratheden to the Standing Committee for General Bills, for the consideration of the Smoke Nuisance Abatement Metropolis Bill [H.L.]; And the Lord Chaworth (*Earl of Meath*) for the consideration of the Indecent Advertisements Bill [H.L.]; Read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

REMOVAL OF WRECKS ACT (1877) AMENDMENT BILL (No. 46).

Read 1^a; to be printed; and to be read 2^a on Thursday next.—(*The Earl of Milltown*).

COUNTY COUNCILLORS (QUALIFICATION OF WOMEN) BILL (No. 47).

A Bill to enable women to be elected and to act as County Councillors—Was presented by The Lord Chaworth (*E. Meath*); read 1^a; and to be printed.

COMMISSIONER FOR OATHS BILL (No. 6).

Read 3^a, and passed, and sent to the Commons.

LARCENY ACT, 1861, AMENDMENT (USE OF FIREARMS) BILL (No. 30).

THE EARL OF MILLTOWN, in rising to move "That the Bill be committed to the Standing Committee for Bills relating to Law, &c.," said: My Lords, before making the Motion which stands in my name I wish to call your Lordships' attention to the fact that we are at present a good deal in the dark with regard to the Standing Committees. We are ignorant of when they are to meet or where they are to meet. We do not know exactly whether they are to be public or private, and we are completely in the dark as to by what standard we should be guided in making the Motion to refer a Bill to either the Standing Committee on Law, or that for General Bills. I am moving to refer this Bill and the Town Police Clauses Act Amendment Bill to the Standing Committee for Bills relating to Law, not for any particular reason, because so far as I can see they might just as well be referred to the Standing Committee for General Bills. As my noble Friend opposite pointed out, there is nothing in the Bill now under your Lordships' notice which requires particularly the acumen or education of lawyers to unravel or dissect. But I propose to refer it to the Law Committee, partly because it was suggested to me that that was the

proper thing to do, and partly because it so happens that I am myself a Member of that Committee. It has struck me that perhaps it might be as well that when the Chairmen of the Committees are elected there should be a direction to which of the two Committees the several Bills should eventually be referred. I shall be glad to hear from the Chairmen of Committees what are his views upon the matter.

THE EARL OF MORLEY: I propose to call a meeting for the election of Chairmen as soon as possible. I believe that is the first step to be taken. I think the earliest moment at which this can be done will be Friday next. At all events, it will be done at the earliest possible date, so that the Standing Committees may get to work in the course of next week.

LORD HERSCHELL: There is one matter to which the noble Lord alluded, as to which I would like to say a word—as to whether the proceedings of the Standing Committees should be public. That is the practice in the case of the House of Commons Standing Committees, and I cannot see any reason why it should not be so in the case of the Standing Committees of this House. The advantage seems to me to be altogether in that direction. With reference to the time of meeting, no doubt that will be a matter of subsequent consideration. It is obvious that if work is done to the extent to which it will be done by these Standing Committees, this House will be so far relieved of its work, and it would be practicable, therefore, for the Committees to meet at or after the hour the House now sits for public business. It would, of course, be very difficult, without some arrangement of this kind, to obtain the attendance upon the Standing Committees of the legal Members of this House.

LORD BRABOURNE: I think it would be very satisfactory if we could have some definition from those who proposed these Standing Committees of the standard by which it is to be determined which Committee a particular Bill is to be referred to. I see I am placed on the Committee for Law; that is, I suppose, for the satisfactory reason that I do not happen to be a lawyer. When the

proposal to establish these Committees was before your Lordships, it was pointed out that hardships might arise in the case of a noble Lord, who might be interested in a certain measure, but would be excluded from the discussion upon it because he did not happen to be a Member of the Committee to which the Bill was referred. Your Lordships having come to the conclusion to establish Standing Committees, -I, of course, loyally submit; but I do think that we who objected to their appointment altogether should at least be informed whether there is any standard by which any particular measure is referred to the one Committee or the other.

LORD HERSCHELL: I might ask your Lordships' indulgence to point out, in reference to what the noble Lord has just said, that there is power under the Standing Orders to add to either Standing Committee ten Peers in respect of any particular Bill. There is no doubt that if a noble Lord who was on one Committee were interested in a Bill before another Committee, and wished to take part in its discussion, he would readily obtain a seat upon the Committee which had to deal with that measure.

Ordered, that the Standing Committee to which the Bill stands committed be the Standing Committee for Bills relating to Law, &c.

INDECENT ADVERTISEMENTS BILL.

(No. 34.)

Ordered, that the Standing Committee to which the Bill stands committed be the Standing Committee for General Bills.

TOWN POLICE CLAUSES ACT (1847) AMENDMENT BILL (No. 38.)

THE EARL OF MILLTOWN: In moving to refer this Bill to the Standing Committee for Law, I would like to say that I entirely agree with my noble Friend (Lord Herschell) that the proceedings of these Standing Committees should be public, unless the Committee otherwise decide. It would be extremely hard upon your Lordships, as well as upon the general public, if, when important alterations are made in Bills before the Standing Committees, there are no means of ascertaining the reasons and arguments which guided

noble Lords in coming to their conclusions.

Bill committed to the Standing Committee for Bills relating to Law, &c.

House adjourned at a quarter before
Five o'clock to Thursday next, a
quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Tuesday, 30th April, 1889.

CONTRACTS WITH FOREIGNERS.

Order (15th April) for an Address for a Return relating to Contracts with Foreigners, read, and discharged; and instead thereof,—

Return ordered—

"Of all Contracts for Articles of Home Manufacture made in the United Kingdom by the several Government Departments, between the 1st day of April 1888 and the 31st day of March 1889, with Contractors outside the Kingdom."—(*Mr. Howard Vincent.*)

EAST INDIA (RAILWAYS).

Ordered:—

"Address for Copy of the Contracts entered into by the Secretary of State for India with any Company for the Construction of Railways in India (in continuation of Parliamentary Papers, No. 412, of Session 1882, and No. 450, of Session 1871)."—(*Sir G. Balfour.*)

QUESTIONS.

PRESIDENCY ALLOWANCES IN INDIA.

MR. KING (Hull): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for India whether the Secretary of State has yet caused the inquiry to be made, which was promised in answer to a question in this House on 18th February, 1887, with regard to the grant of Presidency allowances such as are given to the India Public Works Department to officers of the Telegraph Department, as sanctioned by letter 1,000, E. G., July 15, 1876; and, if so, whether he can now state why the sanctioned allowances are not granted?

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Sir J. GORST, Chatham): The inquiry was made, as promised, in February, 1887; and a

reply was received that the question of granting the same Presidency allowances to the officers of the Telegraph Department as are given to the Public Works Department had been referred to the Finance Committee in India. No further communication has been made by the Government of India to the Secretary of State.

MAINTENANCE OF MAIN ROADS.

MR. WALTER M'LAREN (Cheshire, Crewe) asked the Secretary of the Local Government Board whether he had received a memorial from the Cheshire Quarter Sessions, showing that the last payment made by the Local Government Board on 20th December, 1888, of £11,514 was in respect of maintaining and repairing roads up to 25th March, 1887; whether this was the final payment that the Board intended to make in respect of roads; whether, as the County Council only took over the county work on 1st April, 1889, the county was now left to find this sum of about £11,500 for the two years between 25th March, 1887, and 1st April, 1889, amounting to £23,000; and whether any opportunity would be given to the House of discussing this and other matters connected with the county finance in respect of grants from the Government, as it now no longer came within the Budget.

THE SECRETARY TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. W. LONG, Wilts, Devizes): I have received a memorial from the Cheshire Quarter Sessions with reference to the payment of Government contributions in respect of the maintenance of main roads. The sum of £11,514, which was paid to the county authority during the last financial year, was a Government contribution in aid of the expenditure of that year, although the contribution was necessarily based on an expenditure actually incurred during a period prior to that year. The payment referred to is the last Government contribution which will be made in respect of main roads, as, from the 1st of April last, the county authority have had ceded to them certain licence duties and other revenue in substitution for the Government contributions previously paid. There can be no ground for contending that, while the county is entitled to receive the revenue referred to,

they are also to receive the contributions for which that revenue has been substituted. If the hon. Member wishes to raise a question with reference to this matter by a Motion, it will, of course, be open to him to do so.

MR. M'LAREN: Is it not the case that this payment was for the repair of main roads up to the 25th of March, 1887?

MR. LONG: No, Sir; certainly not. The payment was made in relief of the rates for the current year 1888, but as the expenditure for the current year could not be ascertained, the payment had to be based on the expenditure of the previous year. The sum was paid, however, in relief of the rates for the current year.

MR. C. R. SPENCER (Northamptonshire, Mid): Is that in accordance with the statement which has been made by Lord Salisbury?

MR. LONG: I am unable to say, nor do I know what statement the hon. Member refers to. It is, however, in accordance with the statements that were made in this House.

MR. C. R. SPENCER: Are we to understand that it is in accordance with the declaration of the President of the Local Government Board?

MR. LONG: Certainly.

RAILWAY RATES.

MR. WALTER M'LAREN asked the President of the Board of Trade whether he had received notices of objection from the British Dairy Farmers' Association to the proposed schedules of maximum rates of the 26 chief railway companies in the kingdom, chiefly in respect of their proposals regarding the carriage of milk; whether, although almost all milk was carried by passenger trains, there were no genuine proposals in the schedules for a reasonable maximum rate; whether some companies proposed to take power to charge for milk conveyed by passenger trains 2d. per lb. or 1s. 8d. a gallon for any distance however short; whether all the objections contend that the companies should be asked to state clearly their real proposed rate for the carriage of milk by passenger trains; and, whether he would comply with this request, and order the companies to amend their proposals in the way suggested?

Mr. W. Long

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Sir M. HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.) said that notices of objection of the kind described in the question had been received by the Board of Trade. They had evidently been drawn up with great care, and contained statements and arguments which were well worthy of consideration; but as he had to form an opinion on the matter after hearing both sides, he could not, of course, say now what his opinion was likely to be.

MR. M'LAREN: Will the right hon. Gentleman say when the parties will be heard? Will it be not until after all the notices have been lodged?

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: The hearing will not begin until after that time.

THE SUGAR CONVENTION.

MR. CRAIG (Newcastle-upon-Tyne): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, as the declaration attached to the Sugar Convention provides that

"Two months at least before the Special Commission meets the Laws put in by the different Powers, as suppressing all Bounties, shall be communicated to the various signatory Governments,"

will they be laid before Parliament previous to the Second Reading of the Sugar Convention Bill?

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir J. FERGUSSON, Manchester, N.W.): The proposed laws, or as we say Bills, are submitted to the International Commission with the view of examining whether they are sufficient to give effect to the Convention, but chiefly for the purpose of affording the bounty-giving Powers the means of ascertaining the measures by which bounties may be most effectually abolished. They will, doubtless, be presented to Parliament in the form in which they have passed their respective Legislatures, but at present as they are to be laid before the Commission, and may be said to be in our possession confidentially, it would be improper to present them.

SIR L. PLAYFAIR (Leeds, S.): Will the right hon. Gentleman tell us whether all the signatory powers have sent in Bills or Draft Bills on the subject?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: Yes, I believe they have.

THE INDIAN ARMY.

SIR ROBERT FOWLER (London) asked the Under Secretary of State for India whether all Officers who were appointed to cadetships in the Indian Army after December 1858 were informed that their appointments were conditional, or subject to any alteration that might be decided on: If any Officer was not so informed, wherein do the conditions of his appointment differ from those Officers appointed before December 1858, and who remained local Officers: And whether an Officer (Lieutenant Colonel Chapman, late Madras Army) who had received his nomination under the old conditions, and had never been informed of the contemplated changes, or called upon to signify his consent thereto, had nevertheless been posted to the general list, and subjected to great loss thereby?

*SIR J. GORST: Many officers appointed to cadetships in the Indian Army after December, 1858, were not called on to sign a note to the effect that they were aware of the conditions then introduced. (2) All these officers were appointed subject to those conditions. Officers appointed before December, 1858 were not. (3) Col. Chapman, received his appointment in March 1859, under the conditions under which it could alone be granted. He was posted to the general list, in common with the other officers in his position.

ZULULAND—SENTENCES ON NATIVE CHIEFS.

SIR ROBERT FOWLER asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether Her Majesty's Government have received official information of the sentences on the Zulu Chiefs; and whether the question will receive the consideration of the Secretary of State?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (BARON H. DE WORMS, Liverpool, East Toxteth): Her Majesty's Government have been officially informed that Undabuko has been sentenced to imprisonment for fifteen years, Tshingana to imprisonment for twelve years, and Dinizulu to imprisonment for ten years. These sentences are not to be carried out until the

Secretary of State has been able to consider the cases.

COUNTY COUNCIL VOTERS.

MR. HERMON HODGE (Lancashire, Accrington) asked the Secretary to the Local Government Board whether, in the event of County Councils giving instructions for the preparation of lists of voters in urban districts in street order, town clerks of municipal boroughs who have already issued their precepts will be compelled to issue supplemental instructions in accordance therewith; if not, who are the authorities to give such instructions to town clerks of municipal boroughs?

MR. LONG: The question, I understand, applies to cases where directions have been given by the County Council that the lists of voters shall be made out according to the order in which the qualifying premises appear in the rate-book. We are advised that unless the directions have been given by the County Council prior to the issue by the town clerk of his precept, the directions will only take effect in connection with the registration for the subsequent year.

H.M.S. SULTAN.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE (Bradford, Central): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether he can give the House any information as to the prospects of raising the *Sultan*, and when will the Court of Inquiry be held as to whether proper means were adopted immediately after the stranding of the vessel to recover it?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Lord G. HAMILTON, Middlesex, Ealing): The reports received from the officers of the Mediterranean Fleet and the dockyard officials who have inspected the *Sultan* are not favourable to the prospect of saving the vessel. Their view is confirmed by the salvage company who were engaged by the Admiralty and were working on the spot. Other salvage companies take a more favourable opinion of the position of the ship, and have made offers to attempt to raise her. The damage to the hull is considerable, and the deterioration of the fittings and machinery will be so great that it is very doubtful, from a pecuniary point of view, whether the *Sultan* is worth raising; but until I know what the claim for salvage will be

I cannot give a definite opinion upon this point. A further inquiry into the measures taken to save the *Sultan* after she grounded is necessary. The late Commander-in-Chief of the Mediterranean, his Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh, has unfortunately been so seriously indisposed during the last month by an attack of fever as to be wholly unable to transact naval business; until, therefore, he is convalescent it will not be possible to commence the investigation.

THE TONNAGE BILL.

MR. DONKIN (Tynemouth) asked the President of the Board of Trade whether, in the event of the new Tonnage Bill becoming law, the tonnage of those steamers of foreign countries that had practically adopted our system of measurement would be increased for paying dues in foreign ports in the same way as that of English steamers would be under the new Bill?

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: Assuming that the Tonnage Bill becomes law in the terms in which it is introduced, it will have no effect whatever on the payment of dues by foreign ships in foreign ports. No foreign country that I am aware of has adopted the *Isabella* decision as part of its tonnage laws. The measurement of tonnage under that decision would be abolished by the Bill in favour of the tonnage of the international arrangement.

MR. CRAIG: Arising out of the answer of the right hon. Gentleman will he tell us where we can get a copy of the *Isabella* decision?

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: No, Sir, I cannot; because there was no decision at all. The hon. Member is probably aware that the case was listed for hearing, but it was never actually heard. The Board of Trade was advised that it had no case.

TITHE SALES IN WALES,

MR. BOWEN ROWLANDS (Cardiganshire) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention had been called to the following paragraph in the *Echo* of Saturday last:

"Mr. Stevens, the agent of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, will next week recommence tithe sales in Wales, in Carmarthenshire and

Cardiganshire. After communicating with the Home Office the county authorities have decided to place a police force of seventy men to protect Mr. Stevens."

Whether such communication has in fact been made; and, whether any attempt had been made to come to a peaceful understanding with the tenants, and so render the presence of the police unnecessary, as had been done in other Welsh counties?

The SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (MR. MATTHEWS, Birmingham, E.); I have received no communication from the authorities of Carmarthenshire and Cardiganshire on the subject to which the paragraph refers. I have written to the chief constables of the two counties, and until I hear from them I am not in a position to say whether the facts are accurately stated, or what attempts have been made to come to a peaceful understanding.

THE INHABITED HOUSE DUTY.

MAJOR RASCH (Essex, S.E.) asked the Secretary to the Treasury whether, with reference to the petitions for alteration of assessment of Inhabited House Duty, he could place lodging-house keepers and schoolmasters on the same basis as traders?

*THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (MR. JACKSON, Leeds, N.): In view of the fact that additional taxation is necessary in the present year, it is impossible to make modifications of the existing duties which would involve a loss to the Revenue. The alteration which the hon. Member suggests is of this character. Moreover it does not stand alone, and if we are to undertake a revision of the House Duty we must await a time when it is possible to deal with the whole group of questions which would thus be opened up.

GOLD COAST—THE MURDER OF MR. DALRYMPLE AT TAVIEVE.

SIR ROBERT FOWLER asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the Government was now in receipt of a Report by the Governor of the Gold Coast, on a petition from the jurymen at Accra, before whom Bella Cobinah and Napad Sebeh were tried last August on a charge of procuring the murder of Assistant Inspector Dalrymple at

Tavie; and, if so, what action has been taken thereon; whether the Governor has been called upon to explain the discrepancies between the indictment against those two men for alleged complicity in the murder of Mr. Dalrymple, and the Governor's statement, as reported in the *Gold Coast Government Gazette*, that they, and also a third prisoner, Akoto Mamlay, an old woman, had been tried, not only for the murder of Mr. Dalrymple last May, but also for certain other murders at an earlier date; and what reply, if any, has been made to the jurymen who, in the petition referred to, urge that the Governor's statements respecting the trial at which, with the concurrence of the Judge, they acquitted the two first named prisoners, is "not only incorrect, but also untrue and unjust and without foundation," and that they have been "greatly wronged by reason of their integrity as jurors having been unjustly impugned by his Excellency and the Legislative Council endeavouring to make scapegoats of them by imputing blame to them for the consequent result of an injudicious policy and the foolish blunders committed by some official or officials?"

***BARON H. DE WORMS**: In answer to the first and third paragraphs of my hon. Friend's question, I have to say that the Secretary of State is still awaiting the receipt of the petition through the Governor with his report thereon. The delay probably arises from the fact that he has only recently returned to head quarters from a prolonged tour of inspection. In answer to the second paragraph, it was intended to proceed against these men on both charges; but on their acquittal on the first indictment, the Prosecution decided not to proceed with the second.

SCHOOL BOARD SUMMONSES.

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.), asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention had been drawn to the inconvenience and loss of time suffered by persons resident in Bethnal Green and neighbourhood, owing to School Board summonses being now taken at Dalston Police Court; and whether he would make arrangements by which they could be heard at Worship Street, as formerly?

MR. MATTHEWS: I am informed by the Chief Magistrate that he has this matter now under his consideration, and will shortly report to me upon it. I will then consider whether any new arrangement can be made by which the grievance in question can be remedied.

THE PARIS EXHIBITION.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON (Dun-dee) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the British Ambassador to France had been or would be instructed to attend the opening of the Paris Exhibition.

***SIR J. FERGUSSON**: No such instruction has been given to the Ambassador, and as we are not taking part officially in the Exhibition such an instruction will not be necessary.

WOMEN COUNTY COUNCIL ELECTORS.

MR. WALTER M'LAREN asked the Lord Advocate whether Clause 8 of the Scotch Local Government Bill meant that every County Council elector, including women, would be qualified to be elected to the County Council; and, if not, whether he would introduce words to make it clear that women electors are eligible for election?

***THE LORD ADVOCATE** (**MR. J. P. B. ROBERTSON**, Buteshire): No, Sir; the clause does not purport to state the necessary qualifications of Councilors, but only enacts a disqualification. It leaves standing the general common law as to personal qualifications for holding public offices.

MR. M'LAREN: Will the right hon. and learned Gentleman state whether the Bill will or will not enable women to vote at County Council elections?

***MR. J. P. B. ROBERTSON**: It will not enable them.

CERTIFICATION OF DEATHS.

DR. CAMERON (Glasgow, College) asked the Secretary of the Local Government Board whether his attention has been called to the fact that according to the last Report of the Registrar General 17,465 deaths occurred in England and Wales during 1887, where the cause of death was not certified by any medical attendant or coroners' inquiry; and whether, taking that fact into consideration, Government will consent to the appointment of a Select

Committee to inquire into the efficiency of the existing law as to the disposal of the dead, for securing an accurate record of the causes of death in all cases, and especially for detecting them where death may have been due to poison, violence, or criminal neglect.

MR. LONG: The proportion of deaths, where the cause of death is not certified by any medical attendant or coroner's inquiry, is steadily declining. In 1879 the proportion was 4·7 per cent, while in 1887 it was only 3·3 per cent. The proportion varies from 0·8 per cent in Middlesex (extra metropolitan) to 5·7 in Dublin, and 7·4 in Wales. The Registrar General informs me that the uncertified causes of death (including a considerable majority of cases of infants and young children) may be generally sub-divided into two classes—(1) the cases in which the deceased person has had no medical attendance during his last illness; and (2) the cases in which the attendance has been by an unqualified or unregistered practitioner. As regards the first class of cases, they are most numerous in the sparsely populated districts, where distance places a natural obstacle in the way of procuring medical attendance. The second class of cases may be subdivided. In some instances an unregistered practitioner is working on his own account, in others he is acting as the assistant or *quasi* partner of a registered practitioner, and in others the practitioner may be duly qualified, but either he is unregistered or has been removed from the register. The Registrar-General has good reason to know that a very large proportion of the cases of uncertified deaths are reported by registrars to coroners prior to their registration, although these officers, in the exercise of their discretion, decide that it is unnecessary to hold inquests. I cannot say that I think the circumstances are such as to require the appointment of a Select Committee as suggested.

DR. CAMERON: I beg to give notice that on the earliest opportunity I shall call attention to the subject, and move a Resolution upon it.

NEW MEMBER SWORN.

The hon. Edward Knatchbull-Hugessen, for the Borough of Rochester.

Dr. Cameron

MOTIONS.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (MORNING SITTINGS).

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That unless the House otherwise order, the House do meet at Two of the clock on Tuesday and Friday, and that the provisions of Standing Order 56 be extended to the Morning Sitting on those days."—(*Sir Michael Hicks Beach.*)

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar): I am sorry that the First Lord of the Treasury is not here to explain the reasons which induced him to place this Motion upon the Paper. Up to the present time the Government have always told us that the business was in arrear, and that it was necessary to appropriate the time set apart for the Motions of private Members. I do not think there is much good to be gained at this time of the Session by protesting on the part of private Members against this taking away of the whole of their time. The Government now propose to take two morning sittings, one on Tuesdays and the other on Fridays, and the Amendment I have put down upon the Paper would give the Government the whole of one night, and would reserve to private Members the whole of another night. I trust that in disposing of the question the Government will not bring in their majority to override the wishes of the House. I think it would be of advantage to private Members that the Government should have the whole of one night, and that they should have the whole of another, because, so far as private Members are concerned, the proposal of the Government in its present form would, practically, ruin two of their evenings. Every Member knows that when the Government takes a morning sitting from 1 till 7, it is almost impossible, unless the question is one of the highest importance, for a private Member to make a House at 9 o'clock. Therefore, to take morning sittings on both of the private Member's nights will be practically to ruin the two evenings devoted to private Members. If my proposal be accepted, the Government will gain something like half an hour in the length of the sitting, and will also gain in the rapidity with which they will be able to dispose of

business by having the dinner hour available. Hon. Members know very well, that during that hour a vast amount of business is generally done. Therefore, if my proposal be accepted, I believe that both the Government and the House generally will be largely benefited. The other day, when a similar proposal was made, a great objection was taken to the suspension of the 12 o'clock rule, and yet the Government now propose to suspend the 12 o'clock rule on two nights in the week. I believe that the House is disinclined to sit until 1 o'clock in the morning, and would prefer to return to the 12 o'clock rule, except in a case of urgency. I therefore suggest that the Government should take the whole of Tuesday or Friday, and leave the whole of the other day to private Members. It may be urged that it would be creating a precedent for the Government to have three days a week. but I confess that I am one of those who think that the Government ought to have three nights out of the five at its disposal. At present, the Government practically obtain them by infringing the rights of private Members, and I think it would be more convenient to fix permanently that the Government should have three nights a week. I trust that the Government will meet my proposal in a conciliatory spirit. I have proposed that the Government should take Friday, and leave Tuesday to private Members, and I have done so because I find that the motion of my hon. Friend the Member for Swansea (Mr. Dillwyn) in reference to the disestablishment of the Welsh Church is down for Tuesday next. But as between Tuesday and Friday, I have no strong opinion. I only ask that the Government should respect the rights of private Members for one night, and I believe that if they do this they will get through some business themselves, while they will still leave an opportunity to private Members to bring forward matters in which they are interested. I beg to move the Amendment of which I have given notice.

Amendment proposed, to leave out from the word "order," to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "the provisions of Standing Order 56 be extended to Friday."—(Mr. Sydney Buxton).

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

MR. DILLWYN (Swansea): In seconding the Amendment, I sincerely hope the Government will accede to the request of my hon. Friend, yet I have no strong expectation that the Government will do so, seeing how recklessly they have used their power already to take away the rights of private Members. I confess I have no great hope that they will alter their course at my solicitation, though I think I have a special claim when I make an interested appeal on behalf of the motion for which I have secured first place 14 days hence. The question I desire to raise in reference to the Established Church in Wales excites the greatest interest throughout the whole Principality, and I make a special appeal to the Government in its favour. In the very first Session of this Parliament, and at an earlier day than I have obtained this year, I succeeded in getting a first place, but afterwards that opportunity was ruthlessly taken away to meet the exigencies of public business. Many times since then I have balloted, but never have I been successful until now, and again I am balked by the Government taking away Tuesday, leaving but four hours in the evening at the disposal of private Members. Certainly, I think it is a hard fate, and, considering the interest taken throughout Wales in the subject I desire to raise, I think the Government might allow me to use the opportunity that is almost within my grasp.

*SIR G. CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy): If we must submit to something of this nature I very much prefer the proposal of the hon. Member for Poplar to that of the Government, while I think it will most conduce to economy of the time of the House and serve the Government purpose best. More business is likely to be done in an whole day than in two half days. The point also I particularly aim at is that the amendment will not trench upon the salutary twelve o'clock rule, and I am sure this wholesome rule is much appreciated. But the form in which the question is put is that the words proposed stand part of the Resolution. I must protest against this

taking by the Government of the time of private Members thus early in the Session. I know I shall be told that the Government are driven to this course by what is called obstruction, but in anticipation I protest against that, and I can aver that there has been less obstruction this Session than in any Session since I came into the House. Indeed, I think the evil connected with the congestion of business with which the House is afflicted is less unreasonable discussion than to the scamping of business insufficiently discussed. Especially I refer to the way in which Scotch business is scamped. We are continually told that we must accept Scotch Bills as they are presented to us or not at all, for there is not time to discuss them sufficiently. No doubt it is the case that the business of the House, and with it the congestion of business, is increasing. And why is this? For the reason that it is totally impossible that one House sitting as a whole can dispose of the whole legislative work of the three kingdoms, and conduct the affairs of this great Empire, dealing not only with the great principles, but all the details of every Bill, instead of proceeding by a system of delegation of labour and several Committees. I feel this to be especially the case in regard to Scotch Bills. This Session there is a large amount of business relating to Scotland, and our limited arrangements for Grand Committees are such that I am told there is no power to refer any of these Bills to a Grand Committee. We were also told the other day that the rules of the House do not provide for the reference of private Members' Bills to a Grand Committee. I do not know what authority there is for that statement, and for myself I can see no reason why Bills of all classes should not be so referred, including Scotch Bills. When the House is threatened with much Scotch business, English Members would be relieved and Scotch Members would be satisfied by referring these Bills to a Committee composed mainly, I do not say entirely, of Scotch Members. The present Government, however, have refused this concession, which was advocated by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian; hence it is that business generally is congested, and the Govern-

ment find it necessary, or make it a plea, for laying hands on the time of private Members. I altogether object to the present system, and I think that by a seasonable system of delegation, justice would be done to Scotland, and work generally would be more effective. To take away the time of private Members at this period of the Session cannot be justified. Taking away the whole time it practically is, for it is a delusion for private Members to hope to secure a proper discussion at nine o'clock.

*DR. CAMERON (Glasgow, College): I just wish to say a word or two to show that the feeling in favour of the proposition of the hon. Member for Poplar is not at all unanimous. For myself, and I can speak for a number of Members near me, I much prefer the Government proposal, for we consider that it practically gives us two chances in the week for bringing on Motions. It may not on each give opportunity for long debate, but at all events, it does allow of discussion and division. I quite admit that for a Motion such as that the hon. Member for Swansea desires to bring forward a full night's debate is required, and in reference to that if the hon. Member will move an amendment to the Government resolution excepting the Tuesday he has succeeded in securing from the operation of the resolution, I shall be happy to support him; but I do not think it is necessary on account of a single exceptional case to adopt a rule that I think would be very injurious to the interests of private Members and which would certainly greatly curtail the opportunities yet remaining for securing discussion of subjects in which we are interested. One word on the general principle of this Government monopoly of the time of the House. They do not gain anything by it. They tell us debates in Committee of Supply are unduly protracted. Of course they are, and for the simple reason that private Members cannot bring forward any subject at all unless they take the opportunity of moving a formal reduction of a vote in Committee of Supply. Look at the straits to which hon. Members are driven to obtain discussion of their hobbies. On this very Motion the hon. Member for Kirkcaldy finds an opportunity to discuss the neglect of Scotch business, and his favourite remedy of Grand

Committees, and my hon. Friend the Member for Dundee would, had he not been ruled out of order, have found a similar opportunity. As illustrating some of the difficulties of hon. Members who do not secure first place on the orders of the day, I may mention that on to-night's paper stands a Notice in the name of the hon. Member for Barrow (Mr. Caine), but which he will not be able to move because he has not taken the trouble to put the terms of his Motion on the paper—at least Mr. Speaker, I know that your predecessor was in the habit of voting that unless the specific terms were set down, a Resolution could not be moved on the General Notice to call attention to a subject. I am satisfied that a number of Members are much more favourable to the Government proposal as it stands than to the amendment. I shall vote against both, and I venture to say that if the Government succeed in carrying their resolution they will not advance business one whit, for Members will find opportunities upon Government Bills or in Committee of Supply to call attention to those matters in which they are interested, and the result will be a number of irregular discussions that certainly will not tend to advance business.

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN, St. George's, Hanover Square): We are warned that the Government will not gain by this proposal, but let me say that we are not only anxious that the Government should gain, but that the House should gain, by having full opportunity for the discussion of the business we are anxious to introduce. The hon. Member who has just spoken has said with justice that Committee of Supply is made the means of ventilating many subjects—hobbies I think he called them, but I should not use that term—subjects in which hon. Members are interested. Well, we wish to get on with Supply, and it is more or less in redemption of the pledge we are under to take Supply early in the Session that we propose this Motion to the House. The House is fully aware of the important business with which we wish to make progress, business in which hon. Members opposite take the greatest interest as well as Members on this side, and apart from progress with

this business, we wish to give opportunity for discussion on Supply, while avoiding the necessity of protracting the Session or of having recourse to an Autumn Session. It is with the view of facilitating business generally, that we submit this Motion. The hon. Member opposite suggests that it will be better to take the whole of one day, Tuesday or Friday, instead of the morning sittings on both days. We have considered that matter most carefully, both from the point of view of public business and the convenience of private Members; and I believe the view which has been expressed is correct, that by adopting this Motion private Members would possess a greater advantage, having two evenings in the week instead of one. There are some Motions so important, such as that of the hon. Member for Swansea, that they might not be sufficiently discussed in four hours, but on the whole I really believe private Members stand a better chance by accepting the proposal of the Government than by accepting that of the hon. Member who has moved the Amendment. The hon. Member for Kirkcaldy protests against the sacrifice of private Members' rights, but if the hon. Member ever has a good field day, it is on Government nights when the House is in Committee of Supply; for then the hon. Member positively revels in all and every subject that can possibly be introduced. I should have thought that if there was any Member who should be grateful to the Government for bringing on Supply early and regularly, it would be the hon. Member who is so extremely industrious in the study of every subject that comes under the cognizance of the Committee. I do not wish to argue this question by any reference to the hon. Member's observation upon obstruction. Let the present discussion be confined simply to the point as to what is best to be done under the circumstances. The Government wish to meet the desire of Members to discuss the Estimates early in the year with proper freedom, and in that sense our proposal should commend itself. I may remind the House that yesterday we obtained two votes. (Hear, hear.) Well, if this is to be considered good progress, I should like to know how many nights will be required for Supply. If that is the standard of

good progress, and the Government are refused Tuesdays and Fridays, and they are to have two days a week for four votes, how are we to be expected to legislate at all? Is it the wish of hon. Members that we should have no legislation at all? Let me call attention to the standard of progress suggested by that cheer just now, namely, that two votes in an evening is a respectable allowance from an indulgent House of Commons. I find that this year we have passed 34 votes in 12 sittings, and that is the slowest progress that has ever been made during any period with which I have been able to compare it. There have been times when 30 votes have been passed in seven days, 22 in five days, while last year 31 votes were passed in four days. This year we have taken 34 votes in 12 days. I think these figures show that the Government have not acted too early in their desire to avert the danger of being forced at the end of the Session to hurry over business in a manner discreditable to our business capacity, and with which private Members as well as the Government have every reason to be dissatisfied. I hope the House will see it is in no spirit of aggression towards the rights and opportunities of private Members that the Government submit this Motion.

MR. J. MORLEY (Newcastle): I am quite desirous, like the Chancellor of the Exchequer, to keep off the topic of obstruction, but I may be pardoned for one observation. May I suggest that, since the Chancellor of the Exchequer does not desire to discuss the question of obstruction, the representatives of the Government should drop making charges of obstruction elsewhere. There has, no doubt, been a rather tardy progress with Votes; the figures just quoted show that to some extent; but I must remind the right hon. Gentleman that we are in effect now discussing Votes in Supply which practically we have not had an opportunity of discussing for three years. ["Why?"] Because the time of the House has been so regularly and constantly taken up by the Government for their own, as we think, unfortunate measures that there has been no discussion of Votes in this Parliament until this year.

*MR. GOSCHEN: I beg pardon. Last year these very Votes, the Home Office

Votes, upon which we spent the whole of yesterday, were taken earlier in the year—April 9—and, under no pressure, were passed after a short discussion.

MR. J. MORLEY: It is quite true the Home Office Votes have been discussed at some length as compared with last year, but they came in for longer discussion owing to the passing of the Commission Bill last year, and in regard to which, rightly or wrongly, the Home Office has taken a certain part which it was the duty of the Committee to discuss this year. I should think the Home Office Vote will always from its importance take considerable time. On the particular question whether private Members would reap more advantage from the proposal of the Government than from that of my hon. Friend (Mr. Buxton), I cannot help feeling that the latter is rather in the nature of a blow at the sanctity of Friday night as a private Members' preserve. It cannot be denied, of course, that private Members would, under the motion of the Government, have two chances against one under the Amendment. Therefore, I should hardly be able to support the proposal of my hon. Friend. I wish to know, however, first, whether it is to be understood that the Government give the House a pledge that on Friday nights Supply will be put down as the first Order; secondly, whether the Government will on this occasion, when the House is meeting them so generously, undertake to make and keep a House at the evening sitting on Friday. This question I put in consequence of something that fell from the First Lord on a former occasion, when he denied, against my right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lothian, that it was the practice of Governments to give this undertaking. Thirdly, I think it would be very fair, considering how often my hon. Friend (Mr. Dillwyn) has been disappointed, if the Government were to promise to let him have his Tuesday. That would be a concession to a private Member, which would go far to soften the natural disappointment caused by the proposal of the Government.

MR. W. G. CAVENDISH BENTINCK (Penryn and Falmouth): Before the right hon. Gentleman replies, may I put a further question, whether our leaders on the front bench will do

their best to insure the keeping of a House for a reasonable time at the evening sittings on Tuesdays and Fridays. I have myself in earlier days opposed the break of two hours in our proceedings, for I know how extremely difficult it is for private Members to be in their places again exactly at nine o'clock. It was always an understood thing that the Government should do their best to be represented in sufficient numbers to keep a House for at least half an hour after nine o'clock. I believe at the present moment there are no less than thirty-seven gentlemen, who sit on the front bench, enjoying salaries, which, if they are not too high, are, at all events, extremely good, and it is part of their duty to attend to make a House on Tuesdays and Fridays. It was the opinion of no less a person than Lord Beaconsfield himself. I do not know whether my right hon. Friend, the Member for South West Kent (Sir W. Hart Dyke) is in his place, but I am quite sure he could bear out my statement that there was nothing so repugnant to the late Lord Beaconsfield as a count-out on an evening sitting reserved for private Members, and constantly, in the days when I had the honour to be a Member of the Government, we received circulars begging of Members of the Government that they would be in attendance to prevent such a scandal. I think also we have a right to ask that on Friday nights the Government should give the House the full rights of Supply—that is to say, that if the first motion should be agreed to, then some one on the Treasury Bench should immediately move, "That the House resolve itself into Committee of Supply," so that Members may have the opportunity of bringing forward their motions. In the days when Lord Ossington was Speaker, I felt it my duty to bring forward this very question, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian being then Leader of the House, and, he having declined to move that the House do resolve itself into Committee of Supply after the first Motion had been conceded, I then endeavoured to make the Motion, but was prevented by the Speaker, who said that only a member of the Government could make it. On the point being raised a second time, having regard to the changes made about the year 1860, when the motion for

adjournment over Saturday was got rid of, Lord Ossington held that it was obligatory on the Government on Friday nights to make the motion. I am quite aware that the late speaker (Lord Hampden) did not altogether assent to that doctrine, and gave opinions somewhat doubtful on the point, but, nevertheless, I think the right hon. Gentleman, if he considers all the antecedents, will agree that something ought to be done, especially when the rights of private Members are cut down to Friday nights at nine o'clock. I hope the right hon. Gentleman will carry out this plan, and that he will give us an assurance that should the first Motion as an Amendment to the Order of the Day for Supply be carried or agreed to, Supply will again be set up, so that other hon. Members having the next Motion will not be shut out.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: As I think the sense of the House is against my proposal, I will ask leave to withdraw it.

*MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton): I have not gathered quite whether a distinct pledge is given, such as was given by the First Lord when he made a similar motion before Easter, that the morning sittings should be, if not wholly devoted to Supply, at all events mainly, only trivial or formal business being taken besides.

Amendment by leave withdrawn.

*MR. GOSCHEN: In regard to the suggestion made, I cannot fall in with the proposal to make an exception of the Motion of which the hon. Member for Swansea has given notice in reference to the Established Church in Wales. If we go so far, we shall then be pressed to make further exceptions. We must abide by the general view that in four hours the hon. Member will have an opportunity, not of a long debate, but of obtaining the views of the House on this question, in which he takes so much interest. We will put down Supply as the first thing on Friday nights, exactly the same as if we had not taken a morning sitting. In reply to the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh) I must say that the Government cannot pledge themselves as absolutely as my right hon. Friend the First Lord of the Treasury did on a former occasion, to take nothing

but Supply on the days in question. The intention of the Government in asking for these days is in the main to make progress with Supply, but occasions may arise when it will be indispensable to put other business down. With regard to the suggestion of my right hon. Friend as to setting up Supply again on Friday nights, I think the present practice has worked sufficiently well. Each case has been judged upon its merits, but the discussions will proceed exactly upon the same footing as on an ordinary Supply night. As to engaging to make a House, to give absolute pledges on such matters frequently leads to misunderstanding. Disputes arise as to the extent to which the Government has come under any obligation. I am sure that the experience of the right hon. Gentleman opposite will bear me out in saying that sometimes, even when Governments have endeavoured to make a House, they have not always succeeded, and in such circumstances a charge of breach of faith is easily brought. There is sometimes a difficulty in Members of the Government themselves being in the House punctually at 9 o'clock. I have no doubt that when subjects of great interest are brought forward a House will be made, but I can give no pledges.

SIR G. TREVELYAN (Glasgow, Bridgeton): I understand from the right hon. Gentleman's speech that he has practically given the House the same pledge under the same conditions—that the morning sittings, on Tuesday and Friday, shall be given to Supply—as was given by the First Lord of the Treasury when he made a similar Motion at an early period of the Session, and which the House will allow was honourably kept.

*MR. GOSCHEN: I think I stated that I could not give an absolute pledge, and that though we wish to continue taking Supply on these occasions, circumstances may arise which will compel us to take other business.

SIR G. TREVELYAN: I hear with regret, considering the immense concession which the House is making, that the Government will not give a pledge on the subject. I feel that business will not proceed satisfactorily unless the exception to Supply on these two afternoons is very rare indeed; and the same remark will apply to the keeping of a House

in the evening. The question is whether the Government will sincerely and honourably do their best to keep a House. Everyone is aware that late on in the Session the Government itself cannot always keep a House, but Members are rather distrustful on account of what happened when the Motion of the hon. Member for the Wansbeck Division (Mr. Fenwick) fell through, the Government not having even made a pretence to keep a House, but having done their very best to destroy it. I rose principally, however, on account of the Motion of the hon. Member for Swansea. Considering what the House is doing, it is not too much to ask the Government to give a whole evening to my hon. Friend's Motion. It is a matter which interests in the highest degree the Members for a great section of this country, who have had little or no attention paid to them during the whole three years of this Parliament. Not only is that the case, but they have been treated with exceptional hardness by the Government and the House. My hon. Friend had an opportunity of raising the question in 1887 on the Address, but he was prevented by the Government using the closure. That was felt in Wales to be very hard treatment indeed, and it would do something to erase that feeling from the memory of Welshmen if the Government were generously to make the concession asked for. I believe I am speaking the mind of the House when I say that it is upon whether the Government make this concession or not to an old and honoured Member and to a great body of Members who certainly have not done anything to obstruct, that it will depend whether on this (the Opposition) side of the House the action of the Government will be received in a spirit of acquiescence in the first place, or, if we are forced by a majority to accept it, whether we shall do our best to work it with the Government in a friendly spirit.

MR. PICTON (Leicester): I am extremely surprised at the manner in which the Government have received the suggestion to exempt the Motion of the Member for Swansea (Mr. Dillwyn) from the operation of the Resolution. More consideration ought to have been shown for the claims of the Welsh people who were writhing under the outrages they are suffering owing

to the imposition upon them of an alien Church. ["Oh, oh!"] Well, the House knows what has been going on in Wales with regard to the collection of tithes. Is this a time to refuse the Welsh so obvious a concession to their national feelings as a full discussion on a motion in which they take the deepest interest? Such a refusal will have the effect of convincing the Welsh that they have nothing to expect from this House, and of encouraging them to demand Home Rule. It is on account of the claims of the Welsh people that I urge the House not to join in what I am afraid I must call a conspiracy against them, and in order that we may come to a decision on the question I beg to move to insert in the Motion after the word "Friday" the words "except on Tuesday, May 14th."

Amendment proposed, after the word "Friday," to insert the words "except on Tuesday the 14th May"—(*Mr. Pictou.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

*MR. BOWEN ROWLANDS (Cardiganshire): In seconding the Amendment I desire to urge the just claims of the Welsh people to be considered in this matter. No one can say that the Welsh Members have done anything to obstruct the business of the House; indeed I doubt whether they have adequately discharged their duty in bringing Welsh grievances before the House. But whenever a Welsh question is raised, honourable Members on the other side justify the claim of this House, to legislate for Wales, as well as England, either by leaving the House, or by engaging in conversation as they are now doing. The hon. Member for Swansea has not only been prevented by the application of the closure from bringing on this Motion on one former occasion, but on another occasion, on which he obtained a day by ballot, the Government intervened, and took it away from him. The question is one of great importance, and even if hon. Members regard the question as absurd, one would think they would be desirous of a full debate in order that they may expose its absurdity before a larger House than is likely to be found at an evening sitting

after a morning sitting. The Government have displayed an entire absence of chivalry in regard to this motion, while the neglect of the question with which it deals has led to scenes distressing to everyone in Wales.

MR. E. SWETENHAM (Carnarvon, &c.): I confess I feel very strongly on this subject, because I know the deep interest taken by the people of Wales in the Motion which is to be brought forward on the 14th May by the Member for Swansea. I trust that the Government may yet be able to accede to the proposal of the Amendment by giving a longer time for this debate than will be afforded if the rule now proposed is adopted. This is an exceptional case. I am afraid that the Government will reply that they cannot make a concession in this case, because, if they do, equally powerful applications may be made on future occasions, and they would not then be able to resist them. I entirely feel that there is a great deal in that answer, but at the same time I feel that this is not the first occasion on which the Motion of my hon. Friend has met with a premature death, and I therefore hope and trust that the House will allow a full and ample discussion to take place on this important subject. I am sure that not only Wales, but England, will look forward with great interest and anxiety to the result of this discussion, which I trust will be such as to make the people of Wales feel that they have not been dealt harshly with by the House and the Government, but that at all times every subject connected with them will have full and free discussion and ample consideration.

*SIR HUSSEY VIVIAN (Swansea, District): I hope that the Government will accede to the Amendment. It is possible that the Government may allege that they cannot make this concession for fear that others will be forced upon them. But before they can make that out they will require to show that there is any other question in the same position as this. In the first place, the Member for Swansea lost his chance and was shut out from the discussion of this question by the application of the closure on the Address. Then he fortunately secured, by the ballot, the first place on a Tuesday; but three days before the Motion could be made, that

day was taken from him in spite of the appeals of the Welsh Members to the Leader of the House. On that ground alone I do not think the Government can be met by any similar proposal to that now before the House. But, moreover, there are not two Welsh Churches nor two Wales's. There is no other nationality that could appeal to the House to redress its grievances in the same manner as Wales, and therefore there is no possible similar appeal to that which we are now making. Do the Welsh Members obstruct the business of the House? Do they make motions likely to take up the time of the House? Why, their voices are very rarely heard, and surely when they bring forward a question that so vitally affects the Principality, some consideration is due to them. This question moves to the very bottom the feeling of our constituents, and hon. Gentlemen know how, very rarely by the fortune of the ballot, private Members can obtain an opportunity of bringing forward a question, and how hard it is that when they do obtain an opportunity it should be taken from them. Surely the Government will not expose themselves to all that may be said—and indeed has been said—by taking away all the time that Welsh Members have of bringing forward questions so vitally interesting to them. I appeal to the Government to reconsider their decision and accept this most reasonable Amendment. In their own interest it is important that the Chancellor of the Exchequer should do so. The hon. Member for the Carnarvon Boroughs has just spoken in the sense in which I am speaking. That hon. Member knows the feelings of the Welsh people, and must be accepted as an adviser of the Government in their own interest. The Government cannot suppress and trample upon the feelings of a nation. Wales is a positive nation, and they cannot trample her down, nor is it their interest to do so. In the last Parliament the Conservative Members from Wales could have come down to this House in a hansom cab. Now they would require a four-wheeler. It was not always so, and why is it so now? Because there is a strong feeling running through Wales that it does not sufficiently command the attention of Parliament. If the Government desire

to act in their own interest they will accept this Amendment.

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Sir M. HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): The Government would be much more disposed to accept the Amendment if supported in the spirit of my hon. Friend the Member for Carnarvon than as it was put by the right hon. Member for the Bridgeton Division, who threatens the Government in so many words that if they do not accept the Amendment ["Oh, oh," and Ministerial cheers]—well, he said that if it were not accepted he would not consider the Resolution in a friendly spirit; in other words, that he would not facilitate the business of the House by doing that which the House has resolved to do. It is really too hard to be told that we are trampling on the spirit of a nation because we do not give seven hours instead of four to the discussion of one matter affecting Wales. The Government feel that they are simply precluded from accepting this proposition by the exigencies of the occasion. As my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer has said it is impossible not to see that if we were to give a whole sitting to the discussion of the Welsh Church we should be met with similar demands. Only this evening I understand a Motion has been set down with reference to the Disestablishment of the Scotch Church. Will any one say that is less important than the Disestablishment of the Welsh Church? I do not think the importance of a debate is to be measured by the number of hours it occupies. Those who listened to the miserable waste of time in the debate of six hours last night on the salary of my right hon. Friend, may find in this Motion an opportunity for the Welsh Members to set an example to the House, by showing that a really important subject can be properly discussed within reasonable limits of time.

*MR. T. ELLIS (Merionethshire): Sir, this is not at all a case of giving four hours instead of seven. It is a case of giving an opportunity to the Welsh Members of discussing this question, which has been only discussed in this House for four hours on any occasion. In 1886 my hon. Friend obtained first place, but on that occasion the private business continued until eight o'clock, so that there were only four hours for

the discussion of the question. Take the first hour and a quarter for the mover and seconder of the Resolution, and then another hour and a quarter for the mover and seconder of the Amendment in this case (two English Members, who no doubt feel a very great interest in the Welsh Church) and again take an hour and a quarter for right hon. Gentlemen on this and on that side of the House (and if they compress their remarks into an hour and a quarter it is a feat which they seldom perform), and allow another quarter of an hour for the divisions, the four hours are filled up, after only two Welsh Members have had an opportunity of speaking on the question. Even the hon. Members for the Carnarvon or Denbigh boroughs who wish to say something with regard to the question of the Church in Wales will not have a chance to say a word. I think the Chancellor of the Exchequer admitted that this question is of first-rate importance, and I should think he will admit further, that, as compared with the motions fixed for various dates during the next month, it has distinct pre-eminence. I will further say, in reply to the argument of two of the right hon. Gentlemen who have spoken, that the successful Members in respect of motions for the next month sit on this side of the House, and I believe only one hon. Member opposite—the Member for Preston—has a motion standing in his name. It has relation to the rating of machinery, a subject which has been repeatedly before the House of Commons, and for which I should think the hon. Member would gladly accept four hours. In view of the pre-eminence of the subject, and in view of the fact that the Government has on two previous occasions taken from my right hon. Friend the fortunate position which he had obtained by the ballot, and in view of the fact that hon. Members on this side of the House who have Motions for discussion in this month, are willing to forego their claims for seven hours, I again appeal to the Government to grant this privilege to my hon. Friend the Member for Swansea.

MR. JAMES ROWLANDS (East Finsbury) : I think that by this time the Government ought to have arrived at the conclusion that the claim of the Welsh Members should be conceded. The Welsh Members do not trouble the

House, possibly not as much as they might do, certainly not as much as they will do, if their legitimate requests in future are treated in the same manner as this one is being treated by the Government. They have asked the Government to concede to them three hours on a most important question, which at the present time they are pressing before this House. The Government have declined to let them have the three hours which they ask for. And as an inducement to proceed speedily with Supply, we get a speech from the President of the Board of Trade, who tells us that last night was simply wasted on the Vote for the Home Office. [Sir M. H. BEACH : Hear, hear.] The right hon. Gentleman says "hear, hear." I say that if the Government throw out such insinuations as that they cannot expect to proceed very rapidly with Supply. Now, I was present during the greater part of last night—a longer time than he was—and if the right hon. Gentleman will allow me I will enumerate the questions dealt with on that Vote of the Home Office. First there was a debate, which, perhaps, did not take so long as it ought to have done, with regard to the police stations of London, raised by my hon. Friend the Member for Bethnal Green. Will the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade say that that debate was a waste of time, seeing that it involved a question of grave importance to the people of London? Then there was a discussion raised by the junior Member for Northampton with regard to the Truck Question. That was a debate which, but for the candid action of the right hon. Gentleman and his colleague, would have taken longer than it did last night. Then there was the question with regard to Civil Servants and *employés* at the Home Office. Was that not a question of vital importance? It was dealt with by both Benches as if it were. I simply indicate these as some of the points raised on the Vote of the Home Office—questions which must be dealt with thoroughly whenever the Vote comes forward, and which will be dealt with more thoroughly in the future than ever they have been dealt with in the past. I do hope right hon. Gentlemen opposite will not cast slurs upon hon. Members on this side. It was the only opportunity we had during the twelve months of

raising questions in connection with the Home Office, and it is a slur upon hon. Members who raise them to say that they are wasting the time of the House. Unless we are to understand that the closure is to be applied before any discussion, we shall, in spite of the slurs, continue these debates. I trust the Government will concede the request of the Welsh Members, so that they shall have full opportunity of discussing the disestablishment of the Welsh Church. Only those conversant with the feeling of the Welsh people can understand how strong a spirit actuates the Welsh people in asking that this subject should be adequately discussed. Is it that the right hon. Gentlemen opposite are afraid to vote upon this question? It has been pointed out that a four wheeler will contain the Welsh Conservative Members coming to this House, and if they do not concede to the Welsh Members the request they are now making, possibly only a two and not a four wheeler would bring to the House all the Conservative Welsh Members after the next election.

The House divided: Ayes, 118; Noes, 188.—(Div. List, No. 86.)

Main Question again proposed.

*MR. H. H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton, East): I do not wish to detain the House for more than a few minutes from deciding this Question, but I wish to make my protest, even if it be an unavailing one, against the resolution of the Government to which the House is just about to agree. The Chancellor of the Exchequer said just now, "The question before the House is what is best to be done under the circumstances of the case," and, for my part, I do not think that to pass this resolution is the best thing to do under the circumstances. I do not complain of the way in which the Government conduct the business of the House, but this resolution is being passed practically in order to give greater facilities for Committee of Supply, and I wish to enter my protest against the way in which the business of Supply is now being conducted. It does not promote public economy or the efficient control of the House over the public expenditure, and, these resolutions which are passed year after year simply as stop-gaps do not facilitate the real settlement of

this question; they put off the evil day, and do not tend to raise the House of Commons in the public estimation in regard to the matter of public expenditure. Last year a strong Committee was appointed on the motion of the Government for the purpose of considering the procedure in Committee of Supply, and that Committee recommended the House to try an experiment with reference to the Civil Service Estimates which would tend to the economy of time and promote a better control by the House over expenditure. Nothing has been done upon the report of that Committee, and I think we are entitled to ask Her Majesty's Government whether, before taking the time of the House in order to make more opportunities for Committee of Supply, they will not give us some indication as to what is their view with regard to this question of procedure in Supply. The proposal of the Committee I refer to was that a Committee should be appointed—a large Committee—for the purpose of dealing with the Civil Service Estimates. I would point out that the time we are asked to place at the disposal of the Government is not for the purpose of getting on with the Military and Naval Votes, but in order that they may make progress with the Civil Service Votes, and perhaps the functions of the House of Commons are less wanted in regard to the Civil Service than in the case of either of the other great spending departments. The House may be, and is, called upon to discuss great questions of policy connected with the Army and Navy, but as far as the Civil Service expenditure is concerned, such questions rarely arise. The House will be surprised to hear that during a period of 21 years all the discussions that have taken place in Committee of Supply have not resulted in a saving of £50,000. I think, therefore, seeing that last Session we spent 38 days in Supply, and this Session after spending 12 days we have hardly more than commenced the Civil Service Votes, we are justified in asking if the time has not arrived when the House should consider whether the principle of devolution should not be applied to the Civil Service Estimates as well as to other matters. It should be remembered that we are not only the guardians of the public purse, but we are

also the trustees of the public time; and that is a very precious possession. (Several hon. MEMBERS: "Hear, hear.") I do not know whether those cheers are intended to be approving or ironical cheers; but I for one am not content to see the time of the House wasted for any purpose whatsoever, and as far as our discussions in Committee of Supply are concerned, I say that—not, perhaps, owing to the fault of any section of the Opposition, but owing to the way in which our business is conducted—we do waste a great deal of valuable time, which might be more beneficially employed in dealing with important public questions that are yet awaiting solution. I am not about to propound any scheme of my own in regard to procedure in Supply, but I do say that the present method does not produce anything like an economical result as far as the public expenditure is concerned; and I want to ask Her Majesty's Government whether they think it is yet too late to consider the recommendations of the Select Committee of last Session that they should try the experiment as to whether they cannot improve our present mode of dealing with the Civil Service Estimates. Without saying anything that may be considered satirical in regard to any individual Member, I have known the time of the House to be wasted sometimes for hours in the discussion of a very insignificant item of expenditure, which, if the House of Commons only had confidence in a Committee of its own, might have been settled upstairs in as many minutes. I may add that I am content to accept this proposal of the Government as a stop-gap, but I would warn Her Majesty's Government that this stop-gap will by no means prove a final settlement of the question. The question is not a party one, but it concerns the efficiency of our Parliamentary Government.

MR. MUNRO FERGUSON (Leith Burghs): I certainly think that some protest is necessary against the general system of the management of business in this House, and especially with regard to the conduct of Committee of Supply. Since the extension of the franchise in 1885 there has been a closer attendance of Members, an increase in the demands of the people, and also in the influence of the National Party in

Ireland. In order to deal with the difficulty, the attempt must be made in one of several ways—either by enforcing the closure, by prolonging the sittings of the House, by taking the whole of the time of the House as has been proposed to-day, or by the adoption of a system of delegation to Standing Committees upstairs. In the American House of Representatives, with 315 Members, there are something like 40 Standing Committees, and it may become necessary in this country to adopt the same principle. I think it is idle to accuse the legislative machine of failure because the Opposition have criticized the Estimates. So long as Estimates are submitted to the House, it will be, I imagine, the duty of hon. Members to consider and discuss them. I hope that the Government will be able to provide some satisfactory means of meeting the difficulty.

*SIR J. GOLDSMID (St. Pancras, S.): So far as my experience goes, I have noticed that hon. Members, and especially new Members, are nowadays inclined to repeat over and over again the discussions which have taken place in Committee of Supply in former years, without bringing in any new fact or supplying any new information, the only result having been a waste of the time of the House. I believe that in the French Chamber a Committee settles all the Estimates; and I am satisfied that so far as we are concerned the time will come, and come very soon, when we shall have to give up these long and weary discussions of the Estimates in Supply, and shall have to consider them in Committee upstairs. I venture to say that in that case not one-half the time will be spent which is now devoted to the consideration of the Estimates, for I am afraid that a good many Members now discuss them simply for the purpose of showing their activity to their constituents rather than that they possess any special knowledge of the subjects they discuss. If a Committee were selected composed of practical men accustomed to administrative work, they would be able to go through the Civil Service Estimates with care, and there would be no necessity for a discussion in Committee of Supply afterwards. But if hon. Members only desire to amuse themselves upstairs and then to raise the discussion again downstairs, no

advantage will be gained by referring the Estimates to a Committee. Such discussions are not allowed in the French Chamber, and they ought not to be permitted to take place here. I trust that before next Session the Government will carefully consider whether some new plan cannot be devised.

SIR J. KENNAWAY (Devonshire, Honiton): I think we are indebted to the right hon. Gentleman opposite for bringing this question before the House at the present time. I did not understand him to find any fault with the way in which the Government have conducted Supply, but I do foresee that if we are to go on as we have been doing this Session, we shall find ourselves in this position at the end of July, that it will be necessary to resort to summary measures in August and September, or we shall have to sit again up to Christmas Eve. I may remind the House that last year we passed in one night Estimates which have occupied 12 nights in discussion this year. I would therefore make an earnest appeal to the Government to deal with the matter if it is possible this Session, and at any rate to consider what is to be done in the future.

*MR. BUCHANAN (Edinburgh, W.): I hope it will not be concluded from the remarks which have already been made that the opinion of hon. Members on this side of the House is absolutely unanimous. I was a Member of the Committee of which the right hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. Fowler) was also a Member, and I was one of the few Members of the Committee who belonged neither to the present nor to the past Government. The Committee was mainly composed of right hon. Gentlemen who regarded the question from the point of view of Members of the Government, either *in esse* or *in posse*. I ventured to put before the Committee then that there is value to be attached to a discussion of the Estimates in Supply quite apart from the question of a reduction of expenditure. We value it because it sometimes gives us an opportunity of considering questions of policy and administration, together with questions of a social and political character which interest the community generally. It is not fair to take as the only test of the economical value of the discussions the reductions of

expenditure actually carried in the House of Commons, but rather what the result is so far as subsequent Estimates are affected. For instance, a discussion takes place this year either in regard to the extravagance of a Department or the way in which a money vote is distributed, and you find the result of the discussion not in the Division List, but in the Estimates submitted subsequently to the House of Commons. Above all, we are afforded an opportunity of calling the administration of the various Departments by the Government to account. As a Scotch Member, representing only a small group of Members in this House, I think I am bound to attach particular value to these discussions. It is practically the only opportunity we have for discussing questions connected with the administration of the law, and questions of policy relating to Scottish matters, which cannot be expected to interest the whole body of Members of the House. I am, therefore, perfectly certain that if the Government were to embark in any general scheme to limit discussions in Supply they would receive strenuous opposition from this side of the House, and would not tend to economise either the public time or money.

*MR. STAVELEY HILL (Staffordshire, Kingswinford): As a Member of the Committee, I wish to support the views of the hon. Member for West Edinburgh (Mr. Buchanan). So far as the amount of a Vote is concerned, it may well be dealt with by a Committee upstairs; but I should altogether deprecate any proposal to hand over to a Committee upstairs any question as to the policy of the Vote. As far as the amount of the Vote is concerned, it may be true, so that during the last 21 years a sum of £50,000 only has been saved as the result of the discussions which have taken place in this House; but though the effect of the discussion has not been shown in the reduction of the Vote, it has been manifested in the course which the Government have taken in preparing subsequent Estimates.

SIR W. HARCOURT (Derby): I must say that I agree very much with the remarks both of my hon. and learned Friend the Member for Kingswinford and the hon. Member for West Edinburgh. Certainly I can have no prejudice against any attempt

to lighten the work of the House by referring the Estimates to a Committee upstairs. I myself made that proposal to the Government in 1886 in Committee upon the Procedure Bill. I was unfortunately defeated on that occasion by a majority which consisted principally of right hon. Gentlemen sitting on the Front Bench opposite. The President of the Board of Trade was the principal opponent of the scheme, and if I remember rightly, the present First Lord of the Treasury and the Chancellor of the Exchequer also opposed it. I quite agree that Committee of Supply has not merely or even principally to do with the matter of money. If it were a mere money question it might well be sent to a Committee upstairs; but the various Votes involve questions of principle. I do not think that a Committee sitting upstairs would effect any more than has been accomplished by the efficient public servants we possess or by successive Secretaries to the Treasury, who have worked hard to keep down expenditure. The growth of the Civil Service expenditure is hardly perceptible. When we consider the enormous additions made to public service from year to year in order to meet the demands of the House of Commons, it is amazing what a control is exercised over the Civil Service expenditure. As regards mere expenditure, I do not think the House of Commons can do much in reducing it; and the main use of discussion in Committee of Supply is that it affords opportunity for the examination of administration in all departments; but it is quite impossible that that could be undertaken by a Committee sitting upstairs, which naturally would be under the control of the Government, who would be sure to have a majority upon it in one form or another. Therefore a decision upon any question affecting administration that would debar the full House from considering it would be deemed to be most inconvenient; nor did the Liberal Government contemplate that there should not be a power of reviewing in the House every item of Civil Service expenditure. I cannot agree with any proposal which would have the effect of depriving the House of Commons of the power of discussing administrative subjects.

MR. GOSCHEN: The right hon. Gentleman must be grateful to those Members of the Committee who then opposed that to which now he is also opposed.

SIR W. HARCOURT: Not altogether. I should have no objection to a preliminary examination by a Committee upstairs, and I still think that proposal a good one, although I think there should be reserved to the House absolute power to discuss any question arising upon the Estimates. That was my proposal.

MR. GOSCHEN: It appears to me that the process would be an absolute lengthening of the labours of the House. While, as I understand the desire is by a Committee to relieve the House of some of its functions, the House will see from the perfectly natural and legitimate remarks of the right hon. Gentleman how very difficult it is for the Government to take any steps to withdraw from the House the full consideration of all questions of administration. The Government is deeply indebted to the right hon. Member for Wolverhampton for the remarks he has made; I think they are extremely valuable. It is perfectly patent that a financial examination of the Estimates has become subordinate to, and is entirely vanishing in, administrative criticism; and yet the machinery has been devised and maintained with a view to financial rather than administrative criticism. It is on this account that Members may speak several times on the same Vote. Therefore, forms and methods which have been adopted in order to secure financial control are used for purposes for which they were not originally intended, or for which they were intended only in a subordinate sense. As an hon. Member has said, it is not only as custodians of the public purse, but also as critics of the administration and of the policy of the Government that Members speak in Committee of Supply. At the same time it can only be with the full assent and concurrence of the House that the Government can take any step to limit the discussions to the primary object of financial control. I notice that in foreign countries Budgets and Estimates pass with extraordinary rapidity, and that is because the criticism is

confined to financial questions. If opportunity is to be taken in Committee of Supply to attack every Minister and to devote one or two evenings to the consideration of his conduct, it will be absolutely necessary to take radical measures to keep such discussions within reasonable limits, and to secure the despatch of business. The Government are perfectly disposed, with the assistance of the House, to make any experiment which they think is at all likely to succeed; but they have received information, and it has been corroborated by what has fallen from several hon. Members, that it would not be satisfactory to relegate the discussion of the Estimates to a Committee upstairs, if this in any way limited the privileges of hon. Members as to raising discussions in the House itself. The Government are perfectly sensible that the motion they are proposing is a stopgap and that it is not a satisfactory stopgap, and they will continue to give their full attention to the larger questions, as they invite right hon. Gentlemen and hon. Members opposite to do. I quite understand that Ministers and ex-Ministers may differ from those who have not held office; but the views of all must be taken into consideration; and I trust the Government may be able at an early date, possibly next Session, again to submit proposals to remove what all on both sides of the House consider to be the present unsatisfactory state of things.

DR. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W.): I must say that from my point of view, the opportunities now afforded to private Members for the discussion of matters which are of importance to their constituents are quite few enough, and if the scheme which has been shadowed out to-night by one or two speakers were adopted, they would find themselves almost entirely extinguished. At present it is only in Committee of Supply that we are able to discuss important questions which deeply concern the welfare of our constituents. I think that every private Member ought to protest emphatically against any attempt to apply a further closure. It is impossible to apply any merely statistical test, but the indirect results of discussions in Committee of Supply in removing abuses and in checking expenditure have been very

great. As a private Member I have thought it my duty to make these brief remarks.

The House divided:—Ayes 203; Noes 102. (Div. List, No. 87.)

"Resolved that, unless the House otherwise order, the House do meet at 2 of the clock on Tuesday and Friday, and that the provisions of Standing Order 56 be extended to the Morning Sitting on those days."

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (REPORT OF SUPPLY AND WAYS AND MEANS.)

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That the Reports of the Committees of Supply, and of Ways and Means, may be entered upon at any hour, though opposed, and the Proceedings thereon shall not be interrupted under the provisions of any Standing Order regulating the Sittings of the House, except of Standing Order No. 5. But, after such proceedings are disposed of, no opposed business shall be taken"—(*Sir Michael Hicks Beach*.)

*SIR W. BARTELOT (Sussex, North-West): I would like to say a few words before the question is put. I am quite prepared to support the Government, even on this proposal, if they will state clearly and distinctly that it is necessary, in order that they may finish the important business they have in hand before the 15th of August. I am sure the House will do all it can to accelerate business so as to avoid another mischievous Autumn Session. But I must point out that we are breaking through one of the main conditions imposed by the House when the Rules were altered. We now come down an hour earlier than we did before. We are quite willing to support the Government by every means in our power, but I think they ought to consider the health of hon. Members and give them an opportunity of getting to bed at a reasonable hour. We are now breaking through a Rule which we were promised—and I was the means of extracting that promise—should never be broken through, except on most urgent occasions, that is to say when great debates were going on which it was necessary to finish. I feel somewhat strongly upon this subject; and I think we ought not to agree to this Resolution without a strong protest against the loss of the power to save ourselves from the disgraceful scenes which frequently occur when the House sits after midnight.

SIR G. CAMPBELL: I think the appropriate and fitting protest which we have just heard comes excessively well from the hon. Baronet. By the Resolution just agreed to, the House has practically extended its sittings up to one o'clock, and by the present Motion it is proposed to extend them to an indefinite period. For my own part I would rather sit a little later in the Session and have an opportunity of going to bed at a decent time than sit up till all hours during the Session in order to obtain a somewhat earlier prorogation.

MR. COGHILL (Newcastle-under-Lyme): I am strongly opposed to this proposed interference with the 12 o'clock rule, which worked admirably last Session. When the House sits after midnight, it is simply a question of physical endurance, and of who can stop out of bed the longest. It is really imposing upon our constituents to take credit for these late sittings, because we cannot legislate properly after 12 o'clock at night. Of the hon. Members who remain in the House after that hour a great part have lost their tempers, and of those who have not the greater number are fast asleep. I do not think we ought to sit after 12 o'clock at all. I do not take the same view with regard to Autumn Sessions as the hon. Baronet (Sir W. Barttelot). I think we ought to have Autumn Sessions—that we ought to rise early in August or even in July, and meet again in the autumn. If we do not do this we have six or seven months in which the House does not sit at all, and the business of the State is then administered not by the Ministers but by the permanent officials, who really govern the country. We may have every confidence in Ministers, and I think we have, but I do not think we have the same confidence in the permanent officials. But, whether we have an Autumn Session or not, I think that in the interest of the health of all who are concerned in the proceedings of this House we ought to resist most strenuously the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman to extend the sittings of the House beyond 12 o'clock.

*MR. GOSCHEN: I think there must be some misapprehension in the mind of the last speaker with regard to the scope of this proposal. It is not proposed that we should legislate after 12

or 1 o'clock, but merely to take report of Supply and report of Ways and Means after that time. There are many occasions when these reports are taken without any debate at all, and, in the case of a repetition of the discussions that have taken place in Committee we propose to take them after the usual hour for adjournment.

MR. COGHILL: May I remind the right hon. Gentleman that on one occasion quite recently, on report of Supply, we were kept here till nearly four o'clock in the morning?

*MR. GOSCHEN: Yes; and that may happen again. That was an occasion when it was absolutely necessary to pass a particular vote within the financial year, and the law would have been broken unless the House had been willing to make the sacrifice. It was an isolated case, and it is with a view to such isolated cases that we put this proposal before the House, and certainly not with any intention that we should frequently sit late. It certainly is not intended that we should have a repetition of the tremendous strain involved in the late hours of previous sessions. I can assure my hon. Friend behind me (Sir W. Barttelot) that we do not intend to put any further strain upon Members of the House than is absolutely necessary. We are deeply grateful to hon. Members on this side of the House for the constant attendance they have given under most arduous and difficult circumstances, and for a length of time such as has never been called for on previous occasions. We are most anxious to avoid an Autumn Session. There is no class of members who more desire to avoid an Autumn Session than the Ministers of the Crown. We are most anxious to avoid any of those extraordinary occurrences which happened last year and the year before. I may say that the country is not in the hands of the permanent officials during the time that Parliament is in recess, and that it is important that ministers should have some months at their disposal for carrying on the work of their departments in a more consecutive manner than is possible whilst the House is sitting. It is quite proper, as my hon. and gallant Friend has contended, that Ministers should have time for the preparation of their measures. We feel the force of

that, and we trust that with the co-operation of the House we may be able to avoid that Autumn Session which I know he regrets so much.

SIR W. HARCOURT: I quite agree with the right hon. Gentleman that the hon. Member for Newcastle-under-Lyme (Mr. Coghill) seemed to be under the misapprehension that he was sitting on the Ministerial instead of on the Opposition Benches. A gentleman who declares his unlimited confidence in Her Majesty's Government would more appropriately find a seat on the Government Benches. It is not the business of an Opposition to have unlimited confidence in the Government, and on the whole I have more confidence in the permanent officials than in Her Majesty's present Administration. I also entirely concur with the right hon. Gentleman in condemning the hon. Member for Newcastle-under-Lyme for desiring an Autumn Session. There is nothing I less desire than an Autumn Session. I wish that the Ministers will have the longest possible time for considering their measures, and I will do everything to insure that result. But is it necessary that the Government should press the Motion at this moment? No occasion for it has arisen. The Motion applies to Report of Supply, and it will have the effect of breaking through a very valuable rule, which, according to promise, was not to be broken through except in cases of special necessity. The Session is yet young, and I do not think that any special necessity is raised by Report of Supply. If, later on, it should appear that any inconvenience is arising to the Government from their not being able to get Report of Supply, it will be time enough to make this unusual application. The Government ought not to complain that a greater amount of time is taken in Committee of Supply, because two additional Morning Sitzings have been granted to them expressly for that purpose.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: I do not know that I can add much to what my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer has said, but I would point out the difficulty in which the Government will be placed if the proposal is not acceded to. It is suggested that the proposal may be postponed, but the Government do not wish to be continually coming to the House with proposals for altering the rules, or for giving them more

time in order to make the necessary progress with business. The House has granted additional time for the transaction of proceedings in Committee of Supply, but what may happen under the rule at present? When votes agreed to in Committee are reported to the House the objection of a single Member after 12 o'clock will be sufficient to prevent the consideration of the report. Then it will be necessary that the report should be placed first on the Paper next day, with the result that a fresh discussion may arise, which would never have arisen if it had not been in the power of a single Member to object to the report stage being taken at the previous sitting. The Government would thus be deprived of no inconsiderable part of the time to be devoted to the consideration of Supply. That is the reason which has induced the First Lord of the Treasury to place the Motion on the Paper; and the Government have not the least intention of utilizing the Resolution for the purpose of regularly keeping the House up to an unreasonable hour. Power will be resorted to very rarely for the purpose of any real discussion on the Report of Supply, for there is no desire to get rid of the 12 o'clock rule by its means.

MR. S. BUXTON: I should like to ask the right hon. Gentleman if he can point to any occasion on which one or two Members have practically prevented the Government getting Report of Supply. The objection we find to this proposal is not so much that we may have to sit beyond 12 o'clock, but the state of uncertainty as to when the House will rise on the particular evenings when Report of Supply is put down. The great advantage of the 12 o'clock Rule is not so much that we rise at 12 o'clock, but that it gives hon. Members almost the absolute certainty that at a specified time they will be able to go home. The great drawback of the old system was that even if we went to bed early we did not know that we were really getting to bed early. I trust the Chancellor of the Exchequer will give some heed to the protest made on this side of the House against the present proposal. He has himself whittled down the proposal so that at the present moment it seems perfectly unnecessary. It would be only courteous to the general feeling of the House if now, when we

have given additional time to the Government, they would yield on this small point.

The House divided :—Ayes 183 ; Noes 114.—(Div. List, No. 88.)

Resolved, that the Reports of the Committees of Supply, and of Ways and Means, may be entered upon at any hour, though opposed, and the proceedings thereon shall not be interrupted under the provisions of any Standing Order regulating the sittings of the House, except of Standing Order No. 5. But, after such proceedings are disposed of, no opposed business shall be taken.

EAST INDIA (ABKARI DEPARTMENT).

*MR. S. SMITH (Flintshire): I rise for the purpose of calling attention to the motion which stands in my name, and of moving the following resolution—

“That, in the opinion of this House, the fiscal system of the Government of India leads to the establishment of spirit distilleries, liquor and opium shops in large numbers of places where till recently they never existed, in defiance of Native opinion and the protests of the inhabitants, and that such increased facilities for drinking produce a steadily increasing consumption, and spread misery and ruin among the industrial classes of India, calling for immediate action on the part of the Government of India with a view to their abatement.”

I make no apology for again calling the attention of the House to this most important question. It will be in the recollection of hon. Members that the question was raised last year in a somewhat confused form. It was raised upon a Motion dealing with another question, and the result was that the House was not able to pass a clear and distinct judgment upon it. I was told by some hon. Members that owing to that fact they were not able to vote for the motion last year, but I hope that they will be able to give their support to the Resolution which I am about to submit to-night. The question is now raised in a distinct form. We challenge the whole policy of the Indian Government in regard to the administration of the Excise laws; and it is now my duty to call attention to a Despatch issued in 1887, which forms the official justification of the Indian Government for the system which now prevails in that country. That Despatch is altogether incorrect and misleading. I believe that I shall be able to show that the figures on

which it is founded are altogether fallacious, and it will be my duty to traverse the whole of the allegations contained in it. One would be disposed, upon reading the Despatch, to suppose that the Indian Government are a great temperance society, and that their main object has been to diminish as far as possible the evil of intoxication; that the revenue has been quite a secondary consideration, and that what was mainly thought of was the moral condition of the people. The Despatch, which is dated August 8th, 1887, says:—

“Your Lordship is aware that few subjects connected with Revenue Administration have of recent years obtained greater attention at the hands of the Government than questions relating to Excise Administration. In each of the three larger Governments, Bombay, Madras, and Bengal, the Excise system has, within the last six or seven years, been completely examined in its operation and in its effects. These examinations have been made under the instruction of the Local Governments, and in direct communication with us; and the principles on which they have been based, and which have been unanimously accepted by all the authorities concerned, have been these; that liquor should be taxed and consumption restricted, as far as it is possible to do so without imposing positive hardships upon the people and driving them to illicit manufacture. The facts now placed on record show that in this policy the Local Governments have been completely successful, and that the great increase of Excise Revenue in recent years, which the Congress take as evidence of the spread of drinking habits, really represents a much smaller consumption of liquor, and an infinitely better regulated consumption than the smaller revenue of former years.”

I believe that I shall be able entirely to shatter that statement to pieces. There has been an increase of revenue in recent years from £2,300,000 to £4,200,000, and the contention of the Indian Government is that that increase of revenue is obtained from increased duties and a decreased consumption. These are the things upon which we desire to join issue. The despatch says:—

“Drunkenness, in the English sense of the term, hardly exists in India. Writers, whose comparisons are based on Oriental experience, describe as drunkenness and as spread of misery and ruin a condition of things which, if it existed in England, would be regarded almost as a millennium of temperance. The average consumption in India is only a bottle or a bottle and a-half of spirits a year for every adult male, and in some provinces is even less than that.”

These two paragraphs will give the

House some idea of the substance of this despatch. The statements contained in it are utterly unfounded and altogether opposed to universal public opinion in India. Three years ago I travelled there and met all classes and conditions of people, but I never met one who did not lament the rapid spread of the consumption of intoxicating liquors. The hon. Member for Barrow (Mr. Caine) was there last year, and will be able to confirm all that I say. Every opinion confirms the astonishing increase in the consumption of spirits within the last few years, and the statistics collected by the Government of India itself utterly confute the statements contained in the despatch of 1887. In proof of my allegation I will, first of all, cite the statement of the late Keshub Chunder-Sen, the great social reformer, who said—

“It is indeed harrowing and painful to contemplate the extent to which sensuality, profligacy, and brutal revels on the one hand, and irreligion, blasphemy, and practical atheism on the other, are making ravages among all classes of the native community in consequence of the spread of drunkenness, and undermining the religious and moral life of the nation . . . In short, the use of intoxicating liquor has done more than anything else to degrade the physical, moral, and social condition of my countrymen, and has proved a stupendous obstacle in the path of reformation.”

Contrast that statement with the one made by the Government of India to the effect that drunkenness in a European sense does not exist in India. Let me now quote the opinion of an English gentleman, Mr. Hudson, Secretary of the Behar Indigo Planters Association, in evidence which he gave before the Government of Bengal Commission in 1884. He said—

“The upshot of the inquiries I have made amongst the planters and of my personal observations during a residence of 20 years, is that drunkenness has greatly increased during the last few years. I attribute this principally to the fact that 20 years ago, and up to a few years past, it cost a man four annas to get drunk on spirit; now he can make himself dead drunk, *thik nissa*, as it has been expressed to me by a ‘habitual,’ for one anna. Also by the fact that, whereas it used to be most difficult to get spirits anywhere except at the distilleries, it can now be procured within reach of nearly every hamlet.”

One anna represents a penny. This extraordinary cheapening of liquor is one of the main causes of the increase of drunkenness, and is one of the consequences of the policy adopted by the

Bengal Government. Out of a great number of letters I have received I will read a few extracts. The House knows that the tea industry is now one of the most important in India. The custom is to bring a large number of coolies from other parts of India, and get them to reside in the tea gardens. It is a kind of arrangement that needs great care in order to prevent it from degenerating into a species of servitude. We allow the coolies to be taken from their homes, and surely it is our duty to protect them, as far as possible, from all temptations. I will read to the House an extract from a letter which affords a good specimen of a large number of letters I have received containing complaints as to the condition of these coolies. This letter is from a plantation in which I have some interest myself, and I have therefore the means of knowing that the information it contains is reliable. The writer says:—

“I regret to state the sad fact that drunkenness among garden coolies has spread to an alarming degree since its promotion and encouragement by this outstill system. Any attempt to abolish, or even lessen, this growing evil will be hailed with pleasure. Since the introduction of this odious system in 1883, the consumption of country spirits has, I am certain, increased sevenfold (possibly more), and it is increasing yearly, judging from the new stills that periodically spring up here and there all over the districts. The Local Government allow and cherish these stills contiguous to our gardens and bazaars. There are cases on record of proprietors and managers having laid the matter before the Local Government, clearly demonstrating the injury the industry and the health of the coolies had and were receiving at their hands from the propagation of such a system, but the said Local Government only lent a deaf ear. There are cases where managers have objected to allowing a still in the grants under their charge, but to no purpose—they were enforced. The manufacturing places are chosen and fixed by the Local Government. These outstills are put up to auction yearly, and the right to manufacture and sell country spirits knocked down to the highest bidder. They are readily disposed of at high prices to eager competitors, bent on aggrandizement at the expense of our tea gardens and coolies’ health, by making and selling them a venomous compound, at four annas per quart bottle, and termed by the Local Government wholesome country spirit. Before these outstills were created, shops where spirits could be procured by coolies were few and far between, and the said spirits could not be purchased at less than one rupee per bottle. During these times the coolies had little or no temptation to drink, and were, although earning less money, in a much better pecuniary state than at present. The roadside and bazaar outstill absorbs their surplus

cash, aye, and more, because food and clothing are often curtailed to provide the grim fire-water. Sunday is, of course, the great day for drinking, and driving by I have come across coolies lying literally dead drunk at intervals in the road, covered with mud from head to foot, and have had to have them rolled on one side to clear the way for my trap. One of my best men got leave one day, bought six bottles of country spirits at a shop about four miles away, and, on his way home, fell across the railway line, smashing his bottles, and lying insensible until, luckily, picked up by another coolie. It is needless to say that the drinking leads to rioting and wife beating; cases, however, seldom come before the notice of the Government. Were they to do so, coolies would be constantly absent from the gardens, so the planter, as a rule, settles these matters himself."

I have collected an immense mass of materials which have accumulated in my hands during the last three years—papers and letters almost without end—and I could quote hundreds expressing views almost identical with these. Perhaps the House will expect me to describe the method by which the Government carry on their liquor policy in India. They farm it out to contractors. [Sir J. GORST: No.] The hon. Gentleman says "No," but I believe I shall be able to prove the truth of my assertion. The system is to farm it out to the men who will pay the largest annual sum for the privilege of supplying the liquor, and the traffic sub-divides itself into two minor heads, one of which is called the Central Distillery System. The distillery belongs to the Government. The contractor goes to the Central Distillery and takes, say, 100,000 gallons, engaging not to charge the public more than a certain price; but he may sell it as cheap as he likes. If he finds that he can only sell 80,000 gallons, he will offer the remaining 20,000 gallons dirt cheap—almost for nothing—rather than have it left on his hands. There is also the outstill system, which is still worse. The contractor receives power not only of selling by retail, but of manufacturing himself. He pays for the outstill a certain fixed sum, and he contracts with the Government to pay a lump sum for the use of the outstill. This outstill system was introduced in Bengal in 1876. Upon the introduction of the outstill system into Bengal in 1876, consumption of drink and revenue therefrom was nearly doubled in five

years. An enormous stimulus was given to the manufacture and consumption of strong drink. So terrible were the effects, so loud was the outcry, that the Government were obliged to appoint a Commission of Inquiry into the working of the system. Now I must ask the House to listen to one or two quotations on this subject. First, I quote the evidence of Mr. C. S. Metcalfe, Additional Commissioner of Patna, a district which had suffered most from this outstill system.

Sir J. GORST: What is the date of this?

*MR. S. SMITH: Mr. Metcalfe's evidence was given before the Bengal Commission in 1883-4. He says:—

"I have been officially connected with this district since 1879 to 1884 as collector, and from 1874 to 1876 as officiating commissioner. My experience has been as a collector both of the 'sudder distillery' and the 'outstill systems.' The habit of drinking has extended to all classes. The quantity drunk is larger owing to the cheaper price at which it is now sold. Persons who previously were satisfied with a dram, are now able to afford a bottle or two. Among the labouring and artisan classes, drinking has increased to a deplorable extent. I have not noticed any cases among the school boys, but my experience is that domestic servants, day labourers, and women, drink to an extent I never noticed under the distillery system. Under the outstill system the habit of drinking is forcibly brought home by instances such as these. My coachman has tumbled off his box drunk. If I want a mochee to mend the harness I have to arrange that he shall be sober the night before. A workman now drinks his bottle of spirits as regularly as he eats his food, and quarrels have become frequent from a man arriving at home having spent all his earnings in drink. I can speak from personal observation that there are more drunkards in and about this city than I ever observed before."

Complaints like these poured in upon the Indian Government, petitions were presented by natives and Europeans, and in 1883-4 a Commission of Inquiry was appointed. This Commission collected an immense amount of evidence, through the bulk of which I have gone with much patience. Twice I have gone carefully over the Report. I do not know whether the right hon. Gentleman opposite had done the same when he made the statement he did last year supporting the despatch of the Indian Government that there was a marked decrease in the consumption of strong drink, for this Commission came to the conclusion that in the great province of Bengal among 69,000,000 of people

the consumption had increased in ten years by 135 per cent, or in other words, from an average of 1,600,000 gallons to 3,700,000. The despatch for the Government of India was dated 1887, and scarcely takes the slightest notice of the conclusions of the Bengal Commission, and simply glides over it, touching it so casually that an ordinary reader of the despatch would not know that such a Commission ever sat and arrived at such terrible conclusions. The despatch of 1887, and the Under-Secretary in his speech last year, laid great stress on the fact that less illicit drink was sold and more Government drink. That was the stress of the argument last year, and I suppose it will be repeated to-night. But let me call the attention of the House to the finding of the Bengal Commission. Here is what they say :

"No matter what view may be taken of the extent of illicit distillation and smuggling under the Control Distillery System, they cannot be held to account for any considerable proportion of this amount and may be excluded from the consideration of the question without the conclusion arrived at being seriously vitiated thereby."

In other words, the Commissioners say that this gigantic increase as shown in the statistics of drink consumption is not to be accounted for by the transfer of the consumption from illicit to licit manufacture.

SIR J. GORST: In Bengal?

*MR. S. SMITH: Yes, in Bengal with its 69 million inhabitants.

SIR J. GORST: My interruption was intended to remind the hon. Member that my statement was founded on the statistics for the whole of India and was not confined to Bengal.

*MR. S. SMITH: Then I may take it that 69 millions of people are to be excepted from that general statement.

SIR J. GORST: I did not say so.

*MR. S. SMITH: I think I have proved there is this enormous increase of consumption in Bengal, and I shall leave to my hon. Friend behind me to produce statistics as to the rest of India. All the evidence I have been able to collect shows me that this illicit drinking is a mere bugbear, an excuse to save the consciences of the British people, an easy way to throw dust in the eyes of inquirers. Now, the Bengal Commission reported in favour of a reversal of the outstill policy, and an attempt at reversal was made for a

year or two; but as the revenue straightway fell off by 10 lakhs, the Government did not like it and they gradually reverted to the old system, 50 outstills at a time being licensed in spite of the vehement protest of the native population, and we have to-day the abominable outstill system going on in spite of the unanimous protests of natives and Europeans. The native Congress of India is an important educated and representative body of some 1,200 Members chosen from all parts of India, and this is a resolution they passed :—

"That having regard to the fact that a serious increase in the consumption of intoxicants has taken place under the systems of abakari and excise now prevailing in India, the Government be respectfully urged to adopt some such improved system as shall tend to discourage insobriety."

I have not, so far, alluded to the opinion of missionaries, the most disinterested Europeans in India, and some of whom have lived 20 or 30 years in India, and there are no more intelligent and honest observers to be found on matters touching the social welfare of India. From these I am almost overwhelmed with evidence. Last year I quoted the Rev. Thomas Evans on the terrible evils of the drink trade. A great conference of British missionaries held in Calcutta last December, condemned the outstill system in the most pronounced manner, and they proposed that the municipalities of India should be permitted to exercise local option on the question of the opening of the drink shops. There is municipal government in many of the large towns such as Calcutta, Bombay, and Delhi, and having this in view, the conference included this in their memorial :—

"That under all these circumstances and for all the reasons specified above, your Memorialists most respectfully but most urgently request that the outstill system, which has proved a curse to the country, may be abolished without delay; and that the privilege of 'local option' in regard to the opening of shops for the sale of liquor may at once be conceded to all rural communities under such arrangements for working it under existing law or under fresh legislation as to the Government may seem best."

What is required is to bring Local Option to bear on the evil. It is well known that the municipalities would extirpate the system, root and branch. But the Government will not give them

power to do anything of the kind, because they are afraid of the revenue. Let it be remembered that the native population look upon the liquor trade very differently from ourselves, they look upon drinking as a vice, there is no such thing as a class of moderate drinkers, though there may be a few educated natives who have adopted English habits. A native if he drinks at all drinks to get drunk, and he drives hard bargains with the publicans for the purpose. The Mahomedan and the Hindoo religions are utterly opposed to the use of strong drink. Even to-day the mass of Indians are abstainers. The consumption of drink is confined to a few comparatively, and so the average consumption per head of population appears very small. But whereas ten years ago there were perhaps 10,000,000 of drinkers in India, we have now turned them into 20,000,000, and at the rate we are going on we shall, in time, turn the 20,000,000 into 40,000,000 and the 40,000,000, into 80,000,000. The climate of India and the constitution of the people make liquor little else than poison to them. When taken to excess for a short time it kills them. Then the average income of the people of India is not more than 3d. per head per day for every adult male. That sum is barely sufficient to keep a family alive, and a penny a day spent in drink out of that sum reduces them to starvation. There is no Poor Law in India, but if we make the country a nest of drunkards, we must introduce a Poor Law to keep the people from starvation. The real objection that meets us is the revenue, the £5,000,000 raised from the sale of drink and other intoxicants blinds the eyes of Indian officials. It is a revenue easily raised. The man who sells most drink gets the contract, and the revenue is very easily raised. Every official in India is looked upon with favour more or less in proportion as he increases the revenue contracts. Indian finance is always in an impecunious state, and so it comes about that the best official is the man who collects most revenue, and the bad official is one who allows the revenue to fall off. It is quite natural that that should be so. Having got this vicious system, and having to raise money out of it, the Government of India must employ persons who will best collect

the revenue. The officials are tied to the system, and we can place no more reliance upon their opinions than on the question of the Abolition of Slavery we could have followed the advice of West India planters as to the moral effects of the system. A wasteful system of finance has brought the Government of India to lean more and more on immoral sources of revenue, and so we go on poisoning the natives of India with drink as we have poisoned the Chinese with opium. But we should not lend ourselves to any such system. We should not consider merely what the exigencies of the Indian Government are. We should insist that the revenue of India should be raised by moral means, by means consistent with the true interests of India. It is a melancholy reflection that a so-called Christian Government should outrage the moral sense of the heathens we govern. We have outraged the moral instincts of the natives of India by our conduct in this matter. No one who reads the native newspapers can doubt that, in the view of the natives, the use of liquor was immoral. My Resolution deals with opium as well as drink, for it is included in the Excise Laws, and its sale in India is licensed, though not on so large a scale as drink. We include it in our condemnation, for I know its effect is not less fatal than drink to the natives, and my hon. Friend (Mr. Caine) has visited an opium den in Lucknow, and to him we are indebted for the following description:—

"We enter with the rest, and find ourselves in a dirty courtyard, round which are ranged 15 small rooms. The stench is sickening, the swarms of flies intolerable, and there is something strange and weird about the faces of those who are coming in from the street. It dawns upon me that I am in yet another and different 'Government' Bazaar, and that, for the first time in my life, I am within the walls 'of an opium den.' At the entrance sits a comely Chinese woman, whose husband is busy showing the arriving customers into the least crowded of the side rooms. Before her is a table, covered with copper coins. She is veritably 'sitting at the receipt of custom.' About half these copper coins go the Government Treasury at Calcutta, the other half going to the Government tax collector, the opium farmer. I obtain permission to go over the whole premises, and enter the first of the small rooms. In the centre of the room, which has no window, and is very dark, is a small charcoal fire, whose glow casts a lurid light on the faces of nine human beings, men and women, lying in a circle like pigs in a sty. A young

girl about 15 years of age has charge of each room, fans the fire, lights the opium pipe, and holds it in the mouth of the smoker who has last come in, till his head falls heavily on the body of his predecessor. Two or three are in various stages of preliminary drunkenness. I have been in East End gin palaces on Saturday nights—I have seen men in various stages of delirium tremens, I have visited many idiot and lunatic asylums, but I have never seen such horrible destruction of God's image in the face of man, as I saw in the 'Government' opium dens of Lucknow. To my dying day I shall carry the recollection of the face of a handsome young woman of 18 or 19 years, sprawling on the senseless bodies of men, her fine brown eyes flattened and dulled with coming stupor, and her lips drawn back from her glittering white teeth. Another girl of the same age was sitting in a group of newly-arrived smokers, singing some lewd romance as they handed round the pipe. I went from room to room and counted 97 persons of both sexes in various stages of opium stupor. Green hands could get drunk for a penny or less, but by degrees more and more opium is needed, and the callous keeper of this hideous den showed us men whom 180 drops of thick opium, mixed with tobacco, hardly sufficed to intoxicate. I came out staggering and faint with the poison-laden atmosphere."

I cannot pursue this painful subject further, I fear I have encroached too much on the time of the House. I hope I have not spoken too warmly, but the subject is one of enormous importance. I am advocating the cause of countless millions of our race. I am trying to stop ravages compared to which those of war and pestilence are but lesser evils. This House has long, far-reaching arms, and they can give deliverance to India. I ask the House to use its mighty influence to-night for the protection of myriads of our fellow-creatures. I ask the House, by passing this Resolution to-night, to send a thrill of joy through the vast population of India.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That, in the opinion of this House, the fiscal system of the Government of India leads to the establishment of spirit distilleries, liquor and opium shops in large numbers of places where till recently they never existed, in defiance of Native opinion and the protests of the inhabitants, and that such increased facilities for drinking produce a steadily increasing consumption, and spread misery and ruin among the industrial classes of India, calling for immediate action on the part of the Government of India with a view to their abatement.—(Mr. Samuel Smith.)

*MR. CAINE (Barrow): I need not follow my hon. Friend, in seconding his Motion, into a description of the terrible

social evils of the present vicious system, which I can assure the House my hon. Friend has not exaggerated. The Resolution states that the fiscal system of the Government of India spreads misery and ruin among the industrial classes of India, and I found abundant evidence to sustain that allegation. But first let me deal with the Government argument in support of their policy, and meet them upon their own ground. The hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary for India (Sir J. Gorst) evidently wishes that the figures with regard to the whole of India should be quoted and not those relating to sections or districts.

SIR J. GORST: Not at all. I do not object to any figures being taken as long as it is made clear to the House what figures they are.

*MR. CAINE: Well, I will be quite clear as to the figures I take, and I will explain, for the sake of simplicity, that all my figures will be in pounds sterling, taking the usual reckoning of ten rupees to the £. I find that, according to the latest available statistics, those of 1887, the total revenue from intoxicating liquors all over India is steadily advancing. I may say that the gallonage of consumption is not given in the Government returns, at all events, until the last two or three years, and I found it very difficult, even in India, to get figures on the subject. I will first show how the revenue from intoxicating liquors and drugs is steadily advancing. The present system has been in existence for about fifty years. It was founded about 1838, and it reached complete perfection about 1878, when the total revenue from intoxicants was £2,458,000. In 1879, the revenue rose to £2,619,000, in 1880 to £2,838,000, in 1881 to £3,135,000, in 1882 to £3,427,000, in 1883 to £3,609,000, in 1884 to £3,837,000, in 1885 to £4,012,000, in 1886 to £4,152,000, and in 1887 to £4,375,000. The revenue has therefore virtually doubled itself in ten years. Now it is urged by the Government that this increase is the result, first of all, of increased taxation, and secondly of the transfer of the consumption from illicit to Government liquor. I would ask my hon. Friend the Under Secretary, whether he means to say that the bulk of the increase of £2,100,000 is a transfer from illicit to

Mr. S. Smith

licit consumption? If so, it reflects very great disgrace on the management of the excise system in former years. With regard to the raising of taxation, that has been very trivial, and nothing at all like the 100 per cent it would have to be, in order to account for the increase. The revenue is derived, not only from spirits, but also from opium and other intoxicating drugs, and the imports show a steady increase, and one that has been much more rapid in recent years. The imports of spirits show an increase of 50 per cent in the last ten years. In 1885, the imports of spirits amounted to 858,000 gallons; in 1886, they amounted to 937,000 gallons, and in 1887 they rose to 1,063,000 gallons—or total increase of 23 per cent. in three years. There was also an increase of 60 per cent. in the imports of malt liquors in the three years. Furthermore, there is, all over India, a steadily increasing manufacture of beer, strong in alcohol, on which no duty is paid. All the increased consumption is native and not English. The English population is more sober and abstemious than in times past, and its consumption of liquor has certainly not increased. We have now 15,000 teetotalers in the Indian Army, and the evidence goes to show that a decreasing amount of liquor is consumed by our soldiers. Under these circumstances, the figures I have quoted are calculated to give alarm to every social reformer and every practical politician. I will quote from Paper 166, of June 25th, 1887, in order to show what are the opinions of authorities:—

“The principles on which the Excise system of India are based, and which have been unanimously accepted by all the authorities concerned have been these; That liquor should be taxed, and consumption restricted, as far as it has been possible to do so without imposing positive hardships upon the people, and driving them to illicit manufacture. In this policy the local Governments have been completely successful, and the great increase of Excise Revenue in recent years, which have been taken as evidence of the spread of drinking habits, really represents a much smaller consumption of liquor, and an infinitely better regulated consumption than the smaller revenue of former years.”

I at once admit that that is the principle on which the excise laws of India are supposed to be based and intended to be based, as is clearly shown by the following order issued to Revenue Officers in India on September 17th, 1838, when

the foundations of the present system were laid:—

“It cannot be too strongly urged upon collectors that the object which Government has in view is to restrain and, if possible, to correct and diminish the total actual consumption of spirituous liquors, whether clandestine or licensed, being fully persuaded that any amount of revenue that may be lost by the efficiency of the system for this end will be repaid one hundredfold in the preservation and advancement of moral feelings and industrious habits among the people.”

I met many of the leading officials in India, and their great cry was, “Don’t call our good intentions into question.” Of the good intentions of the Government I have no doubt, but I say that those good intentions in the present case have only made the usual pavement. I contend deliberately that the Excise Laws of India, the best and worst of them, directly lead to an increase of drinking facilities, and, as a matter of course, to an increased consumption of liquor, with all its attendant evils. That the various Governments of India, in spite of themselves, are inevitably committed by those laws to a policy of expansion, instead of restriction, and that the sale of liquor and drugs is stimulated all over India, for the sake of the revenue it produces. I am fully aware of the seriousness of this charge. I have had it drummed into me during the three months I have been in India, but I stand by it. Last year, Mr. Westland, Finance Minister for India, used the following language in the Legislative Council:—

“I look hopefully to a considerable increase in the Excise Revenues, and believe that a great deal might be done in Northern India by the introduction of the methods which in Bombay and Madras, have so powerfully contributed to the increase of revenue under this head.”

In England it is the custom for Finance Ministers to congratulate Parliament upon a diminishing revenue from intoxicants; in India, however, the Finance Minister looks hopefully to a considerable increase in such revenue. I have been censured for saying that such a statement as this coming from such an authority, would certainly be interpreted by his subordinates into a hint to stimulate the sale of Exciseable articles. I repeat the statement, and will presently show how it is being acted upon. Let us, however, now examine for a moment into the operation of the

methods in Bombay and Madras, which have made such a powerful impression on Mr. Westland and Sir David Barbour. In the Financial Statement for 1887-8, Mr. Westland uses clear enough language about the methods of the two Presidencies. He said:—

“As regards excise, it will be seen that it is in Madras and Bombay that the Revenue Administration has been most successful, as these two provinces, with a total population of 47,500,000 produce a Revenue nearly as large as that of Bengal with 69,000,000. The whole system of distillation has been brought more thoroughly under control, and stricter and more methodical preventive measures have enabled the Government to greatly enhance the rate of duty, for the question of the rate of duty which it is possible to levy, is simply the question of the prevention of illicit distillation.”

Sir David Barbour commenting on this paragraph in this year's financial statement says—

“Mr. Westland's expectations was that by the prevention of illicit dealings, it would be possible to raise a large Revenue, the increase of Revenue being accompanied, not by an increase of, but by a check on drinking.”

Well, I want to see how drinking is checked by this system. In Madras there was introduced in October, 1884, a new system which enables the authorities to raise a large Revenue by the prevention of illicit drinking. I admit that the change was a great improvement on the previous system, but it was bad at the best. In 1883-4 the consumption of arrack in the Presidency amounted to 1,204,000 gallons. In 1885, the year of transition it fell to 1,189,000 gallons. We should, however, expect to see a steadily diminishing consumption if the system were all that is claimed for it. In 1886 the consumption goes down a little farther—to 1,055,000 gallons; but in 1887 it rises again to 1,084,000, and in 1888 to 1,270,000, which is more than that of any previous year. We find, therefore, that although the system diminishes the consumption for a year or two the increase invariably comes afterwards. The people have learnt drinking habits, and the Government with a view of raising revenue, push in liquor shops whenever they think there is a ghost of a chance of a customer. Sir David Barbour is wisely silent with regard to Bombay. I will not be silent. While I was in Bombay I had a visit from Lallubhai Gordandas, general assistant in the Abkari Department. I

had a long conversation with that gentleman. I made careful notes of it, and read them over to him with some care, and he admitted that they accurately represented what he said. His statements were (I quote from my notes):—

“Throughout the Presidency there is no illicit distillation whatever for sale. There may be a little prevalent where there are many toddy or mowra trees, for private consumption only. We have got Mr. Pritchard's system well in hand, and illicit distillation is now reduced to a minimum.”

The system has now been in good working order for ten years, and what are the results? In 1882 the consumption of ardent spirits in the Bombay Presidency was two millions of gallons, and in 1886 it had risen to 2,750,000 gallons, these being the latest available figures. There was thus a net increase of 40 per cent in four years, which means that it would double itself in 10 years. We are asked to believe that this increase is due to the change from illicit to licit consumption. I entirely fail to understand how such financial authorities as Mr. Westland and Sir David Barbour can commit themselves to statements, the bottom of which can be knocked out by a simple reference to their own Excise Reports. The Financial Report for this year has the audacity to suggest that their principles apply equally to intoxicating drugs as to liquors. It will be found that wherever the consumption of liquor increases, the appetite for drugs appears to be also whetted. I will take the pattern district of the Bombay Presidency, where the system is most perfect, and I will give the revenue from foreign liquor, from country spirits, and from drugs. I wish to show that it has steadily increased right through from the completion of Mr. Pritchard's system in 1877. During the five years ending 1877, the average revenue from foreign liquors was £1,100; during the five years ending 1882 it was £2,700; in 1883 it was £3,500; in 1884, £3,600; in 1885, £8,300; in 1886, £8,400; in 1887, £9,300; and in 1888, £9,000. Now we take the spirit manufactured at the Government distilleries: During the five years ending 1877, country spirit produced an average revenue of £310,000; during the five years ending 1882 a revenue of £390,000; in 1883, £540,000; in 1884, £590,000; in 1885,

£640,000; in 1886, £690,000; in 1887, £710,000; and in 1888, £750,000. And now with regard to drugs: We are told it is better for the people to consume what they call "wholesome" spirit than to take opium or other drugs, and that by stimulating the sale of spirits they diminish the consumption of drugs. Well, in the five years ending 1877 the revenue from drugs was £5,400, in the five years ending 1882 it was £5,100, in 1883 it was £8,100, in 1884 it was £9,400, in 1885 it was £10,400, in 1886 it was £10,800, in 1887 it was £11,000, and in 1888 it was £11,700. This is the way they secure a maximum revenue with a minimum of consumption. I say, without fear of contradiction, that the consumption has increased in precisely the same ratio as the revenue, not only in Bombay but all over India alike. This is inevitable so long as the existing system prevails. I admit that some methods in India are better than others; but all are bad, and all are based upon the same principles. My hon. Friend has very fairly described the systems in use. The Government control the manufacture, but they do not control the retail sale. They pretend to; but to all intents and purposes, when the liquor sale has been given to a farmer, he can do whatever he likes. I have had long interviews with liquor farmers. I have talked to one who pays as much as £140,000 a year for the monopoly of certain districts, and he told me he was obliged to take so many gallons a year and to pay duty on it. The Government do not allow him to sell above a certain price, but when he finds himself with liquor on his hands he disposes of it at any price he can get. The fact of the matter is that there are eight or nine different systems prevailing in India, and eight or nine sub-varieties. I am bound to say I did not see a single man in all India, excepting one, who understood it in all its details, or indeed half as well as I did myself. I contend that under this vicious farming system the bias of everyone concerned is in favour of the expansion of the trade and not of its contraction, and that whatever may have been the intentions of the inventors of the system all moral considerations are swamped in the efforts to obtain revenue. The Government is biassed

in favour of the tax. It may be an unconscious bias, but the bias is there. It furnishes a steady and improving revenue, as I have shown, and it is cheap to collect. This is shown by the figures. The revenues from forests cost 55 per cent to collect; from opium, 25 per cent; from land, 15 per cent; from Customs, 7 per cent; from stamps, 4 per cent; and from Excise only 3 per cent. The bias is naturally in favour of such an admirable and cheap source of revenue as this, and especially as it doubles itself in ten years. As to the officers engaged in the administration, their promotion may not altogether depend upon the revenue obtained, but it does depend upon it to some extent. If you take the last report for Bengal you will find a paragraph commencing thus: "Officers deserving favourable notice for the management of the Excise Department of their various districts." Then follow 16 names of officers in every one of whose districts there has been an increase in the revenue, the average being £,500 each. I do not blame them for trying to get on in their profession. There are gentlemen opposite who are at the head of their profession, and who would not have got there unless they had done their best to stimulate the revenue in every way. During the three months I spent in India this winter, I found endless instances of the praiseworthy watchfulness of collectors, and of the way in which they act upon the suggestions of the Finance Ministers, who are "looking hopefully to an increase in the Excise revenues." Let me give an instance: In the district of Backergunje, in Bengal, a religious fair is held every year. For some years past a liquor shop has been established there. The agent of one of the excellent and useful associations which are springing up all over India watching the actions of the Government, called upon the Zemindar who owned the land and urged him to refuse to supply land for the liquor shop any longer. He refused accordingly. But the collector, Mr. Clay, of Backergunje, dropped on the Zemindar at once, and wrote to him asking for an explanation. The Zemindar called and explained, and two more letters followed, both of which I will read. The first is addressed to Chunder Das, farmer of corn, spirit and drugs, Lakutia—

"In accordance with the order of the Collector passed to day you are directed to open your shop as usual at the aforesaid Mela. A copy of this order is sent to the proprietors of that Mela, so that they may present to the Collector any objection, if they have any, to the opening of the aforesaid shop at the Mela.—G. C. DUTT, Excise Deputy Collector."

The same gentleman, Mr. Dutt, writes to Babu Behari Lal Roy and two other Zemindars—

"As a person named Parna Chunder Das for a fee of 75 rupees got a licence for setting up a shop for the sale of wines, Ganga, and opium at your Lakutia Mela, and you did not allow him place to open his shop then, an order was issued on him to open his shop, and a copy of that order served on you that you may present to the Collector your objections, if you have any, to give him land for this purpose. Up to this day you have presented no objection and given him no land for his shop. You are ordered to show cause before the Collector within two days why that shop should not be set up at your Mela."

What does this mean? These men are anxious to have their religious festival conducted decently and in order, and this Revenue official comes down upon them like a thousand of bricks because of the shop not being opened. Just suppose for one moment a similar case in England. In Liverpool there is an estate with 47,000 people living upon it. It belongs to the Earl of Sefton. There is not a single public-house upon that estate. But supposing anyone got the lease of a house there and had a licence transferred to it the Earl of Sefton would say, "You cannot do this. I have the right to stop you." And suppose the authorities wrote a letter to the Earl such as I have read to this House, there would be a pretty row! The bias of a liquor farmer is to sell the quantity of liquor he undertakes to sell, if he is to make any profit out of it. He is abundantly helped by the administration of the Abkar Department, which backs up the efforts of the farmer with all the energy of a working partner. Let me just show you how this works. I will give you a few instances. Take the Bombay Presidency. I read this in the last report, dated 1886-7—

"There were 102 spirit shops in the Ahmedabad district in the year 1884-5. Out of this number 19 shops were closed in the following year for want of custom. But during the year under report it was found necessary to re-open 11 of them."

Another paragraph in the same report

Mr. Cairne

gives the explanation of this remarkable operation,

"During the three years for which the farms were sold, the farmer was not able to sell the full quantities of spirit removed by him from the distilleries under his minimum guarantee."

So to enable him to do so, and keep up the Revenue, 11 shops had to be re-opened. During these four years under review in these paragraphs the spirit issued from the Ahmedabad distillery to this farmer who required 11 shops to be re-opened, was as follows:—48,000 gallons, 57,000 gallons, 63,000 gallons, 69,000 gallons. The maximum of revenue is undoubtedly secured, the minimum of consumption is secured by an increase from 48,000 to 69,000 gallons, an increase of 45 per cent. in four years. I had two hours' interview with the liquor farmer of Ahmedabad. I quote from my notes. He said—

"How on earth can we get the ideal of the Government, a maximum of Revenue with a minimum of consumption—we must sell the liquor to get the Revenue. Mr. Pritchard is always putting the screw on the farmer, and pushing up the Revenue. How can we do that unless we push the sale of drink?"

When Mr. Westland so pointedly referred to the North-West provinces as the district from which he looked for an increased revenue from Excise, he was hardly fair to his energetic subordinates in that district. He must have had before him at the time the Excise report for 1886, and read the following leading paragraph:—

"The revenue from Excise has continued to advance steadily, and the gross receipts for the year under report are the highest on record, showing an increase of 12 per cent on previous years."

Why? Because the officials had been stimulating the sale of liquor to the uttermost.

The Report says in one paragraph:—

"The district Reports contain repeated assurances from all parts of the provinces that drinking is practically unknown."

What a dreadful state of things from the Government point of view, but what a blessing it would be if we could have it in England, Wales, or Scotland. I suppose this is where Mr. Westland looks for an increased revenue. But the same Report abounds in paragraphs showing how an enlightened Indian Government endeavours at once to get rid of such a happy moral condition,

and such an unhappy absence of revenue. On page 13 of this Report from the North West Provinces, par. 32, is the following :—

“Etawah.—The number of shops has increased from 53 to 67. There are five shops in the Municipality, which are reported to be sufficient. In the village tracts the number is still far below Government standard . . . Efforts are being made to bring the number of shops up to prescribed standard. Besides the 67 shops now opened, licences were granted for others, but they were withdrawn when it was found that no liquor was sold at these shops.”

I claim that this Report abundantly proves the contention of the Resolution. Etah is another district :—

“Etah.—There has been an increase of one shop; there are now 63. At the last settlement efforts were again made to induce the liquor farmers to open new shops, but, as last year, to no purpose. No one would bid even a nominal price for them. The number of shops is much fewer than the number allowed by Government standard.”

I have no doubt the hon. Gentleman will give some explanation of these extreme statements in the Report from the North-West Provinces. This is the last available report; I bring it down to date so far as I am able, though the Government of India are exceedingly slow in getting off their papers. At page 5, Mr. Crook, the Revenue Officer of Etah,

“draws attention to the impossibility of the labouring class consuming liquor to any considerable extent, when it is sold, as at present, of inferior quality and at an almost prohibitive price.”

He wants to persuade the labouring classes to consume liquor to a considerable extent. Again, in the same report :—

“At Muttra, it is reported that many new licences had to be withdrawn, as no liquor was sold, and that new shops put up for auction were not bid for.”

At Muttra there were 39 liquor shops 25 years ago, now the number is 59. Yet my right hon. Friend says the larger number of shops have been established recently. “Recently” means a period of 25 years. Here are other paragraphs :—

“In Sitapur the reduction of 33 shops is reported to have resulted in a loss of more than 2,000 rupees in licence fees, and no further reduction is advisable at present . . . In the Jhansi division the number of shops is largely in excess of the Government standard, and, although the Commission of Excise makes no

remarks thereon, it appears from the district reports that at present it is inexpedient to make any considerable reduction in their number. . . . We are told that the high rise in consumption at Cawnpore is due to the opening of the new distillery.”

Who was it that opened that distillery? A Limited Liability Company or a private individual? Not at all. It was the Government. In consequence of the opening of the new distillery they raise the consumption. That is the way in which they got the minimum of consumption. I think it is the way in which they get the maximum of revenue. The last paragraph which I will quote is—

“At Benares the licence fees for the year were very high, and to make their business profitable the retail dealers lowered their prices, and thus largely increased the sale of liquor.”

That paragraph absolutely confirms the statement of my hon. Friend. I could go on *ad nauseam*, and could give similar instances from all the Provinces of India. These extracts show clearly that where there are no liquor shops and no desire for them, the Excise administration has forced them in, and that where there are avowedly too many they have refused to reduce them. We have had two Bengal Commissions. Read their reports, or study every or any Provincial Excise Report. They show that the liquor farmers are everywhere competing with each other for the possession of a lucrative monopoly; that the authorities encourage it with a view to increased revenue; that the farmers get up rings to defeat the undue pressure of the authorities; that they doctor the liquor; are the chief culprits in illicit distillation; that they cheat the revenue, lower their prices, and, by the help of the Government, double the consumption. The worst and rottenest Excise system in the civilized world is that of India; the worst and rottenest of the various systems of India is that of Bengal. We have heard from my hon. Friend some account of what has taken place in Bengal with regard to the outstill system. I do not refer to that to-night, because it is of no use flogging a dead horse. I have been informed that it is the intention of the Government to estimate for a somewhat less revenue this year, with a view to getting rid of the outstill system. I trust it is really the intention of the Government to get rid of that

system. The effects of drunkenness on the Indian people are very serious. The nature of the liquor is such that it is prohibited to be sold to the British soldiers. Yet Indian women are allowed to buy it and to drink it with their husbands and children. At Benares three soldiers entered a liquor shop, and having pinned the owner of the shop against the wall by fixing their bayonets through his clothes, they drank the liquor. One fell to the floor of the shop and died, the other two were carried back to barracks. Why should such horrible stuff as this be sold to women and children freely, while prohibited to strong healthy soldiers? The amount of liquor drunk is small compared with the number of the population—my hon. Friend says he does not think it is more than 10 per cent—but it is a fact that drunkenness is increasing. That drunkenness is steadily increasing is a fact which is well affirmed by a large body of public opinion in India, the Government say. It may not be a very serious evil, but it is undoubtedly an increasing one. At one of the meetings at which I was present—a meeting said to have been the largest of its kind ever held in India—this fact was fully confirmed. It was, however, stated by one of the newspapers that the extent of the gathering was due to the desire of the natives to hear a Member of Parliament who was going “on the stump.” I thought there might be something in that statement; but it so happened that my friend, Mr. Thomas Evans, a missionary who went alone to a number of meetings held in various towns in the Bombay Presidency, had even a larger amount of success than was achieved on the occasion I have just mentioned, and he found that everywhere public opinion was against the Government, while, taking it as a whole, the Indian Press is also against the Government. I may be asked, “What remedy do you propose?” In reply to that question I would say, in the first place you ought to get rid of the outstill system, and if you turn your attention to the steady increase of the revenue by the steady increase of taxation, you would find that you would not suffer from an increase in the duty on spirits. I see no reason why the import duty should not be raised to 10 rupees for proof spirit,

which would enable you largely to increase the duties charged in Bombay; because Bombay town and island could pay without difficulty double the amount of duty now charged without the least hardship to anyone or the smallest risk of illicit distillation. I would also venture to suggest that some duty should be put on the heady beer sold in India. I was told, in answer to a question I put some time ago, that no duty is charged on the beer brewed by Messrs. Meakin & Co., and I must confess that I do not see why the Indian drink should be taxed while English beer is sold without duty. I may say that, in discussing this matter with Indian gentlemen, I found that they all entertained the views expressed by the mover of this Resolution. They think that the Indian people ought in some way to be consulted on the subject. I remember on one occasion I saw some 20 natives sitting in a circle outside a building, and I supposed it was a sort of village council. As I did not like to trespass on their deliberations I passed on; but, on coming back again some hours afterwards, I saw the same circle of natives in the same place, and I found that, instead of discussing local matters or British politics, they were discussing six bottles of native spirits. I am quite sure that the collector of the district, when he opened the liquor shop, did not first consult the head man of the village. Can it be said that this is the sort of thing which ought to be encouraged in the administration of that portion of the Empire? Of course it is not for me to dictate to the Indian Civil Service how they can maintain their financial position with regard to the sale of intoxicating liquor; but I do say that while revenue considerations may be allowed to have their full weight, moral considerations ought not to be overlooked or set aside for one moment. India possesses about the finest Civil Service in the world, and it is just as capable as any authority that could be mentioned of carrying out a scheme dealing with this important question. As it is, however, instead of troubling themselves about the maximum of moral considerations they are troubling themselves about the maximum of revenue. The object the Government ought to keep ever in view is to restrain, correct, and diminish the

consumption of intoxicating liquors and drugs, whether illicit or licensed, and fully persuade themselves that any amount of Revenue that may be lost by the efficiency of their system for this end, will be repaid a hundred-fold in the preservation and advancement of morality, industry and prosperity among the peoples of the Indian Empire.

*SIR ROPER LETHBRIDGE (Kensington, N.) said: I do not for one moment believe that the Excise policy of the Government of India, as a whole, is, or has ever been, intentionally or consciously directed to the mere gathering of Revenue, regardless of its effect on the moral well-being or social habits generally of the people of that country. I think, Sir, that every one who has been in any way associated with the work of that Government, as I have been, or who knows anything whatever of its character or traditions, will repudiate any notion of the kind with indignation and with perfect honesty and sincerity. Then too, Sir, in the course of the statements that have been put before the House this evening, there have been several propositions laid down which, in my opinion, will be held in India to be statements that are either inaccuracies or gross exaggerations. When the hon. Member for Flintshire spoke of the high officers of the Government of India being possibly ignorant of the working of the Abkari system, surely he forgot that these very officials, even the very highest of them, have themselves passed through the mill of the lower offices of State. For instance, my hon. Friend the Member for Evesham, who was himself Finance Minister of India, commenced life in that country, many years before, as an Assistant Magistrate, and rose through every stage of the official ladder. At many stages he himself had charge of the Abkari administration of the districts in which he resided. Well, Sir, the same, of course, holds true of very nearly all the other high members of the Government of India. They know the working of the Abkari system, and to charge them with ignorance, or even to make ignorance the excuse for their policy, is altogether inaccurate. Then again, I must say that I heard with very great regret the attack that was made by the hon. Member for Barrow-in-Furness on those Englishmen, Mr.

Meakin and others, in the hills of India, who are, in my opinion, and in the opinion of many others, serving the cause of Temperance in India, especially amongst our soldiers there, by putting within the reach of those soldiers light, wholesome, English beers, in the place of those horrible concoctions, such as country arrack, of which we have heard such eloquent accounts to-night from hon. Members opposite. And, Sir, the hon. Member for Barrow spoke of the chief of these gentlemen having been decorated because of his being a brewer. I can assure the House, from personal knowledge, that Mr. Whymper, the gentleman of whom he spoke, was decorated for, or, at any rate, might well have been decorated for, his eminent public services to the State and from no connection whatever with his occupation in life. He had served to my knowledge the cause of the Native States, and especially the cause of the Native State of Cashmere, in a way that did him the greatest credit, and I was exceedingly glad when I saw in the newspapers the statement to the effect that he had received from Her Majesty the distinction of the Companionship of the Order of the Indian Empire. That decoration was, in my opinion, highly deserved for his public services, and I greatly regret, therefore, that it should have been stated in this House that he received it merely because of his connection with the brewing industry. For this reason, and many similar ones, I find with regret that I am unable to agree with the Resolution that has been moved by the hon. Member for Flintshire, though I sympathize very heartily with the spirit and motives of the Resolution. The excellent motives of the hon. Member for Flintshire, and the great services which he has rendered to the welfare and well-being of our fellow subjects in India, are, I am sure, appreciated by the House and by the country, and they certainly are appreciated in India. But, Sir, though I cannot go the full length with the hon. Gentleman the Member for Flintshire, there are two propositions that I would venture, as an old resident in India, to submit to the consideration of the House, and on which I would ask leave to make just one or two remarks as grounds for an appeal to Her Majesty's

Government and to my hon. Friend the Under Secretary of State for India to give us, as the result of this debate this evening, some tangible, clear assurance of their determination that temperance reforms, and not Revenue, shall be in the future the key-stone of their Excise policy in India. In the first place, Sir, I maintain it is idle to deny that our Government Abkari, or Excise policy, has at times, in practice at any rate, tended to encourage the spread of drunkenness amongst the people; and, in the second place, I am quite sure that all that is best and most reputable in Native opinion in India is virtually unanimous in demanding from us, and from the Government of India, some stringent measures of restriction. I said, Sir, it is idle to deny that our policy has at times, though contrary, I am certain, to the intentions of the Government, tended to the increase of drunkenness. Those who read the Indian papers will be aware that since the debate last year, in fact only within a very few months, the Government of India, and especially the Government of Bengal, has brought about a very considerable contraction of that very outstill system of which we have heard so much, and which has been so rightly and deservedly denounced by the hon. Member for Barrow. Last year the Under Secretary of State for India protested most eloquently, and I am sure most sincerely, that nothing could be further from the wishes or intentions of the Government of India than to sanction the continuance for a moment of any system that would in any way encourage drunkenness; and yet the very action of the Government of Bengal to which I have referred, shows that at the time my hon. Friend was protesting so eloquently, this system was in full force in many districts in the immediate neighbourhood of the seat of Government at Calcutta. In the second place, I have said that the whole of the Native public opinion is strongly in favour of most stringent restrictions on the sale of intoxicating drinks. I believe that that will be frankly and fully admitted by my hon. Friend and by the Government of India; it is at any rate fully well known to everyone who has ever resided in India, and has ever been brought much into contact with the people of the Empire. I believe that even the extreme measure of the total

prohibition of the sale of intoxicating liquors would not only not meet with any resistance from the people of India, but would, in fact, be most popular in that country. That, in my opinion, is the cardinal feature of the situation in India; and it contrasts very strongly with the situation in this country. I ask those who think with me on the Temperance Question, those who earnestly desire to advance the cause of Temperance, and yet who shrink from any too violent interference with personal liberty, what would be our position if all our countrymen in England—not only the classes, but the masses of the people—were all in favour of total prohibition? If there were no such thing as a national beverage, if there were no reality in the cry of robbing a poor man of his beer, if there were no social customs to be destroyed by prohibition, and if in the national conscience the drinking of a dram of spirits or of a glass of beer were held to be a sin, I say I would unhesitatingly vote immediately for total prohibition. But that is the case and these are the circumstances in India. As far as Native opinion is concerned, I say emphatically that the Government have a free hand in the direction of restriction upon the sale of intoxicating liquors. They can do what they like; they can extend those restrictions to any extent they like, with the certainty of obtaining the approval of all classes of the Indians. Therefore the only two considerations that can affect the Government of India in their decision are, first, the fear of illicit distillation, and, secondly, the fear of the loss of revenue. As to illicit distillation, no doubt the facilities are exceptionally great in India, where every jungle yields the raw materials for producing spirits in abundance; and I am free to admit that if they had total prohibition or anything like it, it is possible that the pecuniary inducements to illicit distillation might be very considerable. On the other hand, the strength of public opinion, all the power of caste rules, in fact the whole organisation of Native society, would be on the side of the Excise officers in suppressing illicit distillation, and, therefore, I confess—having some little personal knowledge of the circumstances of the case—I do not think that any great weight need be

assigned to the bugbear of illicit distillation. The other consideration that should weigh with the Government in deciding this question is, of course, the loss of Revenue; and I confess that I cannot brush that consideration aside so lightly as the Mover and Seconder of the resolution have done. I feel that we are dealing in this matter with other people's money. It is very easy for British Representatives to be virtuous and philanthropic at the cost of the Indian Exchequer, to which their own constituents do not contribute a penny. Still, on the other hand, the Indian taxpayers are willing that some loss should be incurred to the Revenue for the sake of their own good name and the morals of their people. I do not think it is for this House, with its necessarily limited and imperfect information, to force the Government of India hurriedly into reforms that are to be carried out at the cost of the Indian taxpayers; but I think the House may do this much, and do it in the cause of righteousness and of justice to the people of India—we may show that we sympathize with the Government of India whenever it does that which is right in itself and which is also agreeable to the people of India. In conclusion, I trust that Her Majesty's Government may see their way to accept the motion of the hon. Member for Flintshire, provided always that the hon. Member consents to such modifications in its terms as will make it absolutely clear that the House does not and will not impugn the motives of the Government of India.

*MR. WALTER M'LAREN (Cheshire, Crewe): I have listened with great pleasure to the speech of the hon. Member, although at times he seemed to me to waiver between one set of views and another. At any rate, it is satisfactory to find that he cordially agrees with the spirit of this resolution, and that so far as he has any objections to it at all they relate to those terms of it which seem to him to cast doubt on the good intentions and faith of Indian officials. It is particularly encouraging to those who hold our views, that an hon. Gentleman of so much experience in India, should tell the House he would vote for total prohibition in a country where drinking was, according to the religious sentiments of the people, considered a sin.

It is undoubtedly true that a great majority of the religious, moral, and respectable natives of India do hold the view, that drinking intoxicating liquors is sinful, although such a view is being rapidly undermined by the action of the Government. The hon. Member said we must remember that in this matter we are dealing with other people's money. But he must remember that the Indian Government, nearly all of whom are Englishmen, are in this matter dealing with other people's money also; they are not dealing with a country which governs itself. In India there is an English despotic Government who legislate for the people over whom they rule, and in levying this taxation and in forcing this trade upon the people they are dealing with other people's money and moral welfare. The system we protest against is one which in its very essence must work badly, it must inevitably tend to the increase of the drink traffic. The licensee undertakes to pay license duty upon a given amount of liquor whether he can sell it or not, and that gives him a far greater incentive to sell and push the sale than even the English licensing system gives the English publican. The Indian Government contend that their endeavour is to put down illicit stills, but the fact in many cases really is that when a holder of a license finds he has contracted to sell a greater quantity of spirits than he can find an ordinary demand for, he encourages other persons to open illicit stills, in order to enable him to go the Government and say, "Here is an illicit still: it is clear that there is a demand for liquor: give me permission to open a legitimate and legal shop in the village." The man who has opened the illicit shop gets a small sentence, for which he is no doubt recompensed by the owner of the license. The Government can never hope to decrease the consumption so long as they continue to increase the facilities for drinking. Besides, while the Government are forcing on this sale of strong intoxicating spirits they put a very high duty, which is almost prohibitive, upon cocoanut palm toddy, a native liquor which any man can distill, and which is said to be little stronger than ginger beer. And still they wish us to believe that they are actuated by a desire for temperance. We ask them to

give proof of this by taking off the duty upon the juice of the palm and allowing the people to drink it if they desire it. If the Government will only allow the natives to drink this liquor it will prevent the necessity, if there is necessity, of the natives resorting to the use of the stronger spirituous liquors. I do not desire to throw the slightest doubt upon the good faith of the Under Secretary of State for India. He has already indicated that his desire is to increase temperance. I give him in the fullest and frankest way every credit for that desire, and I trust before his tenure of office expires he will have ample opportunity for putting his good will into practice. But we do not believe in the protestations of the Government of India; the whole facts go against them. I daresay some of the higher officials may be sincere but we do not believe those who have the every day working of the system in the provinces genuinely desire to decrease the system. Mr. Gregson in a pamphlet published last year gives a quotation from the official despatch from the Government of Bombay to the Secretary of State for India. The quotation was to the effect that the question for decision was whether they should sit quiet and allow the temperance movement in the Colaba district to continue and spread, and thereby forfeit a large amount of revenue, or were measures to be adopted which would bring the people to their senses. There are other quotations with which I will not trouble the House, tending to show that the Government through their minor officers are undoubtedly endeavouring to increase the consumption of intoxicating drink. The Government profess to have a standard for the number of drink shops in any given locality, but we find that in some districts where the number of drink shops fell below the standard attempts were made to increase it, while in districts where the number was larger than the standard fixed no attempt whatever was made to decrease it. The protestations of some of the Indian officials as to their desire for temperance are therefore neither more nor less than shams. The system we are attacking was developed in 1877. It was one of the unhappy parts of the policy pursued in India at that time. It was, I presume, felt necessary at that

time to increase the revenue with a view to providing increased military expenditure, and for paying for the scientific frontier policy which distinguished that period. ["Oh oh."] At any rate the revenue has greatly increased. Within the last ten years the consumption of intoxicating liquor has about doubled. When the Government are, by all their subordinate officials, doing what they can to increase this revenue, and consequently to increase the facilities for drinking, it is useless for them to tell us they are actuated solely by the moral welfare of the people. It is my belief that in this matter the Government have not had the welfare of the people at heart, but have simply had the welfare of the revenue at heart. Their motive has been the same as it was in respect to the opium trade. They have ruined multitudes of people both in India and China by their opium traffic, and yet they are beginning to find their endeavour to keep up the opium revenue is failing because Chinese are now growing their own opium. I only wish some similar falling off in the revenue from the drink traffic could be anticipated. I am persuaded that if you would only allow the native population of India to manage their own concerns, if you would only give anything approaching local option in this matter you would very soon arrive at a proper solution of the drink question. Our responsibility in India is very great and serious. We conquered the country by means which Englishmen are not too fond of recalling—means which Englishmen would be very sorry to see repeated to-day. [Sir J. GORST: "Oh, oh!"] Although the Under Secretary for India cries "oh," there are few Members in the House of Commons who would like to see a repetition of those means—at any rate I should be very sorry to see it. The fact that we have conquered India by such means casts upon us serious responsibility for the welfare of the Indian people. The responsibility would be less if we allowed them to govern themselves, because we should then share with them responsibility for their own laws. At present we have that responsibility entirely upon our own shoulders. The Indian people are willing to accept our rule, but they do demand in this matter, as in every other

matter, that they should have control over their own destinies subject to the veto of the Secretary of State; and I contend that if the Government were wise enough to submit the matter to any well considered measure of local option they would find that native opinion in India is opposed to the system by which the drinking of intoxicating liquor is rapidly increasing in the Indian empire.

*SIR J. GORST: This resolution requires the House to condemn the fiscal policy of the Government of India, with reference to the liquor question, and if the policy of the Government of India, with reference to the liquor question, were anything like that which has been described by the hon. Member who has just sat down, and which was also described by the mover and seconder of the motion, the liquor policy of the Indian Government would indeed most richly deserve the strongest condemnation of the House. I go further and say that if I believed that the men by whom the Indian Government is administered, were such wicked men, as the hon. Member opposite suggests they are, I would not remain a day longer in the position of Under Secretary for India, and I should say that the sooner the British officials cleared out of that country, the better it would be for India. I do not intend to compete with the hon. Member for Crewe in the high moral platitudes in which he has indulged, but I put it to him whether he considers it fair to men who among difficulties and dangers, are administering the affairs of this great country in a distant land, to withhold from them that charity which is accorded in this country to the meanest criminal, and to believe them capable of the horrible wickedness which the hon. Member has attributed to them? I thought it was the duty of a Christian man to extend charity to the action of his fellow-creatures, and to try to believe that they were animated by virtuous motives, and I turn gladly from the harsh, uncharitable accusations of the hon. Member to the more kindly spirit in which this question has been approached by the mover and seconder of the Motion, who, although they think the officials are misguided and wrong, at all events have the charity to credit them with the common instincts of humanity. May I call the attention of the House for one

moment to what is the fiscal policy of the Government of India, with reference to intoxicating drinks? I am not going to quote an old despatch, but it is language recently held by the Secretary of State for India. On March 14 of this year, the Secretary of State, in answer to certain memorials forwarded to the Secretary of State by native associations in Calcutta concerning the outstill system in Bengal, sent a despatch in which he said:—

“In connection with this subject I desire to remind your Excellency that in my despatch of the 19th of April. 1888, (No. 28, revenue), I laid down the principles (1) that any extension of the habit of drinking among Indian populations is to be discouraged; (2) that the tax on spirits and liquors should be as high as may be possible without giving rise to illicit methods of making and selling liquor; and (3) that subject to these considerations a *maximum* revenue should be raised from a *minimum* consumption of intoxicating liquors. In other words, to quote from the report of a Committee appointed by the Government of Madras in the year 1884, ‘It should always be borne in mind that the taxation of the sale of intoxicating liquors is imposed primarily in order to restrain the consumption of such liquors, and not for the purpose of making money out of their sale.’ I am confident that your Excellency’s Government will adhere strictly to these principles in any measures which you may think fit to adopt, and that you will do all that lies in your power to insure that they shall be observed by all who are engaged in the work of the Excise Department.”

I appeal to all hon. Members, except the hon. Member who spoke last, to say whether it is possible to lay down the principles which should govern our Excise administration in India in more clear, more distinct, and more appropriate language than that? I do not appeal to the hon. Member because no doubt he might reply that the Indian officials were actuated by the vilest possible motives.

*MR. M'LAREN: The hon. Gentleman knows very well that at the outset of my speech I gave him every possible credit for good intentions in this matter, and the hon. Gentleman ought not to make such a charge against me.

*SIR J. GORST: I decline to accept the adulation of the hon. Member or to be praised at the expense of the Secretary of State and of the honourable men who administer the Government of India. To except me from the common condemnation is an insult, and I decline any reservation on my behalf. I share the fate of the Secretary of State.

*MR. M'LAREN: This is really too bad. I never made any charge against the Secretary of State. I do complain of the unfairness of the charge made against me.

*SIR JOHN GORST: At any rate the hon. Member charged those who administer the Government of India in distinct terms, and in such terms as to make every hon. Member who has himself taken part in the Government of India, or who has friends taking part in that Government, most indignant at the unworthy insinuations of the hon. Member. I apologize for being led to use such warm language, but I am here as the representative of men thousands of miles away who cannot speak for themselves. What can a Government do in this matter? It can only lay down sound principles and exercise the utmost vigilance in its power to see that they are carried into effect. How are those principles carried out in the administration? All hon. Members who have spoken, with the exception of the hon. Member for Barrow who has just returned from there, have talked as if this excise system is the administration of the Government of India. It is nothing of the kind; it is the administration of the various provincial Governments of India, for the administration of the excise law is a matter which in India is given over entirely to the Governments of the different provinces. They have a variety of systems, varying according to the population and nature of the country, and various other local circumstances; and it would be absolutely impossible to devise one uniform hard-and-fast system of excise administration to suit the various conflicting circumstances of the different provinces. Yet you are asked to condemn the existing systems as a whole. I could understand the House of Commons being asked to come to the conclusion that the excise system in Assam or in Bengal is bad, but to include in one sweeping condemnation the whole of the various provincial Governments without discrimination, and to argue that because there are defects in one province therefore the system in another province, however differently situated, is bad, seems to me very like the case of a man who because he finds an enormous amount of drunkenness in one European country, say for instance

Belgium, denounces therefore the Kingdom of Italy for not properly exercising its excise administration. Just to show what a difficult subject this is, and how hard it is to apply the *a priori* theories of the hon. Member for Flintshire, let me call attention to one single circumstance. There is one province in India which has not been mentioned in this debate—Lower Burmah—and it is remarkable in this particular. The revenue per head of the population raised from the consumption of spirits and opium there is enormously in excess of that raised in any other province of India. It is double the revenue raised in Assam, more than ten times that of Bengal, and enormously greater than the revenue raised in Bombay. Yet in that part of India which, according to the *a priori* theories of the hon. Member for Flintshire, should be in the worse excise condition, there are fewer shops open for the consumption of Indian and imported spirits than in any other province of India, with the exception of Assam.

MR. W. S. CAINE: Do you mean per head?

*SIR J. GORST: No.

MR. W. S. CAINE: You must take into account the fact that the population is smaller.

*SIR J. GORST: Yes, but the proportion of spirit shops in Burma to the population is about the same, for instance, as that of the Panjab, where there are 1,939 shops open for the sale of spirits, while in Lower Burmah there are only 445, yet the Excise Revenue per head in Burmah is 11 times as high as in the Panjab. In Assam there are 1,067 shops licensed for the sale of opium; in Lower Burmah there are only 16. I refer to these facts just to show how difficult it is to apply the *a priori* theories of hon. Members to the remarkable and varying circumstances of the different provinces of India. The hon. Member for Barrow has alleged that the system laid down by the Secretary of State, good as it is in theory, is so badly carried out in practice that there is an enormous increase in the consumption of liquor—as, for example, in the province of Bombay. But we have always looked on Bombay as having, perhaps on the whole, the best excise system. The reason why the quantity of liquor is shown to have

increased in the returns referred to is because those returns show only the liquor consumed in those districts of Bombay in which the central distillery system is in force, and which now constitute 11-12ths of the whole area of the province. But as district after district was brought under the central distillery system, the consumption of those districts was brought into the annual total, and the consumption in Bombay appears to have grown, whereas it is only the central distillery system which has been extended over the whole of the province of Bombay.

MR. W. S. CAINE: But if you take the financial returns and calculate the amount of duty paid you will find a perfectly steady increase in the consumption even including those districts.

*SIR J. GORST: Luckily I have an illustration which I think will satisfy even the hon. Member for Barrow, for we have the most accurate returns for many years past of the consumption of drink in the city and island of Bombay. Now if there is one part of India where we might expect the drink traffic to grow it would be in the city and island of Bombay, because there we have a thriving well-to-do population in contact with Europeans, within easy access of those imported spirits to which reference has been made, and having ample employment in factories and other industrial establishments, and where they got far higher wages than in the country districts generally. Therefore we should not have been surprised if, with the great increase of population, there had been some increase in the consumption of intoxicating drinks. But what are the figures? Now, in the year 1872-73 there were consumed in the city and island of Bombay 907,000 gallons of liquor which paid Excise Duty, and from which was raised a revenue of Rx. 72,000; in 1886-87 the consumption was only 621,000 gallons, a reduction of about one-third, while the revenue was Rx. 201,000. And I ought to add that in 1872-73 the liquor was proof, whereas in the latter period it was 25 per cent below proof, so that not only was there a less quantity of a liquor consumed, but this liquor was of less intoxicating character, and yet the revenue was nearly trebled.

MR. W. S. CAINE: Yes; because here the highest duty in India is imposed; is it not?

*SIR J. GORST: Now the hon. Member refers to the alteration made in the rates of duty. In the city of Bombay the duty has been gradually raised from one rupee a gallon of proof spirit to 2½ rupees per gallon of spirit 25 per cent below proof, and in the districts of the Presidency it ranges from 1 rupee to 3 rupees per gallon. I cannot tell the hon. Member what the duty was in Madras, but at present the Still Head Duty and the License Fee together average 3 1-8 rupees in urban tracts and 2 15-16 rupees in rural tracts on the quantity of excise liquor passed into consumption, and in Madras, as in Bombay, the rates have been and are being steadily raised. I appeal confidently to these illustrations, as showing, in the first place, that the consumption has decreased, with an enormous increase to the revenue, and that the system in Bombay, carrying out as it does the general principles laid down by the Secretary of State, has not been the utter failure in the direction of temperance which the hon. Member would induce the House to believe it has. I do not know that I could advantageously attempt to deal with the whole excise system in the various provinces of India. I can only tell the House that generally the Government of India has, in the most unqualified manner, assented to the doctrine laid down by the Secretary of State, and the various provincial Governments have accepted that policy and have directed their officials to carry it out in practice. Hon. Members have quoted particular instances of abuse as *prima facie* evidence in support of their case that the officials have not carried out these general principles. But, Sir, is it astonishing, when you come to consider the enormous extent of territory, and the enormous number of liquor shops and distilleries, that you here and there find abuses, and discover instances in which the general principle is not carried into effect? Are the liquor laws in this country universally so admirably administered that you cannot find places where extensive drunkenness prevails, or where the officials have neglected the duties imposed on them? I do entreat the House not to be led astray by

isolated instances into one universal and sweeping condemnation of this system as a whole. The hon. Member for Flintshire has quoted observations made years ago by Mr. Hudson on the out-still system of Bengal. Really it is hardly fair to the House to quote evidence given five years ago in Bengal as if it applies to the general fiscal policy of the Government of India. Just as Bombay is the most advanced province, so, I suppose, many people would take Bengal as one of the least advanced; and there has been for the last three or four years an attempt made by the Government of Bengal to reform its fiscal system by substituting the central distillery system for the out-still system, which the hon. Member for Barrow admits having been informed by the Lieutenant Governor of the Province, is doomed. I do not for one moment say that there is not room for other great and radical reforms in many of the provinces of India; but I ask the House to consider that these reforms are actually now in progress, the attention of all the Governments of India has been thoroughly directed to this matter, and I appeal to the House to give these men credit for honesty of intention and intelligence and cleverness in adapting the orders of the Secretary of State to the circumstances of the particular provinces. Well, Sir, the hon. Member for Flintshire spoke about the liquor traffic in the province of Assam. Now, that is not a province in which there is a great amount of consumption. The amount of duty per head is $6\frac{3}{4}$ annas, or about 6d. per head of the population. Does not the hon. Member for Cumberland wish that the contributions of the English taxpayer were reduced to anything like 6d. per head? Whereas in this "drunken" India that we are said to be contaminating, the amount per head paid by the population for intoxicating liquors is little over 3d.; in this highly favoured England I believe the rate is 16s. per head. Certainly the hon. Member said that a large section of the population of India do not drink at all, but even if you fix the percentage of the drinking population at 10 per cent of the whole, even then the comparison of 3d. per head, there is very favourable to the 16s. per head in this country. It struck me while hon. Mem-

bers opposite were speaking, that they might with advantage look nearer home, and apply themselves to the task of putting down drunkenness in this country, rather than seek to interfere with the administration of the Government of India. I think that the general observations which I have made will show that it is better for the House of Commons to take a wide and general view of a question of this kind rather than be led astray by a few of those sensational incidents which hon. Members who travel in India can so easily gather, and which, if they are accepted as general specimens of the way in which the excise system in India is carried out, do not enlighten, but are utterly misleading. The difficulty in a great measure arises from the extraordinary ease with which ardent spirits can be distilled in India. The innocent juice drawn from the palm tree becomes in three or four hours, without any action on the part of man, as strong as the strongest beer. To take one instance, whereas in Bombay a spirit was manufactured .5deg. below proof, at a cost of 8 annas per gallon, the price was raised to 3r. 2a. a gallon, or 600 per cent, by the taxation which hon. Members opposite so strongly condemn. The hon. Member for Flintshire has complained of the Government cheapening liquor, but, instead of cheapening it, they have raised the price sixfold. What other policy could the Government pursue beyond making by taxation the price of liquor as high as possible, and limiting, as they do limit, the number of places where it is sold, so that the temptation to indulgence should be limited as far as possible, limited to such shops as will satisfy the wants of the population, and check smuggling, and illicit distillation? The hon. Member for Barrow says, though it is not the opinion of those officials best qualified to judge, and who are in responsible positions in administration of the country, that the effect of allowing local option would be the prohibition of the sale of liquor. But it may be observed that in no native State is total prohibition enforced, and it is self-evident that if the population are debarred from obtaining liquor from licensed houses and legitimate sources, they are sure to obtain it from native States, over which we have no control. I think it is rather a remarkable answer to the sug-

gestion that the natives of India, if left to themselves, would adopt measures of total prohibition, that there is not, so far as I am aware, a single native State where total prohibition is effected, or indeed attempted to be carried out.

MR. CAINE : The Gaikwar of Baroda would do so to-morrow if he were permitted. He told me so.

*SIR J. GORST : The hon. Member says the Gaikwar of Baroda told him so ; and knowing that the hon. Member was visiting India and what his tenets are on this question, I have no doubt the Gaikwar of Baroda told him so out of politeness. But I do not know whether the Gaikwar is also willing to stop the growth of poppies. Did he tell the hon. Member he would do that and that he derived a considerable revenue from the cultivation ? I think the hon. Member, while he held an extraordinary influence over the Gaikwar of Baroda should have used it to put a stop to this most pernicious opium traffic from which the Gaikwar derives a large profit. But I must apologise, for I am detaining the House too long. In conclusion, let me summarize the objections the Government have to this Resolution. In the first place the Resolution speaks of the multiplication of distilleries. Now outside the district in which outstills are still licensed—and I ask the House to remember this is a decreasing area, and outstills are suppressed as soon as they can be replaced by central distilleries—outside this small area not more than a twelfth of the area of Bombay—and perhaps one-sixth of the area of British India—outside this area, the number of distilleries is much smaller than it was 25 years ago. Spirit is now made in licensed distilleries, and pays an excise duty according to its strength. Formerly contractors had as many stills as they liked. Gallon for gallon, spirit now pays a higher duty, and a larger revenue is obtained than under the old system. There is also a great reduction in the number of shops, and instructions have been given by the different Governments to reduce the number as far as possible. Officers are instructed not to allow shops to be opened merely to increase the Revenue. This is the very order that hon. Members opposite say ought to be given, and this order has been given.

MR. CAINE : And is disobeyed everywhere.

*SIR J. GORST : The hon. Member says the order is disobeyed everywhere, but I do not think his experience has been sufficient to justify him in making such a sweeping assertion. The Government will take care that these orders are not disobeyed, and the Secretary of State will carefully consider any instance of such disobedience that is brought to his notice. The hon. Member for Flintshire might have done me the justice of telling the House, with regard to the very Assam tea gardens to which he has referred, that, in consequence of the hon. Member having shown me the letters referred to, a despatch was sent to India ordering an investigation. Sufficient time has not elapsed for an answer to be received. But in justice I think the hon. Member might have mentioned that I acted immediately on the allegations coming to my notice. I cannot admit that the increase of Revenue is in itself an evil. I have shown in the instance of Bombay how an increase in the Revenue is compatible with a decrease of drunkenness. I do not find evidences of that increase of drunkenness which hon. Members say cannot be denied. I suppose the hon. Member for Cocker-mouth would bear me out in saying that an increase of drunkenness would be shown in an increase in the number of persons in prison. Now, what are the facts ? In 1870 there were 87,248 prisoners in English gaols in India. In 1878, which was a year of famine and naturally of increased crime, there were 126,111 as a daily average. In 1882 the number had sunk to 84,324, and in 1886, the last year for which I can obtain statistics, they had further gone down to 76,676. This is in spite of an increase of 10 per cent in the population, and this last number was swelled by about 2,000 of quasi-political prisoners from Burmah. Does this look like an increase in drunkenness and the demoralization of the people ? Nor do I find evidence in the impoverishment of the people ; but on the contrary the poverty in the country is less, the condition of the population is improving, and the wealth of India is increasing. I do not find the facts which the hon. Member describes as having resulted from an increased

consumption of drink are supported by reliable evidence, but he makes his statement on the testimony of certain irresponsible persons whose statements he chooses to accept without verification. I have extended my remarks longer than I intended; may I in conclusion quote one witness whose evidence some will accept as being entitled to considerable weight. In 1888 the Provincial Government of Bengal, anxious to improve the Excise system which they were well aware was defective and unsatisfactory, deputed a most eminent Civil servant, Mr. Buckland, to visit the Presidencies of Madras and Bombay, for the purpose of inspecting and reporting upon the results of the Excise system. This was an experienced witness, well acquainted with the defects of the Bengal system, who had been sent to report on the systems prevailing elsewhere. Mr. Buckland reported to his own Government that the Bombay system was far more efficient than that of Bengal. He said that the local officers of Bombay had been repeatedly ordered "to restrain and, if possible, diminish the total actual consumption of spirituous liquors." He added—

"The whole action of the Bombay Government in their excise administration in recent years has been in the direction of (1) raising the price of licit liquor; (2) checking the consumption of illicit liquor; (3) restriction of manufacture to certain centres; and (4) diminishing the number of liquor shops. It has been possible to carry out the first effectively by the constant raising of the stillhead duty, and by increasing the tree-tapping tax in toddy-producing districts. The distillation and smuggling of illicit liquor has been met by increasing considerably the strength of the Abkari inspecting and preventive establishments and enlisting the sympathies of the contractors on the side of the Government, as well as by leasing from native States, from which formerly liquor was supplied into British territory, the control of their Abkari arrangements. As far as possible the manufacture of spirit has been restricted and permitted under departmental supervision at a few central places, generally at the Sudder station of each district. The figures also show that the number of shops for the sale of country spirits and stills has been considerably reduced since the constitution of the Abkari Department, and a new shop is now only opened after careful inquiry to meet a local demand or prevent the use of illicit liquor. In constantly raising the stillhead duty, the Local Government have designedly followed the principle laid down by the Government of India after the passing of the Tariff Act of 1875."

Such is the testimony of a Bengal

officer to the efficiency of the system in Bombay, and it is testimony to which I think the House will attach considerable importance. I do not for a moment say that the Excise system in any of the Provinces of India is not capable of still further amelioration. I do not say that any of the Provincial Governments should rest content with the improvements made; let them institute any other reforms that the ingenuity of man can suggest; but I do ask the House to reject with scorn the insinuations of the hon. Member for Cheshire and to reject this Resolution, which, instead of recognizing the liberal efforts the Government of India have made to carry out reforms, would visit these attempts with undeserved, unmerited censure.

SIR W. LAWSON (Cumberland, Cockermouth): I think that whatever may be the result of the division, which I hope we may have by-and-bye, my hon. Friends the Mover and Seconder of the Resolution may be congratulated on the result that everybody, including the hon. Gentleman himself, have, so far as I can understand, denounced this outstill system. I do not understand why the Under-Secretary for India should be so much opposed to this Resolution, because, as the hon. Gentleman went on with his speech, he seemed to agree very much with the policy of my hon. Friend, which was to reduce the temptations to drink among the people of India. If that is so, what better course could be taken than to pass this Resolution to do what the Government say is right and proper to do? To-night we have not any Irishmen present, and I do not know that we could employ our time better than by discussing a question which affects 200 millions of our fellow-subjects in India. In the course of his speech the hon. Gentleman asked why, when we had so many horrible things to look to in England, we should turn our attention to India. The reason is because the state of things is so horrible in England that we should take care not to allow it to be extended to India. As was once said by the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian the duty of the Government should be to make it easy for the people to do right and difficult for them to do wrong. But we are re-

versing that system. In England the question of temperance has been discussed, I might almost say, *ad nauseam*, and every effort has been made by its advocates to remove the degradation and stigma of intemperance. But, nevertheless, in spite of every attempt, every sort of system, every sort of provision, the demon of intemperance holds the field. As Baron Dowse said not long since, the measure of the degradation of a district is to be found in the facilities for drink which it affords. All our efforts to advance the cause of civilization will fail so long as the Government put temptation in the way of the people of England or India. The Chancellor of the Exchequer of the day manages to get a revenue of many millions by promoting the consumption of drink among the people; he arranges the temptations that he may get the revenue. When the time comes for adding up the balance sheet the right hon. Gentleman rejoices greatly over the large sum he has got, and then, as Mr. Disraeli said, "With a face arranged for the occasion," he makes a few perfunctory remarks as to the regret he feels at the immorality of people indulging in the temptations placed before them. This is what takes place here. The money is raised at the expense of the degradation and ruin of the nation. The hon. Member for Barrow said that the worst system in the world was the system of excise in India. But in England we are doing the same thing. It is worse in India in this way, because the educated public opinion of India is against it. Here educated public opinion is not against it; the condemnation comes from the lower orders. Every drinking shop in this country is licensed not by the working people, but by the gentry, and the guilt lies as much at their door as at the door of those who take the drink. The tempter is as guilty as the tempted. The Prime Minister said, "I will speak no evil of public-houses," and, of course, he did not. The question raised by my hon. Friend's Motion to-night is, are we to bring about the same state of things in India as we have in England—are we to make it a drunken country? I forget who it was that said that if we came away from India the epitaph of our rule there would be—"England found India sober and left it drunk." The Under Secretary says that the state of things is

not so bad as we think, and that the amount spent in drink is only equal to sixpence per head of the population; but it is bad enough, and the alarming feature is that year by year it is growing worse, and no evidence has been adduced against that of my hon. Friend's, that the increase in the consumption of drink is going on all over India as a whole. Why do I say it is, if possible, worse to go on in this manner in India than we do in England? First of all, because we are forcing a new custom upon the people. It is not the custom of India to drink beer and such things. Next, it is absolutely against their religion. The hon. Member for Marylebone, who was recently over in India, told me that there was a regiment of soldiers quartered there, two-thirds of whom were teetotallers, and the greatest order prevailed amongst them. A native of India, talking to the hon. Member about this regiment, asked of what religion they were. "They are Christians," was the answer. "Impossible," said the Hindoo, "they behave so well." Well, Sir, everybody would behave well, I believe, if you could only keep drink from them. Not only, I say, are we flying in the face of the customs of the natives of India and of their religion, but as the hon. Member for Flintshire (Mr. S. Smith) pointed out, we are forcing these drink shops upon a population perhaps the poorest in the world, and who will suffer even more if led into drinking habits than our own people do at home. It seems to me very surprising that this House should hesitate at all as to the necessity of passing this Resolution, because what did we do just a year ago? Last year we passed a Resolution, which I have carried about in my pocket ever since, because it is about the best thing that has been done in this Parliament. It gives hope for the future, and encourages every friend of temperance throughout the kingdom. The resolution, which was moved by my hon. Friend the Member for Leicester, was supported in an eloquent speech by the sugar-bounty man, the right hon. Member for Liverpool (Baron de Worms) and not a single speech was made against it. The resolution was—

"That this House having regard to the disastrous physical and moral effects of the liquor traffic among uncivilized races, as well

as the injury it inflicts upon legitimate commerce, will cordially support the Imperial and Colonial Governments in their endeavours to suppress the traffic in spirituous liquors with natives in native territories."

["Hear, hear."] I am delighted to hear that the House still supports that Resolution. But I want to know why natives should be protected above everybody else. I have asked at public meetings whether we are not all natives of some place or other; and I cannot see why this House should be kind and charitable to Zulus, Hottentots and savages, and not extend its kindness to the people of this country, and in this case to the people of India. If any one speaks on the Ministerial Bench again to-day, I hope he will tell us what has been done with regard to this resolution. It is all very well to pass resolutions, but I should like to ask the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs (Sir J. Fergusson) what has been done to carry them out. Has he written any despatch or formulated any Statute to carry out the Resolution we unanimously passed with such delight a year ago? But whether he has done anything or not, here we have an opportunity to-night of re-enforcing that Resolution and doing something which will give still greater encouragement to people out of doors. Though a Resolution in itself is not much, it is a promise of good, and will encourage all those who are working to benefit the people. All we want is to stop the practice of forcing this temptation on the people of India. I was delighted to hear the speech of the hon. Member for Kensington (Sir R. Lethbridge). That hon. Member played the part of Baalam, and blessed us all round; and I trust his speech will give as much satisfaction to the people of India as it did to hon. Members on this side of the House. With regard to the views of the natives of India themselves, I remember, in the time of the late Mr. Fawcett, on a Committee inquiring into questions affecting India, getting from a witness a statement to the effect that the natives were dead against the drink shops, and would get rid of them altogether if they had the power to do so. I sincerely trust the House will pass this Resolution. It is no light matter. Did not the Archbishop of Canterbury, in the House of Lords a short time ago,

declare that the drink traffic is about as injurious as slavery itself? Well, I hope the House will pass this Resolution by a good majority, because it will strengthen the hands of the Government in dealing with the liquor question in India, promote temperance, and show that this country does not look upon the people of India merely as machines to produce revenue.

SIR R. TEMPLE (Worcester, Evesham): Once more I lay my tribute of flowers of speech on the benign altars of my old antagonists, the hon. Mover and the hon. Seconder of this Resolution. It appears that once more the ancient soil of India has been trodden for several weeks by the classic feet of the hon. Member for Barrow (Mr. Caine). I am not sure whether the hon. Member for Flintshire has recently renewed his acquaintance with India, but the hon. Member has been there; and those two Members may say, with reference to their visits to India, "*Veni, vidi, vici*—I went to India and observed her wrongs and her evils and shortcomings, and lo! I have triumphed over them all by my eloquent tongue and glowing pen." Both these hon. Members, as the House will recollect, have flung very freely a charge of bias across to the occupants of these benches. I beg the House to be kind enough to recollect how forcibly they made out their case that all of us who have had the honour of serving our Queen and country in our Eastern Empire are biassed on this question and all other cognate questions. But if this charge of bias may be made in this manner, it can be rebuked in the same way. I venture to say that this particular imputation, mild as it is, will recoil on the heads of both these hon. Members. I desire to speak with the greatest respect and regard of the hon. Member for Flintshire, who is as true a humanitarian as exists inside or outside of this House; but I appeal to the recollection of the House, as to whether it is not a fact that the hon. Gentleman paints in the darkest and gloomiest colours every case which he presents for our consideration. I venture to say, therefore, that his statements are highly overcharged and exaggerated, and that in this case he has filled up the goblet to overflowing, and has poured out the vials of his indignation over the heads of the Indian

officials, just as he did on a former occasion over the heads of the educational authorities in the principal towns of England. We may imagine, if the hon. Member who seconded the Resolution were to paint in the colours which he has used to-night the social condition in reference to intemperance in the metropolitan area, what a case he would make of it. The House can, therefore, judge what sort of case he is making out for India, and if they will not accept the hon. Member's statement without some sort of mental reservation regarding England, neither will they accept it regarding India. I should like to say a word regarding the Government of India. Both these hon. Members read out a despatch from the Viceroy in Council, and they seemed to imply that that despatch was written in ignorance—in ignorance almost verging on insincerity. I would ask the House whether the great machine set up by Parliament and this very Legislature that I have now the honour of addressing, and presided over by one of the greatest statesmen and most eminent noblemen of the day, deserves to be described in these terms. I would ask the House whether it believes that those responsible for the administration of Her Majesty's Government in India, with all its mighty interests, would have written a despatch which could be justly described by the words used by those hon. Members. If the servants of the Crown are to blame in this matter, I am one of them. I am as much answerable as anybody, because it has been my lot to govern more than half of the great Dependency at different times. The various populations under my Government have numbered at least a hundred and five millions, and I declare on my honour before you, Sir, and this House, that throughout my career I have acted on those principles which were set forth by the Viceroy in his Despatch, and by my right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State, as quoted by the Under-Secretary this evening. One of the hon. Members opposite was good enough to say that we who have risen to the top of the ladder, or to the uppermost branches of the tree, have risen solely by increasing and augmenting the revenue. I am quite unaware that I owe my rise in life to anything of the kind. If I were to attribute it to any particular cause I should attribute it

rather to services on the frontier, to pushing on the railways, to saving life from famine, and to the management of difficult diplomatic missions, and also no doubt to the management of finances, although not to matters connected with fiscal administration. The hon. Member may say that I may have attempted to repress drinking by means of taxation, but that my endeavours were not supported by my subordinates. I ask the House whether I look the sort of man (laughter); I repeat do I look the sort of man likely to give orders and not see them carried out? There are some hon. Members present who have served under me, and there are many others more or less cognizant of my career, and I would ask them to tell the House whether my orders could be safely disobeyed. I am no better than those who have gone before me, or than my brother officers who are administering India. I am only a specimen of the class to which I belong. The House must remember that India is a country abounding with materials for the manufacture of liquor. Liquor can be distilled from every kind of grain, and has been so distilled for thousands of years. The bark of its trees, the sap of its leaves, and the flowers of its shrubs, supply India with materials for the distillation of liquor; and therefore I imagine that the amount of illicit manufacture which would go on unless repressive processes were applied would be enormous. I am sorry to hear my hon. Friend the Member for Kensington (Sir R. Lethbridge), for whose opinion I have the greatest respect, say that illicit manufacture is a bogey. I say it is a reality, and I ask the House of Commons whether it is likely that a population who has understood the art of brewing from time immemorial, and who has a passion for strong drink, would leave untouched and unused all those materials of which I have spoken. Hon. Members opposite, and some even on this side of the House have spoken of local option and total prohibition, and have recommended that powers to deal with those questions should be made over to the new municipalities, or perhaps even to those native congresses which have recently assembled. Local option may be of some use in this country, where the majority cannot tyrannize over the minority. Un-

doubtedly, the majority of the people of India are in favour of total abstinence, but a certain minority is of the other way of thinking and practising. If local option were allowed, the majority would undoubtedly stop the liquor shops, and, mark this, what would be the consequence? The majority having no means of stopping illicit practices, any amount of unlicensed distillation would go on. If we had total prohibition, who is to enforce it? I confess that not even I, myself, with all my administrative power, would undertake such a task as to stop every still that might be set up from one end of India to the other. Every grove of palm trees, every cottage, every field, every outlying jungle, would teem with stills and shops under no check. What police would be required for such a purpose, and what odious inquisition, and what manifold evils and corruption would arise from that inquisition! Even if we did succeed in enforcing total abstinence and total prohibition in British India, we could not do so in the native States. The argument that native opinion is against drink is refuted by the fact that every native State has its drink establishments. There was more smuggling of opium from the Gaikwar's territory than any other place under my control in Bombay. Had native opinion been against that system, the native Government which preceded us would have abolished it. Was there not drinking, and was there not an excess of taxation of every kind and sort found by us when we conquered India, and are not those systems as old as the history of India itself? My hon. Friend, the Member for Cumberland, has said that drinking is opposed to the religion of the people of India. Now, luckily, I have fortified myself with what I conceive to be the very best Native opinion to be obtained on that matter. I refer to Rajendra Lala Mitra, who is, I believe, one of the most learned and accomplished Hindus of this generation. He is profoundly versed in all the ancient religious beliefs of his country, and is a master not only of the Indian classics, but also of our Western tongue. In his elaborate work on the Indo-Aryans he has a chapter on "The Spirituous Drinks of Ancient India;" and he writes without bias either way—without any theory to sustain or to overthrow—and merely with the intent

to portray Hindu manners by citations from authoritative writings. After some discussion, he goes on to say—

"Elders, anchorites, sages, and learned men, forming the bulk of the priestly class, doubtless abstained from them (spirituous drinks), as they do now; so did a good number of thousand respectable householders; but they constituted only a fraction of the sum total of the community. And Sanscrit literature, both ancient and mediæval, leaves no room for doubt as to wine having been very extensively used in this country at all times and by all classes."

A quotation from classical poetry runs thus—

"How will you, dear one, of wine-reddened eye, who have quaffed delightful liquor, drink the mist-befouled water which I offer with my tears?"

In one of the Sacred Books, a goddess, girding herself to prepare for combat with a demon, says, "Roar, roar, ye fool, for a moment only, till I finish my drinking." After adverting to the authority of the Tantra Books in modern Hinduism, our author cites several passages, from which I select one, thus: Siva, the god, says—

"O sweet-speaking goddess, the salvation of Brahmins depends on drinking wine. I impart to you a truth, oh mountain born, when I say that the Brahmin who attends to drinking forthwith becomes a god. True knowledge can never be acquired, goddess dear, without drinking wine. Therefore should Brahmins always drink."

And again—

"Whoever after being initiated in the salvation-giving spell, fails to drink wine is a fallen man in this iron age."

Lastly, our author after describing the supposed effects of the Soma beer upon the Celestials, adds that—

"The effect of this liquor upon the gods could only have been assumed from the knowledge of what it was upon the worshippers."

I have only culled just a few of these flowers out of many in order to show the House what a fallacy it is to suppose that the use of liquor is abhorrent to native sentiment or native religion. Now, as regards the system of which the hon. Member (Mr. Caine) complains. He spoke of it as instituted in 1830. It is as old as the Indian history. Does he suppose that the word Abkar is Anglo-Indian? Not at all. It is good old Persian, and is as old as the word "Mogul" itself. One system after another of distillation has been done away with. We adopted the central distillation system, and the hon. Member has denounced that. Then we

go to the outstill system, and he denounced that. He attacks them in detail. He reminds me of the gim boy, for whom the strokes of punishment were either too high or too low, until he was not struck at all. No system whatever would suit the hon. Gentleman, so that we would have the people using liquor unchecked from one end of the country to the other. But this distillery system has this great advantage. It brings the manufacturer and the retailer of spirits under absolute supervision. We know exactly what liquor is or is not made, and how much has been consumed. We can carefully regulate and calculate the quantities according to the demand of the various localities; we are able to ascertain that so much liquor is required, and so much and no more is issued and sold to the people. On the whole, that is the very best system you could have, if you are to have any system at all, and not to leave the people unchecked. I admit, of course, in this, as in all other respects, there are dangers, because you may have a farmer who tells you he wants the liquor, and he may push the sale. Still, if you are to have a system at all, it is hardly possible to devise a better one than that, provided always it can be carried out in a judicious and prudent manner. Then we come to the question of outstills. I found that, during the time I was at Bengal, the central distillery system was in operation, but in those days it was being discovered that in certain outlying parts of the country the liquor was got from the central distillery, and so we had to regulate the consumption and bring it under control. I am shocked to hear that my successor has adopted the outstill system for many of the most densely populated parts. I have read some reports of what happened, and, though I must say they are greatly exaggerated, nevertheless more harm than good has been done by that attempt. A great source of error in exaggeration are misleading terms. It was complained to the Government that men are becoming drunkards who were once sober. It turns out that they misunderstood the English "drunk" and the English "sober." By "drunk" they meant that a man took a moderate amount of liquor, and by "sober" they meant a man who never touched liquor at all. So the House will readily see that there was great exaggeration. I am not

at all prepared to defend the outstill system. My impression is that it should be restricted as it was in my time, and in the time of my hon. predecessor, and that it should gradually be withdrawn. I hope I understand the Under Secretary correctly that it is being or has been withdrawn, though the withdrawal is rather late. It is doubtless true that in some cases where they substitute a cheap and diluted liquor for pure liquor the impression is raised that more liquor is being drunk than was the case before; but if the duty is increased the only effect will be that you will get, I will not say a maximum of revenue with a maximum of consumption, but a larger revenue without an increase of consumption. With regard to the question of increase of outstills, I admit that I am not prepared to defend that system in Bengal. In my own time, and in the time of my predecessors, in the Government of Bengal it was considerably restricted, and my impression is that it ought now to be entirely withdrawn. I have no figures with me in regard to the alleged increased consumption of drink in Bombay, but I do happen to have brought with me some figures with regard to the state of things in Madras; and I will just quote some facts from the appendix to the able Report of Mr. John Buckland. What does that gentleman show? He shows that in the year 1882-83 there were 1,200,000 gallons of under-proof spirit consumed in that Presidency, while in the year 1887-88, the consumption had risen to 1,350,000 gallons, or an increase of 150,000 gallons, which is, after all, only a very small increase during a period of six years, especially when we consider the freedom from famine that has prevailed during that period, and the marked increase that has taken place in the population, the result really being that the consumption has been kept down although the revenue has been rising. Some remarks have been made about the Bombay system, and it has been stated that the consumption has increased in seven years from two to two and three-quarter millions. I think that this is a remarkably infinitesimal increase when we have regard to the enormous growth of the population and the increase of wealth especially among the working classes. After all, from the figures quoted by

the Under Secretary of State for India, the increased consumption only amounts to about 600,000 gallons among a population of 650,000, which is less than 8 pints per head per annum, and an almost homœopathic increase per diem. With regard to what has been said about Assam, I would remark that that is one of those places in which, as there is a tendency to drink among the class of labourers on the tea plantations, it is desirable that great care should be taken. But with regard to the allegation that drunkenness is increasing in India, I for one entirely disbelieve it. It is some years since I left that country, but from my knowledge of the people up to that time I venture emphatically to deny the charge, and I speak from a knowledge that I do not think can be easily controverted. Moreover, I firmly believe that the people of India still continue to deserve, as they have done for ages, the character of being upon the whole, a sober and temperate people. I hope before the debate closes we shall hear the evidence which can be furnished by the hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for Bristol (Colonel Hill) who has travelled from one end of India to the other, and who can tell the House what he saw and heard during his investigations. Not only do I feel certain that drunkenness is not on the increase in India, but I challenge hon. Gentlemen opposite to furnish a single fact drawn from the authentic statistics of the country or from private information that can be sustained by examination and inquiry which will confirm the theory or allegation that drunkenness is increasing in that portion of the British Empire. Remember that in England any grocer who can get a licence may sell spirituous drink, and in recent years there has been legislation which has fostered private brewing by exempting these small brewers from taxation. The result is that even in my own country there are many thousands of these private brewers. What would be the result if you adopted a like policy in India? I maintain that we have been far more careful of the moral interests of our people in India than we have been of the people in our own country. The mover and the seconder of the Motion have depicted the evils in the most exaggerated manner and through the dark green spectacles of the teetotal cause. As far as I can remember, the

mover of the Motion made no suggestion either in the direction of total prohibition or local option, but the hon. Member for Barrow suggested that the taxation of European spirits imported into India should be raised. That is a mild proposal which I should not object to, and we may as well make that suggestion an acceptable present to the Under Secretary. Further, the hon. Member also recommends the doing away with the outstill system in Bengal. But nowhere except in Bengal does the outstill system exist to any appreciable extent. It has been condemned by the Government of India, and it is in course of being abolished.

MR. W. S. CAINE: It still exists in Bombay.

SIR R. TEMPLE: Only in very remote parts of the province, and it is being done away with. Remember, this is not the first time it has been condemned in this House. It is, after all, only the old, old story. Thus the hon. Members who have spoken have in reality thrown no fresh light on this subject. I do agree, however, that some inquiry should be made as to the opium dens mentioned by the hon. Member for Barrow. Either the evidence of the hon. Member should be taken, or a report of his speech should be sent to the Government of India in order that inquiry should be made as to whether a stop could not be put to these places. I deny, however, that the Indian Government have anything to do with those dens beyond taxing them. And finally I come to the question of prohibition. I do not think that is possible, and I do not believe that the missionaries advocate it. I admit that these missionaries' reports deserve careful attention; and when I lived in India I was always ready to investigate thoroughly any matters which they brought before me, because I know how well informed they are. I do deprecate most strongly the over strong language of the resolution. What possible good can come from flinging such charges at the head of a high authority like the Viceroy? If this House wishes to evince a high sense of public policy and national morality, let it strengthen the hands of the Government of India by declaring its approval of the despatches of the Viceroy and of the Secretary of State, which accurately lay down the fiscal and moral principles involved in the case. Let it content itself with affirming those noble

and judicious principles so well set forth, and thus strengthen the hands of the Government of India in the performance of a very difficult task. We would not then lay ourselves open to misconstruction and misconception, and I believe we would far better perform our duty to England and to her mighty Empire in the East by agreeing to a judicious modification of my hon. Friend's resolution.

SIR W. HARCOURT (Derby): I have listened with great interest and instruction to the speech of the hon. Member, who always speaks with such authority on matters relating to Indian administration, but I have failed to gather from the speech of the hon. Gentleman or that of the Under Secretary any argument against the Resolution. I do not understand either of those hon. Gentlemen to deny that there is great room for improvement in the fiscal system in India with reference to the liquor traffic. Now this is a subject common to both sides of the House, and the question is whether it is well or whether it is not that the House of Commons should pronounce an opinion in that direction which may both strengthen the hands of the Government at home and stimulate the action of the Government of India. That I conceive to be the position we are in to-day. The last speaker has told us that if there were Local Option in India the liquor shops would be shut up. What does that mean except that the great majority of the people of India are against that traffic? In that respect they seem to be superior to their own gods and goddesses, and to the teaching of the Brahmins which the hon. Baronet has expounded with such learning to the House. The great majority of the people of India now appear not only to be abstainers themselves, but wish the system of abstinence to be general. The responsibility of England in this matter is therefore very great. We are the absolute governors of India, and the people of India have no representative institution in which this question can be fought out between the majority and the minority. The hon. Member for Evesham has said that if we did not have this traffic we should have illicit distillation; but I imagine that where the sentiment of the great mass of the population is adverse to the traffic you would have the greatest

security against illicit distillation. Remember that illicit distillation generally exists where the sympathy of the people is with the drink, and not where it is against it. I should like to know how you stop it now. The Under Secretary for India tells us we have a tax of 600 per cent on liquor. Now that is a great temptation to distillation, and, if people want to drink, illicit distillation must be expected to exist with such a tax as that. The methods by which you prevent it now may be used to prevent it under a different system. The hon. Member for Evesham has, I think, done injustice to his own administrative ability when he declares that to stop illicit distillation is an impossibility. He has said that drinking might be introduced into Assam. Now that is a practical illustration of what is being done under the English Government. We have conferred great blessings upon India. No doubt we have given her a just administration to which she was not accustomed. Still we are in danger of bringing to her also evils and vices which are unfortunately the effects of our civilization. Therefore, we are especially bound to be very careful in this matter. The Under Secretary has endeavoured rather to minimize the matter than to argue against this Resolution. He has said that the amount of the expenditure per head of the whole population averages only 3d.

SIR J. GORST: That is the amount of the duty paid.

SIR W. HARCOURT: The fallacy of that argument has already been pointed out, because, although only a small part of the population drinks, you spread the amount over the whole population. We are, however, dealing with an extremely poor people, who live on a handful of rice, and whose clothing is a single rag; and 3d. per head to them is probably more than 3s. to an English labourer. You must be careful lest you introduce and encourage a system which creates habits of drinking that do not now exist among them. I have listened to what has fallen from the Under Secretary and the hon. Member for Evesham, and I am not satisfied that there is not more drinking in India now than there was previous to English rule there. I was a little surprised that the Under Secretary was only able to give us the figures as to the Island of Bombay. With all their

knowledge and authority, the Government in a debate of this character ought to have laid before the House figures showing whether drinking is actually greater or less than it was, and we had a right to expect a statement of that nature from the Government.

SIR J. GORST: The right hon. Gentleman's Government did not collect the statistics which would be requisite for a comparison.

SIR W. HARCOURT: What is the use of a miserable *tu quoque* like that? The present Government have been three years in office, and this question has been debated in the House before.

SIR J. GORST: The Government have statistics for the last two years, but not the figures of earlier years to compare with them.

SIR W. HARCOURT: I am sorry that the Under Secretary should have endeavoured to bring the debate to a miserable retort of this kind. I had myself been trying to argue the question in a different tone. I had said nothing against the Government, but I was speaking of the responsibilities of England towards India. I desired to introduce nothing in the way of Party recrimination. I asked, and again I ask, is drinking increasing among the native populations of India or is it not? We have no information on that point, which lies at the root of the whole subject. What are we asked by this Resolution to do? The hon. Member who has just sat down says there is advantage in the present fiscal system, and that the Government can regulate the amount of liquor imported. That is a curious statement, but I want to know on what basis the Government of India act in determining how much liquor shall be drunk. Does the hon. Member for Evesham with all his experience say that the matter is satisfactory as it stands at present? He admitted that it is not satisfactory in Bengal. The Resolution is in no way an attack upon the Indian Government, but simply a warning to them to be extremely careful on the subject of the liquor traffic. The object of the Resolution is to induce the Government of Bombay to move faster in effecting those reforms which the hon. Member for Evesham admits to be necessary. Therefore having listened to this debate I regard the Resolution not as an attack on the Government but rather as a declaration on the part of the

House of Commons that nothing should be done by the Government of India which would in any way tend to increase habits of intemperance among the native population. Regarding it in that sense, and convinced of the necessity for such a Resolution more by the speeches of the hon. and gallant Member for Evesham and of the Under Secretary than by those of the Mover and Seconder, I shall give my vote in favour of it.

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir JAS. FERGUSSON, Manchester, N.E.): I hope the House will allow me, in the few moments left to us, to reply to the somewhat extraordinary speech to which we have just listened. I should be the first to recognize the good intentions and philanthropic efforts of the hon. Mover and Seconder of the Resolution, but their assertions have been met by most remarkable disproof on the part of the Under Secretary for India. My hon. Friend has shown that in a most remarkable degree a check has been put upon the consumption of liquor by the control of Government, and that the system, which has led in some districts to an increased consumption, has been altered. He has shown that in the best districts of India there have been such measures taken as have resulted in an increase of the revenue simultaneously with a great reduction in the consumption of spirits, notably in Bombay. I may also tell the right hon. Gentleman that the same result, though in a less remarkable degree, has taken place in Calcutta. I have only the return for two successive years, 1886-87 and 1887-88. The consumption in the first year was 200,000 gallons, and the revenue 669,000 rupees; and in the second year the consumption had fallen to 180,000 gallons, while the revenue had gone up to 748,000 rupees. It has been shown that the Government of Bengal are amending the system of outstills—the system which alone would justify the remarks of the hon. Member for Flintshire. The District Revenue Officers have jealously objected to an increase of the drink shops, and there is an earnest desire on their part to raise the moral and material condition of the people in every particular. In face of these facts, ought the House to pass the vote of censure on the Government of India

which is contained in the resolution? The hon. Member for Flintshire would not further a good cause by ignoring all the good intentions and effects exhibited in recent years. I think the House will see it would do a great injustice by passing the resolution, and, instead of thus condemning the Government, would it not be worthier to give it encouragement and support in the performance of its difficult and responsible duties?

The House divided:—Ayes, 113; Noes, 103.—(Division List, No. 89).

Resolved, That, in the opinion of this House, the fiscal system of the Government of India leads to the establishment of spirit distilleries, liquor and opium shops in large numbers of places where till recently they never existed, in defiance of Native opinion and the protests of the inhabitants, and that such increased facilities for drinking produce a steadily increasing consumption, and spread misery and ruin among the industrial classes of India, calling for immediate action on the part of the Government of India with a view to their abatement.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY—CIVIL SERVICES.

Resolutions [29th April] reported.

CLASS II.

(1.) "That a sum, not exceeding £48,751 be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1890, for the Salaries and Expenses in the Department of Her Majesty's Treasury, and in the Office of the Parliamentary Counsel, and also the Expenses of the Statute Law and State Trials Reports Committees."

Resolution agreed to.

(2.) "That a sum, not exceeding £79,688, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1880, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Office of Her Majesty's Secretary of State for the Home Department and Subordinate Offices."

Question proposed, "That the House do agree with the Committee in the said Resolution."

*MR. B. COLERIDGE (Sheffield, Attercliffe): In consequence of my not moving my amendment on this Vote yesterday, the House was enabled to pass the Vote, and practically some time was saved. I now desire to move the amendment, and I would appeal to the right hon. Gentleman, the Home Secre-

tary (Mr. Matthews), as it is a matter that must take some time, and as we were not aware what would be the result of the motion moved to-day with reference to the taking of report of supply after twelve o'clock, to allow the Vote to be postponed. As the right hon. Gentleman does not indicate his views on the subject, I must move the Amendment that stands in my name—namely, to reduce the salary of the Inspector under the Vivisection Act of 1876 by the sum of £50. The Act of 1876, which was passed in consequence of a feeling that some restriction should be placed on operations on living animals, was really a compromise, and did not meet the views of either one side or the other on the question of vivisection. The object of the opponents of vivisection is that the Act should be thoroughly efficient, and in order to do that, we maintain that the Inspector should be a man who has a real desire to limit as far as the Act permits operations upon living animals. The present Inspector is not such a person. Under any circumstances the reports which he submits must be entirely framed on the reports of the persons who perform the operations. Since this gentleman has been appointed, the object and aim has obviously been to accept those reports as gospel truth, without inquiry and investigation as to whether or not they can be depended upon. When Sir Erasmus Wilson left a handsome bequest for the furtherance of science, a number of gentlemen signed a round robin to the Royal College of Surgeons, who were intrusted with the disposal of the money, desiring that the money should be devoted to the purpose of providing a national physiological laboratory, and one of the clauses of this round robin contained this remark:—

"It is a national discredit that we have nothing in London like the splendid laboratories which exist not only in the capital cities of Europe, but in comparatively small towns such as Bonn, Strasburg, and Leipsic."

I will give the House some indications of the character of laboratories which these gentlemen think it a national discredit we do not possess. This is the sort of thing which the Inspector under the Act is anxious to see repeated in this country. I quote a document which describes what is going on in

Strasburg. In that town there lives a Professor Goltz, and I find he

"introduced a new method by which larger portions of the brain were torn away and washed out by means of heated spring water, after the skull had been pierced in several places. The crater-shaped cavities thus formed were washed out. A dog with five holes bored in the head, and with the loss of nearly half a brain lived from February 14th to March 16th. Only young dogs are suitable for these experiments, and he says 'No one has succeeded in destroying the brain so extensively and handling it so roughly, while still preserving the creature's life as myself. In the case of several mutilated dogs, I decided to put out the left sound eye, in order to estimate correctly the functions of the eye maimed by the loss of the brain.' On the 8th November, 1875, two holes bored in the head of a bull dog, and the brain washed away. The animal becomes blind with the right eye. On December 11th, I took the left eye-ball out. Fresh disturbance of the brain on the 5th of February, this time on the right side; dies on February 15th."

Then we have an account of

"a very clever, lively, young female dog which had learnt to shake hands with both fore paws,"

and which

"had the left side of the brain washed out through two holes on the 1st of December, 1875."

Here is Professor Goltz again:—

"After I had laid bare the bone behind the ear of the pigeon, I bored out bit by bit, with the help of a sharp hollow chisel, the ear labyrinths on both sides of the head. In those cases where I endeavoured to destroy entirely both labyrinths, the birds died soon after the operation, with violent rolling movements or somersaults."

Describing another operation on a dog, he says:—

"The sanguinary part of the operation begins with the insertion of the cannula to supply artificial respiration."

The insertion of the cannula proves that the drug curare, which destroys all movement, while leaving sensation absolutely unimpaired, was administered.

"Then the right carotid artery is dissected out. Afterwards, while artificial respiration is being set up, a square opening is made in the left wall of the chest with a knife and the bone scissors. The opening is extended far into the right pleural cavity, and widened downwards, till it reaches the diaphragm, which is severed from the ribs. After this the catheter is introduced from the right carotis into the aorta, and from thence to the left ventricle of the heart. We have repeated this experiment six times."

This is the class of experiments that goes on in Strasburg. The operations at Leipzig are still more horrible. I find

that the spinal cords of two dogs were severed, and after some weeks they were scalded. The animals survived the scalding for six or ten days, and then after a continual fall of temperature died from putrefaction. Three other dogs whose spinal cords had been cut through, survived the subsequent scalding three days, one week, and three weeks respectively. A large sheep dog succumbed 36 hours after having its hind quarters immersed three times in scalding water. A young, active, and very lively dog, which had survived the infusion of blood from a scalded dog 31 days previously, was scalded for 45 seconds in water at 100 degrees centigrade (boiling point), up to the middle of its body. Experiment 21—rabbit scalded. The animal groans. Is bled to death after one hour and ten minutes. Experiment 31—a dog burnt for 30 seconds in boiling water. On the next day morose, very dejected, no appetite. Died 44 hours after the burning. Then we have a young, active dog, subjected to transfusion of the blood of a scalded dog. Four days afterwards it was much exhausted, staggered on its feet, perhaps from hunger, and was killed. Violent scalding of a dog. It died after eight hours. Young active dog killed on the fourth day after the injection of overheated blood. These are only instances of numberless cases of the same character. Well, Sir, we say that any man who says it is a national discredit that England does not possess laboratories similar to those at Strasburg and Leipsic, is absolutely unfit to be an Inspector under an Act, the object of which is to prevent cruelty to animals. Now, Sir, will it be believed that this Gentleman who has been appointed to be not a partizan but a judge, is an old vivisector himself? He was one of the Royal Commission, and no one who reads his evidence can fail to see that his whole object was to re-examine from the point of view of the vivisectors all the witnesses who had been pulled to pieces in cross-examination. I find that in connection with Dr. Sharping the Inspector conducted some experiments regarding asphyxia—which means seeing how long animals will live before they are finally choked. I am aware that it is exceedingly difficult to find out whether the reports of experiments are or are not to be believed. We have been refused

permission by the Home Office to see who does and who does not hold licences under the Act. We have asked to be allowed to inspect the places that are licensed under the Act for the performance of experiments, and we have again been refused. Lately the gentlemen who make these experiments have ingeniously refrained from giving the dates, nor do they as a rule give the places. I take the report of the Inspector for 1888, and I find that Dr. John A. McWilliam is put down as having operated upon 12 animals. He holds a simple licence. He has only operated in this last year because this is the only year in which he has held a licence. In the *Journal of Physiology* of this year—Vol. IX.—I find a report given by this gentleman of his operations. He begins by saying: "The following investigation was conducted on the hearts of various mammals—cats, dogs, rabbits, hedgehogs, guinea-pigs, and rats." He says the experiments were performed "partly on the excised heart" and "partly on the heart *in situ*." Any experiments on the heart *in situ* must be conducted while the animal is alive. Then he says "artificial respiration was employed." This speaks volumes to us, because artificial respiration is only necessary where the drug curare is employed. This drug, as I have already said, does not destroy sensation though it takes away all motive power. What we say is that curare, when employed with any other drug, renders the anæsthetic absolutely valueless. It is impossible to say when the effect of the anæsthetic has passed. What these gentlemen do is to strap the animal down, give it a whiff of chloroform and administer curare, after which it remains motionless till the end of the operation. Well, he says: "The chest was laid open; in some cases the pericardial sac was left intact, but in most of my experiments it was opened and the heart fully exposed." Then, he says: "As the result of a large number of experiments on the mammalian heart, I find," so and so. Another of his statements is: "In the second series of experiments the heart was examined *in situ*, with the normal circulation going on;" and another: "My observations on the action of the mammalian heart as seen after the thorax has been opened lead me to conclude," &c. Then, he says: "In mammals (cat and rabbit) I

have made a considerable number of experiments on this point." The House may take it from me that in that case the heart was *in situ*. Speaking of another experiment, he says: "I have on several occasions performed such experiments." Well, I say that no reasonable man could read all this and come to the conclusion that they represent experiments upon 12 animals and 12 animals only. Sir, these experiments involve practically the turning of animals inside out. And in view of the facts which I have quoted to the Committee, I venture to submit that unless you have an Inspector, who is, so to speak, a suspicious Inspector, and who will not take these gentlemen's reports as *prima facie* evidence without investigation, you are not doing your duty and carrying out the spirit of the Act. I have gone carefully into this matter, and I believe that at present the Act is doing more harm than good, because it has lulled public suspicion, and prevented people from believing the things which are going on. You have made them think that these things do not occur. I have very nearly come to an end of what I have to say, but there are just one or two matters further, which I should like to touch upon. I must again refer to this Report. It is an extraordinary document, and I ask the attention of the Home Secretary to it with a view to explaining its terms. In the first place, it divides the certificates held by each licensee under five heads, which are numbered respectively, 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5. But in another part of the report you have six divisions headed respectively, a, b, c, d, e, and f, and I have tried to find out what f is supposed to represent. It does seem to me most curious that having divided one part of the Report under five heads represented by numerals, you should in another part have six heads represented by letters. But now, Sir, I come to the language of the Report itself. This gentleman has been an inspector who does not inspect, although usually the first function of an inspector is to inspect. Well he has this year, and I hope not for the last time, although it is the first, inspected. But there is not much use in his inspecting a laboratory if it is known beforehand that he intends to do so, and still less is it of any use to inspect it when there is nothing going on, because a mere inspection of the

place of experimenting, and of the elaborate and carefully prepared instruments which are devised with the horrid ingenuity of man for the carrying out of these experiments is not what was contemplated by the Act. He says:

"In table I will be found the list of places registered in different buildings, and all these places have been visited by me during the past year and found to be well adapted for the purpose for which they were licensed."

Does he mean they are airy, light, or what? Does he mean that the instruments are efficient and the knives sharp, and that they were well adapted for the purpose of the licencee? And then he adds:

"The arrangements for the comfort of the animals were in every way satisfactory."

Did any one ever hear such language? Does he mean that the animals are comfortable when being operated upon? Does he mean that they are comfortable before dying or after the operation? That they are comfortable before the operation is not at all unusual, because one of the leading lights in the vivisection world has recommended vivisectionists to carefully prepare their patients, to take young and active animals and feed them well before they are operated upon, because the more lively and vigorous they are at the time of the operation, the better the scientific result. Therefore, no doubt, these gentlemen treat the animals well before they operate upon them. I do ask any fair minded man whether such a statement in what is supposed to be an unbiassed Report is not a public outrage and a matter calling for comment on the spirit which actuates an official who is appointed for the purpose of preventing cruelty to these animals. Now the inspector continues in his report:—

"One of the main objects of the Act was to secure the avoidance of pain being inflicted on living animals that were the subject of experiment, and my attention has been especially directed to the efficient carrying out of this provision of the Act."

Sir, I wish to ask in what way has the attention of the inspector been specially directed to this matter. He says:—

"It is important to observe that comparatively few vivisections properly so-called, that is to say experiments involving a distinct surgical operation on a living animal, have been practised during the past year."

Now, Sir, we say that we have good reason to doubt the correctness of this part of the Report. The Report should

be unbiassed, and the man who is an inspector under the Act ought, if anything, to sympathize with the animals whom he is placed there to guard and see that they are not in any way unnecessarily operated upon. I do not propose now, Sir, to enter into the main question of vivisection. It is not material to this debate. I have only directed attention to facts connected with this Report, and I think that the facts which I have laid before this House justify me in saying that we ought now to take a stand and insist that the Act shall be properly carried out. We believe that the only safeguard—the only way in which it can be properly carried into effect, is by having as an inspector, a man who is not the creature and the chosen inspector of those whom he is appointed to inspect. He ought to be, rather, out of harmony with their desires, and in harmony with those who take the part of the animals. My point is that he is not the right man for the post, because at heart he is a friend of vivisectionists.

Amendment proposed, to leave out "£79,668" in order to insert "£79,618."—(Mr. Bernard Coleridge.)

Question proposed, "That '£79,668' stand part of the Resolution."

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. MATTHEWS, Birmingham, East): I have rarely heard the privileges of the House more entirely abused than by the personal attack which the hon. and learned Member has thought fit to make upon a scientific man of great eminence who has for ten or twelve years discharged his duties to the entire satisfaction of successive Secretaries of State. The hon. and learned Gentleman has based his attack as far as I can gather on a statement by the inspector that he thinks a laboratory of vivisection in this country would assist in scientific research, and therefore be a desirable thing, and in order to give venom to that charge he referred to a number of things which Professor Erichsen has no more to do with than the hon. and learned Member himself. I venture to say that the Professor is no more connected with the experiments which have been conducted at Strasbourg than is the hon. and learned Member. He has had nothing to do with those cruel and unjustifiable experiments. The hon. and learned

Member has suppressed entirely the fact that, under the Vivisection Act, the things he mentioned are impossible in this country. He did not tell the House that curare is not allowed as an anæsthetic in this country, and he describes experiments which are absolutely prohibited in this country.

*MR. B. COLERIDGE: They are not.

MR. MATTHEWS: The Home Office never grants certificates for experiments on cats and dogs except certain certificates of fitness are forthcoming, and the Act declares that curare shall not be an anæsthetic. Therefore, these experiments are illegal and may be followed by penal consequences, and I assure the hon. Member I should not hesitate to prosecute any man detected in carrying them out in this country. The hon. and learned Member will find that Dr. J. A. McWilliam does not hold Certificate E, and therefore he could not have performed these experiments in this country.

*MR. B. COLERIDGE: Dr. McWilliam tells us himself that these experiments were made in the University of Aberdeen.

MR. MATTHEWS: Yes the twelve were, but the hon. Member himself read from the article accounts that apparently related to many more than twelve experiments. Dr. McWilliam only went by Certificate C, which does not enable a man to perform an experiment on a dog or a cat. In England, under the Vivisection Act, a man cannot perform such an experiment without having Certificate E, and if he does so he does an illegal act, and undoubtedly would be prosecuted.

*MR. B. COLERIDGE: I am sure the right hon. Gentleman will pardon me. Any man who holds a simple license can vivisect a dog or cat under an anæsthetic.

MR. MATTHEWS: But the licenses are not given by the Home Office, except upon the production of the certificate required by the Statute. That is the invariable practice. I never give Certificate E, which licenses an experiment on a dog or a cat, unless it is accompanied by Certificate B, which states that insensibility cannot be brought about without necessarily frustrating the object of experiment. Therefore it really seems to me the hon. and learned Member's charge is based upon

foundations that have given way. The hon. and learned Member finds fault with Professor Erichsen because in his Report he refers to the condition of the places where the experiments are performed. I may say that of his own motive Professor Erichsen has introduced improvements in the system. He has advised me against licensing private houses for the performance of these experiments, and as a result of his advice the places where they are now performed are public institutions where a certain publicity attaches to them, and where persons are present who understand the subject, and can see that the thing is done in accordance with the law. This I believe to be one of the greatest and most valuable checks and safeguards that could be introduced. Of course, if an experiment is performed in a private house or private room, it is liable to abuse, but in public places such as the Brown Institution, Owen's College, the University of Aberdeen, and so on, there is always an intelligent and enlightened audience at hand, able and ready to check anything like abuse. It is part of the Inspector's duty to report on these places. Professor Erichsen, who is certainly about as eminent a scientific man as we have in this country, as far as he possibly can superintends and is present at the experiments performed. The hon. and learned Gentleman says Professor Erichsen has not time to inspect enough. It is no doubt impossible for him to inspect all these places, and to view all the experiments, and, therefore, I obtained, this year, the sanction of the Treasury to give him an assistant who shall be present while these experiments are being performed, and judge whether the conditions on which the licenses are granted are properly carried out. In consequence of the curious reticence of the hon. and learned Gentleman, the House may not be aware that the provisions of the Act are express, that experiments likely to cause pain must be performed under the influence of an anæsthetic, and that when the influence of the anæsthetic is exhausted the animal must be killed to prevent its suffering pain. In order to obtain exemption from these very stringent conditions, certificates must be obtained from very eminent persons in the

country, the President of the Royal Society, for instance, that it is absolutely necessary that anæsthetics must be used and that the animal must be killed the moment the effect of the anæsthetic has worn off. It is, of course, impossible that these experiments in vivisection can always be conducted without pain, according to the testimony of medical men. I am not myself enamoured of this system of physical research. The whole of my instincts are opposed to it. But Parliament has sanctioned it, and what we have to do is to see that the experiments are conducted in the best way possible upon the conditions prescribed by the Act. As far as I have had an opportunity of observing Professor Erichsen's conduct, he does most conscientiously and jealously endeavour to carry out the provisions of the Act. At his instance many prosecutions have been initiated, and in some cases we have proceeded to great lengths. Certain experiments or operations were undertaken in Cheshire and in the Welsh counties with a view to discovering a cure for foot and mouth disease or pleuro-pneumonia. I myself was of opinion that they ought not to be regarded as experiments that came under the Vivisection Act, but Professor Erichsen took a more stringent view and prosecutions were instituted, I own a little to my regret, against a gentleman who has since, I believe, established a means of curing these dangerous and fatal diseases among cattle by what he called the experiments he conducted, but which I regarded as an experimental method of treatment. I believe Professor Erichsen is not only a humane man but a man of considerable eminence in his walk of life, and that he discharges his duty in a manner worthy of the commendation and not of the blame of the House. I trust the amendment will be negatived.

*MR. J. E. ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe Div.): I regret that the Government did not accede at once to the suggestion of my hon. and learned Friend (Mr. B. Coleridge) that the matter should be postponed. We are now witnessing one of the evil effects of the new rule passed this afternoon. It certainly was never intended that we should be kept here after one o'clock discussing a matter of great interest to a large number of Members. The

promise of the Board of Trade was specifically that the rule would only be rarely put in force. I therefore move the adjournment of the debate. The almost hysterical speech of the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Matthews) has in no way disposed of the calm and well reasoned address of my hon. and learned Friend. The question has come suddenly upon most of us, and I hope the Chancellor of the Exchequer will consent to the adjournment of the debate.

Motion made and Question proposed "That the debate be now adjourned"—(*Mr. E. J. Ellis*).

*MR. GOSCHEN: Of course I had not forgotten the conversation which took place when the new rule was discussed this afternoon, when a feeling was expressed on our own side of the House as well as on the opposite side, that no great strain should be put upon hon. Members in consequence of the passing of the Resolution. When the hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Coleridge) rose, I did not observe that any objection was expressed in any part of the House to going on, and I certainly did not think the hon. and learned Gentleman was going to raise the whole Question of vivisection. I regret exceedingly that so lengthy a discussion should have taken place, because it is not the intention of the Government to have prolonged sittings at this period of the Session. Under the circumstances, I cannot resist the Motion for Adjournment.

Debate adjourned till Monday next.

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEE).

SIR JOHN MOWBRAY reported from the Committee of Selection: That they had discharged the following Member from the Standing Committee on Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping, and Manufactures, viz., Mr. Firth; and had appointed in substitution, Mr. Lawson.

Report to lie upon the Table.

House adjourned at ten minutes
after One o'clock.

HANSARD'S PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES.

No. 9.]

THIRD VOLUME OF SESSION 1889.

[MAY 9.]

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Wednesday, 1st May, 1889.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

LEASEHOLDS ENFRANCHISEMENT BILL.—(No. 11.)

Order for Second Reading read.

*MR. H. W. LAWSON (St. Pancras, W.): In asking the House to read this Bill a second time, I wish to point out how entirely the circumstances have changed since this subject was last discussed with a view to legislation. Opinion outside and inside this House was then unformed; facts and information of a definite kind were wanting; and the Bill of my hon. Friend the Member for Nottingham, rather laid down the lines on which a measure might be based than provided the machinery necessary for carrying it out. We do not claim for this Bill any perfection of draftsmanship, but it is so far complete that if it pass through Parliament, we believe it would be smooth, just and reliable in its working. The principle, however, is now exactly what it has always been, viz., the grant to urban leaseholders, with a substantial interest in their holdings, of the power to purchase the fee simple on fair and equitable terms. The case is not only stronger than it was in 1884, but it rests upon grounds as rich and full as any that can be made out for legislative change. There is first of all the Supplementary Report of the Royal Commission on the Housing of the Working Classes, quoted in the Memorandum. For more than a year they inquired into

the whole of those conditions which surround the dwelling places of our industrial population. The majority, including all the expert opinion on the Commission, reported that—

“The system of building on leasehold land is a great cause of the many evils connected with overcrowding, insanitary buildings, and excessive rents. This appears to be conclusively proved by the evidence of Lord William Compton, Mr. Boodle, the agent of the Marquis of Northampton, Mr. Vivian of Cambourne, and by the incidental evidence of other witnesses. The evidence of the two former witnesses contains a strong condemnation of the whole system of building on leasehold tenure. Those of your Majesty’s Commissioners whose signatures are appended to this supplementary report are of opinion that the prevailing system of building leases is conducive to bad building, to deterioration of property towards the close of the lease, and to a want of interest on the part of the occupier in the house he inhabits; and that legislation favourable to the acquisition on equitable terms of the freehold interest on the part of the leaseholder would conduce greatly to the improvement of the dwellings of the people of this country.”

This report was a protest, not against leasehold generally, but that particular form which had come before the Commission, the London system of 99 years and under. It has been said that the opinion thus expressed was not justifiable or borne out by the evidence; but I hardly think that those who make the assertion can have read it with any care, for it teems with facts which lead up to the conclusion that I have read out. It should be remembered that, too, the Chairman of that Commission, although he was unable to sign any but the main report, has since expressed his full concurrence with this view. In 1884 there was also obtained a series of reports, numbering to 22 in all, from our representatives abroad, as to the tenure of dwelling houses in the different countries of Europe. I am not going

through that long list, but without exception everywhere freehold is the prevailing tenure, and houses are hardly ever built on any other terms than out and out ownership of the land. This system, as tried by experience, seems to give general satisfaction, and no difficulty has been found in preserving the features of a town by the legal enforcement of salutary covenants.

"For instance," says Sir John Walsham, writing in respect to France, "if a Frenchman shall have covenanted or agreed to use a house as a private dwelling house only, and shall subsequently turn it into a shop, the Tribunals would, on application from one or more of the neighbours, at once summarily order the shop to be closed, and damage to be paid in case any detriment had been caused through the infringement of the covenant."

Not only abroad, however, is the London system of terminable leasehold condemned by its absence. It is exactly the same thing in this country. Nothing has been more clearly proved by the long inquiry of the Town Holdings Committee than that the system of short leasehold is limited in its operation to comparatively few towns and certain districts outside the Metropolis, on account of the general refusal in nearly all parts of the country but London, to build houses on any other system than the freehold or its equivalent, the perpetual, or long leasehold. Liverpool, Manchester, Bristol, Leeds, and Newcastle will have none of it. The Communities of most of the industrial centres of population have rejected the short terminable, in spite of the repeated efforts of the owners and trustees of settled estates and corporate property to thrust it down their throats. Of the population of England and Wales outside the Metropolis something like 60 per cent live in exclusively freehold or perpetual leasehold towns, and the same proportion of their houses are built upon those tenures, and 9 per cent live in towns mainly freehold with a similar proportion of houses. Only 11 Parliamentary Boroughs, most of them in Wales, and 19 towns with a population of from 20,000 to 7,000, live outside London under the London system. In Scotland, as a Glasgow lawyer says, in the returns forwarded to us, "the building lease is almost unknown." Instead of it the land is taken upon feu, which is, "for all practical purposes, a perpetual lease."

Mr. H. W. Lawson

The Society of Solicitors in Scotland say that where a feu has been made impossible by entail, several large towns have been built upon 99 years' leases. Huddersfield is a good example of the failure of the owner of a settled estate to force short leasehold upon a community when the necessities of space were less pressing than in the Metropolis. The power of leasing land there was limited at first to 21 years, but this restriction was in practice evaded, and so powers for the term of 90 years were obtained by Act of Parliament. This, however, was found to be insufficient, and on the ground that other owners in the neighbourhood were leasing land for 999 years, and that the Ramsden Estate was prejudiced in value by not being in the same position as "the progress of buildings and improvements" might be diverted, the leasing power for 999 years was at last obtained and has become the universal tenure. So it has been elsewhere, and in many cases the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, the greatest of the London landlords, have pursued the same policy, and have had either to enfranchise as at York, or to grant "three nines" as at Manchester. In these parts of the country there has been the free and healthy competition of rival systems and the worst has been driven to the wall. For this purpose settlements have been waived and Acts of Parliament modified. In the Metropolis there has been nothing in the nature of free choice. As Mr. Castle, the land agent of the Oxford Colleges, said in evidence before the Town Holdings Committee:—

"The people make the best of the circumstances, and put up with the monopoly when they cannot do better."

When our Metropolitan population got too big for the City of London, and required housing outside, the land available was fettered by every sort of legal disability by charters, restraining statutes, and family settlements, and much of it was incapable of being leased for a longer time than forty years. "There was outside old London," says Mr. Harrison, "the Bishop of London, the manor of Stepney at one end, and his manor of Paddington and Westbourne at the other end, and an intermediate mass of prebendal manors attached to the different prebends of St. Paul, and generally from Hackney

on the one side, to Paddington on the other." There was a belt of land round London, which was occupied by settled estate owners, and their great Church holdings. The limitations and disabilities of Church property were made general by some 300 or 400 private Acts of Parliament, and voluntary settlement. This legislation was obtained without any reference to public policy by the owners of settled estates. Our London system of leasehold is statute made, and it has been maintained from the first by private Acts framed on the lines of ecclesiastical custom and family settlement for the benefit of the owners of the soil. I doubt its advantage even to them in the long run, but the great point harped upon by their agents before the Committee has been that their property has been kept together and they have thus evaded the law of the Thelusson case against accumulations. To-day others are imitating their example, and all over London there are persons ready to buy freehold ground rents of contiguous houses in order that they, too, may build up their pile of real property which may in time bring in a rich harvest to them. What is the other side to this picture of isolated and exceptional riches? The other side shows you the evils of ill-housing, over-renting, and over-crowding inflicted upon the greatest town population in the world as upon others living under the same or similar conditions. Short leasehold has led to bad building, because the house instead of being made as solid and substantial as the owner's means will allow is built to last the term of the lease and no longer. The average lease for building or rebuilding is gradually diminishing in length until the 99 years' term has generally shrunk to 80, 70, 60, and, in some cases I know of, even 42 years' duration. A competent witness gave the Town Holdings Committee his opinion that "old freehold houses are as a rule very much better built than old leasehold houses." Mr. Stockhall, the representative witness of the Friendly Societies, said:

"The usual practice is for an estate to be laid out for building, and then the speculative builder runs up a certain number of houses which he immediately endeavours to sell to those who wish to occupy them. His object is to get rid of his property as quickly as possible. He then loses all responsibility with regard

to it; but if the builder had the hope that he could purchase the freehold at some future time, I take it that he would put up a very different class of house, since he would be sacrificing his own future interests if he built them as they are now jerry built."

An intelligent artisan who spoke in the same sense, comparing building on freehold and short leasehold, said that "one is built, the other is only a pretence at building." Rather than to any particular evidence, I appeal to the general knowledge that in Scotland and the North of England, the houses for the occupation of the trading and working classes are sounder and better than those lath-and-plaster fabrics run up in rows by what we call in London the "jerry builder," what they call in Lancashire the "brick-on-edge man," when it is said that if you drive a nail into the wall of one house it causes the whole terrace to vibrate with anguish. That some supervision of buildings is necessary none will dispute, but the supervision of the ground landlord in the outer districts and skirts of the Metropolis, when translated in action, has amounted to no more than the endeavour to get his land covered as quickly as possible at the highest ground rent obtainable in the market. As for the speculative builders, if a few have prospered on a large scale of operations, the failure of the many has convinced them that when short leasehold is general they labour under a weight which puts them at a great disadvantage as compared with their fellows in such a town as Leeds. Their's is a risky and unsatisfactory business. All of them who gave evidence before that Committee were in favour of enfranchisement, for I firmly believe that they would sooner work soundly and honestly to house the population if they had the chance, and that this short leasehold system is mainly responsible for the jerry builders' existence. As it is with construction in the first place, so it is afterwards with maintenance and repair. After a few years of a short lease has run out the market value becomes quickly, if not beautifully less, and the lessee refuses to carry out any improvements or to make any additions that are not rendered absolutely necessary by the conditions of his life. He will often put aside comfort and convenience, because he knows that part of the value he thus creates remains unexhausted at the end of his

term, and is transferred to the pockets of those who have not contributed a penny towards the increase. Besides this there is the Bill for repairs, that good building would diminish. So you have, in the leasehold system, a fatal check to beneficial improvements. That is not all. At the point when this rickety tenure is about to break down at the fag end of the lease, you bring into play the house jobber, or house farmer, of the type of the notorious Mr. Flight, who gets a great number of houses into his hands, and then sweats extortionate rents out of his luckless tenants. The practice is to do little or nothing to mend the unsanitary and dilapidated condition of the house. A coat of whitewash covers a multitude of sins. It may be said that by the covenants of the lease lessees are forced to "keep in good repair." Unfortunately, those covenants have neither been fulfilled nor enforced. On the Northampton Estate courts meant to be left open have been covered with houses, and the agent told me the covenants were of no avail. In some cases there has been a tacit acquiescence in this neglect on the part of the ground landlord. If covenants were enforced the lease would be thrown up and the ground rent extinguished. It may be said, "Then the local authority will intervene and have these things done." I believe it is too often made the whipping boy of the ground landlord. In the first place, there is the difficulty of putting the saddle on the right horse. Lord Shaftesbury told the Royal Commission—

"It is a difficult point of law to say who are the owners. There are a number of persons holding different leases in the same house."

Then, if they know, they are often to saddle the holder of a short lease with the cost of repairs, which may exceed the whole value of his interest in the property. In London I have heard of a case where the most vigilant of all the Vestries was unwilling to take the necessary steps to secure sanitary conditions, because the lessee would thus have had to spend £300 upon property in which the whole interest was not worth more than £200. Thus the local authority is impeded and thwarted in its action by the privileged position of the ground landlord. It is not possible that any house farmer who takes up only on short terms of under

10 years could have benefited by the passing of this Bill, but it is possible that some lessees who do not themselves occupy might have. In some districts a large proportion of the lessees are occupiers. Woolwich or the mining districts of Wales for example; in others the precarious nature of leasehold has prevented men of small means, especially artisans and labourers, from investing their savings in a property which is a constantly diminishing quantity. I believe that to be a good thing in itself. If some middlemen take advantage of the power to enfranchise they will not have the same motive for keeping the fee simple of the property in their hands as has the ground landlord. "The middleman," said one witness, "is a much more commercial person than the original owner." He will buy to sell. Freehold will circulate as it does in most of our big towns, from hand to hand, and in any case the man will have a direct interest in keeping his property in a safe and sanitary condition, and will be more answerable to the jurisdiction of the local authority which will deal with one responsible proprietor. One of the worst features of the leasehold system is the constant exaction by estate agents of exorbitant fees and law costs on every transaction connected with a house. One witness, speaking of the position of an agent, said, "it is wonderful what pickings there are." Speaking of returns from covenants, Mr. Harrison said—

"On all these things you always pay fees to the solicitor and fees to the surveyor, and in many of these restrictive covenants, for instance on the Gunter estate, you cannot make a single assignment without you give notice and pay a fee of two guineas."

Other witnesses spoke of fees up to five guineas, and this sum is the present maximum on the Portman estate. It used to be 50 per cent higher before 1885, and the agent admits that these fees go towards his salary, and that he charges a consulting fee of two guineas for a statement of terms for any purpose to tenants as well as applicants. In fact, you pay fees at every turn. These pickings account for a good deal of the opposition to leasehold enfranchisement, and they have the same noxious effect that the payment by results and percentage has upon collectors of weekly

rents. The people who live in short leasehold towns not only pay in fees, they pay in rent too. A builder who gave evidence, said, "The vast majority of people who are taking shelter or houses in the suburbs of London are paying 10 to 12 per cent more rent for accommodation under the divided ownership than they are on the basis of one ownership," because they pay the difference of the rate of interest at which money can be borrowed on freehold and leasehold land. Building Societies do not prosper in London as they do in the North on account of the insecurity of tenure, and money is kept back by Friendly and Co-operative Societies which would be freely lent and spent upon freehold. It is not only the lessee that pays; the tenement occupier and lodger also contribute their full share of the inflated rack-rent of the premises in which they live; and the poorer the neighbourhood the heavier the burden. Lessee and occupier together pay the whole cost of those permanent improvements by which their town or neighbourhood are beautified and renewed. In the Metropolis, the Metropolitan Board or other local bodies have thus expended over £37,000,000, with the authority of the Treasury or the Local Government Board. It is impossible to estimate the full amount of the increment of value that the landowners derive from this outlay of public money, yet they have not contributed one penny towards it. The new rates imposed for new purposes of general utility and advantage, many of which could never have been foreseen or imagined, when the lease was originally drawn, have fallen on every class of interest, but that which has gained the greater part of the ultimate benefit. This is not the only way in which they have reaped where they have not sown of the fruits of other men's labours. On the renewal of leases for premises of a business or trading character they have, in many instances, put into their pocket some of the special value that attaches to a commercial connection and established reputation called "trade goodwill." Sometimes it is taken by way of fine; at others by way of increase of rent. I could give many examples, but I will only give one of those supplied to the

Town Holdings Committee and not contradicted.

"A Co-operative Society was started by some workmen at Woolwich. They took up cottage property at £160 a year, and converted it into a place of business at the cost of £3,000 or £4,000, and erected stabling and bakehouses. To provide for the necessities they want to spend £10,000 or £12,000 in taking the block down and rebuilding. For this purpose they asked for the extension of their lease from 11 years to 99 years, but the landlord refused to give more than 70 years on the surrender of the remainder of their time, thus reducing it to 59 years. For this he proposed to raise their ground rent from £160 to £360."

This, according to Mr. Jones, the Secretary of the Union of the Working Men's Co-operative Societies is the sort of treatment they have experienced, and fear the repetition of all over London, and nothing has so much tended to depress and hamper co-operative enterprise. What applies to them applies to ordinary trade in shops and places of business. I know of a case, not given in evidence, where a man took a 25 years' lease of some premises in the Strand, on a large estate, and fitted them out for newspaper offices. Because he was successful and found it difficult, if not impossible to move elsewhere, he was fined to the extent of an increase of 40 per cent to his annual rent. These examples could be multiplied from all those parts of London where the original leases either have fallen in or are about to lapse, if the tradesmen would come forward. The renewals are only purchased by sharing the profits and returns of legitimate trading with the owner of the land, who has borne none of the risks and contributed none of the capital. It is the same with the fabric and improvements of private houses. In the quarry districts of Wales the workmen carve their houses out of the rocks. They have taken up 60 or 40 year leases of allotments of mountain land, and have built substantial dwellings at a cost of about £300, borrowed from the building societies. At the end of 40 years this money is paid off, and then the house on which they have lavished so much labour is soon to revert to the landlord, and they have pay its annual value; yet for that ground they have paid in rent four and five times its former price. It cannot be wondered at that discontent and soreness of the

Welsh people with the leasehold system are growing day by day. It is not only the case with shops and houses. It is the same with chapels. Fines are charged and rents are raised on the renewal of leases for the sites of places of religious worship. The Mayor of Sheffield gave an example from the Norfolk estate, where within 10 years of the expiring of a lease, in order to obtain a short renewal, the lessees of a Wesleyan Chapel, in a district where it was much needed, had to surrender the rest of the term and pay a rent of £100, instead of £8 16s. In one instance, in London, £1,000 was charged as a fine and the rent raised. Thus, in all these cases the occupiers, whatever their necessity, must accept the terms offered them or sacrifice the results of their expenditure of capital and labour, which may be sold over their heads. Short leases have taxed the goodwill and expenditure of traders of every kind for the benefit of the ground landlord. They have led to bad and unsound building; they have imposed vexatious and harassing covenants on lessees, which have checked beneficial improvements and made them pay exorbitant fees and costs at every turn. They have brought property in an unsanitary and dilapidated condition and have fettered the hands of the local authority. By separating ownership and occupancy they have called into being a number of intermediate interests of middlemen and ultimately of house jobbers, and inflated the rackrents both of lessees and occupiers. They have hampered the excellent work of co-operation, of friendly and of building societies, which have done so much to raise the standard and increase the means of living of the poorer classes. More important than any one side of the question is the general effect of leasehold tenure upon the condition and character of our urban population. I believe it to have been most hostile to the spirit of thrift and self help among those classes that most need its development, and fatal to the civic character of those whom we wish to interest and occupy in the public affairs of their own locality. "The present system," said one witness—

"is distinctly demoralizing to the workman. It makes him ready to go if he once begins shifting about. They ought to have an inducement to settle in one locality."

Mr. H. W. Lawson

The condemnation of leasehold tenure has been pronounced most effectively by two of the agents of the great London properties. "Wherever you have the poor," said Mr. Bourne, agent to the Duke of Bedford, "you get decadence, rottenness, and decay." "The working man," said Mr. Hunt, agent to Lord Portman, "occupies a tenement for an average term of ten weeks." They contemplate under the present system an ideal state for ever, continued in which, the working men are to live for an endless series of ten-week terms in a bottomless sink of "decadence, rottenness, and decay." The evidence we have heard clearly proves that the greater the security of tenure, the greater has been the desire of the working class to become possessed of their own dwellings, and when possessed of them, to keep them in good repair. The opportunity of purchasing the freehold of their houses at a fair price is more likely to lead to providence than any other chance of investment. They not only save for themselves, but they create a property around which to accumulate their recollections and affections to leave to their children who are to come after them. The man thus bound by the sense of property and responsibility is surely likely to show more public virtue and energy than the weekly tenant or the short leaseholder, whose civic aspirations are limited to the term of their occupation. I have tried, I fear at too great length, to show cause and reason for this Bill. Its proposals and provisions are plain and straightforward. All lessees of houses, shops, chapels, or other buildings, having a term of twenty years unexpired may acquire the reversion of their property by purchase. The figure twenty has no magical potency, but it represents a permanent and substantial interest in the holding. As a matter of fact the notices and forms are prescribed, and it is our hope that most transactions arising under this Bill will be settled out of court by agreement. Where this cannot be done the reference is in England to the County Court, as being an accessible and cheap tribunal for the purpose, and in other parts of the kingdom to courts holding an analogous position to County Courts. The purchase money is assessed at

what in the opinion of the court is the value of the present interests plus the reversions. It has been urged that the cost of investigating and proving title would in many cases be prohibitive to men of small means wishing to take advantage of the proposed power of enfranchisement. However this objection might have applied to former Bills, it does not apply here, for by Clauses 13 and 21 this is regulated by Section 2 of the Vendor and Purchaser Act, 1874, according to which actual receipt of the rent for 12 years is deemed sufficient, and held to be evidence of title for purposes of conveyance, and the difficulties which have arisen under the Settled Land Act are avoided by providing that only one set of costs are to be paid by the lessee, on a fixed scale of 30s. per £100 when the purchase money does not exceed £1,000. More important still is the provision of Clause 14 with regard to the observance of restrictive covenants, which does away with what has been called the Belgrave Square argument. A distinction is drawn between salutary and necessary covenants on the one hand and frivolous and vexatious covenants on the other. Those that are included in the former class will attach to the freehold just as effectually as to the leasehold, and will be enforceable either by the vendor or by the local authority. In addition to this the local authority is given the general power of restraining the purchaser from doing or omitting to do any act that would prejudicially affect adjoining owners. Many fears have been expressed that it will be impossible to preserve the amenities of property without the supervision of the ground landlord. The example of Southport shows that under leasehold restrictions covenants are used as an instrument for increasing rent rather than for the protection of the neighbourhood. On two estates there it was proved that a considerable sum had been exacted by way of fines for raising covenants, and the Town Clerk said :—

"When covenants are dispensed with, in nearly every case an increased ground rent is demanded, and very heavy costs are imposed upon the lessees, which they regard as a most serious tax upon their industries."

I believe that the local authority would act in a very different manner towards the community it rules and

represents, guided by the expert opinion of its surveyors. As to the legal validity of the course we propose, restrictive covenants have been and are being attached to land by many private Acts governing the disposition of estates, and, at the present moment, our plan has been already treated with the most satisfactory results in the working of a scheme of enfranchisement that is being carried out at Torquay. I hope these provisions will relieve the minds of those who believe that in the case of enfranchised households the qualified independence of the householder would have a worse result than the freehold system has produced in the great centre of industry and population. A new and important point in this Bill is that by agreement between the reversioner and the lessee, a perpetual or terminable rent charge may be substituted for a capital payment. Leases for lives are only treated differently in so far as all limitation time is absent. What has been called the "flesh and blood lottery in human lives" is now so generally condemned that it needs no treatment at my hands. The hardship inflicted where the population is migratory and the trade fluctuating by the expense and difficulty of insurance against the reversion of the property into the hands of the ground landlord is well known. In Great Malvern the existence of the lives have to be proved by bringing the persons to the landlord's house, and those who have left the neighbourhood have to be advertised for. As to the constant injustice of the system, I have only to quote one case at Devonport. The father and mother of children died within twelve months of each other, leaving four orphans unprovided for except by the provision of a house held on lives. Within the next year the two persons died whose lives were nominated in the house, and not only did the house fall in hand, but two heriots with the conventional rent were demanded which was equal to five times the annual ground rent in one year. In some places the landlords have ceased to grant these leases, but in others the system is still continued. It is clear that a tenure which is universally condemned ought, as soon as possible, to be put an end to, and that is the reason that it is exceptionally treated in this Bill. This is a sketch of the Bill. One great

objection that will be urged against it is that it interferes with existing contracts. I hardly think that this point can be urged as a serious argument in a Parliament which passed the Irish Land Act of 1887, breaking through the contract of the agricultural lease without a murmur. It is perfectly well known that the Acts of Parliament interfering with contracts are now so numerous that it is superfluous to quote them. For the compulsion to be exercised you have the analogy and example of copyhold enfranchisement and of the Allotments Act, different in their object and machinery, but both based upon the same principles of public policy. You have given analogous powers to the Police and the Post Office Authorities. I could find precedent upon precedent, provided it is allowed that the public expediency has been proved. Besides that, where this Bill would operate, freedom of contract has been a mere formal phrase. When, on the other hand, you have one landowner or a ring of landowners pursuing one system on a settled plan of self-interest, and on the other a would-be tenant, the conditions of whose life and industry fix him to one place, the tenure is not accepted by mutual agreement, it is forcibly imposed by one party to the contract. I am met by the noble Lord the Member for Devon (Viscount Lymington) with a Motion in which he asks the House to wait before coming to a decision for the report of the Committee on Town Holdings. That Committee has, as I suppose every Member here knows, already presented three voluminous books of evidence, and I imagine every Member who has studied this mass of evidence knows as much about the matter as Members of the Committee. The Committee does not propose to take more evidence, and therefore the House is in as good position to judge of the matter as we are upstairs. But there is something more than that, this evidence has been summarized and condensed by a dozen hands. Really it would be a great advantage to the Committee to have a decision on the question of principle by the whole House, it would strengthen the hands of the Committee, and enable them to proceed with their report with greater confidence after the House has expressed an opinion for or against the Bill. Unfortunately the noble Lord

would not allow that; he meets the Bill with a procrastinating Amendment, although he well knows how impossible it is for a private Member to choose his own time for bringing forward a Bill. Instead of meeting the Bill as the right hon. Member for Brighton would, with a direct negative, he chooses to couch his Amendment in a misleading form of words. This reform has been demanded by almost every city and district where the short leasehold system prevails. Petitions in favour of the Bill have been presented from several County Councils and Corporations; it has the approval of the Society of Scotch Solicitors, and, I believe, of the Incorporated Law Society, and this I think will show the lawyers on the front Bench opposite that it is not considered by their colleagues in the subordinate branch of their profession as a very revolutionary or damaging measure. It has been supported by witnesses of every class and condition before the Town Holdings Committee, including some ground landlords and builders. The whole of the 43 witnesses who opposed it were either law agents or surveyors, with but one exception, who gave stereotyped evidence according to their brief, and when we consider the nature of their testimony, although it shows of course a great deal of expert knowledge, their opinion on the matter of principle is not worth very much. If this system is so beneficial to the builder, the tradesman and the working man it was certainly strange that none came forward to support its perpetuation. When you put the professional opposition on one side, you find that you have against you another set of men. On the London County Council, and outside, this measure has been met with bitter opposition by the Socialist element. They fear that their schemes of social revolution may be made impossible by the creation of a large number of occupying owners, possessed of the freehold of their land and house. I agree with them, but I am not inclined to let things run on, because "the worse remains behind." I believe it to be a matter of extreme importance to enlarge and assure the interest of the people of our great towns, and especially of this vast metropolis; in their own houses and their own neighbourhood. I wish to see the old English

idea of a homely home once more realized in fact, as it is not in London to-day. I wish to see individual responsibility established for the social evil and public danger of unsafe and unsanitary housing. I wish to see our citizens filled with the spirit of responsibility that the sense of security and ownership inspires. This Bill, I respectfully submit, will effect these objects in a way and by a means that are at once cheap, just, and practical.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

***VISCOUNT LYMINGTON** (Devon, South Molton): Before I enter into the matter of this Bill, I may be allowed to say a few words in reference to the remark of the hon. Member when he complained that I met his proposal with a dilatory Motion. I am aware that my right hon. Friend the Member for Brighton (Sir W. Marriott) and others have given notices to meet the Bill with a direct negative, and the reason why I worded my Amendment as I have—and I can assure the House I did so after very careful consideration—was that I believed it was a course absolutely unprecedented for any Member to force the House to a decision upon a question which the House has referred to a Select Committee, and upon a question as to which the Committee will very speedily, I hope, offer a Report. I can assure the right hon. Member for Brighton and others that, speaking for myself, I should be quite prepared to meet the Bill by a direct negative, for I think the Bill is absolutely unjustifiable, both in practice and principle. I feel, also, that the House ought to treat its own Committee with some respect; but the hon. Member for Bristol, who will second my Amendment, will, I have no doubt, in the course of his remarks deal further with this point. And now to deal with the proposal of the hon. Member for St. Pancras. The hon. Member recommends his Bill to the House in the Memorandum that is affixed thereto and which refers to the Supplementary Report of the Royal Commission on the Housing of the Working Classes. Now, in dealing with this Supplementary Report, I would venture to remark, in the first place, that it is not signed by several of the most influential of the Commis-

sioners; it is not signed by the Prime Minister, by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, or by many others whose authority would carry great weight. But, supposing that the Report had been so signed, there is not one tittle of evidence to support the Report. No comparison is made in this Report between a leasehold system, a freehold system, and any other system; and the question of the comparative value of building systems was never presented to the Royal Commission. What does this Supplementary Report say? To use its own language, it is proved by the evidence of Lord Wm. Compton of Mr. Boodle, and what those who prepared the Report are pleased to describe in a rather vague manner as the incidental evidence of other witnesses. Now really I am unable to understand, or to deal with what these Commissioners who sign this Report call the "incidental evidence of other witnesses," but I will go to the evidence of those whose names are given. Mr. Boodle wrote a letter to the *Standard*, dated May 9, 1884, in which he used these words:—

"Speaking for myself, I beg to express my surprise at being reported to be adverse to building leases on the leasehold system. My evidence contained nothing to that effect. I do not think that any better system than the leasehold system could be devised."

Then in one portion of his evidence he says:—

"If a man hardens his heart, and treats his fellow creatures like brute beasts, and crowds them into sties like pigs, this system of middlemen farming houses is the most remunerative thing possible. I think it would immensely increase under the facilities for acquiring separate freeholds."

And now I will venture to deal with the evidence of my noble friend (Lord Compton), and I would only say in passing that I very much regret, the hon. Member, perhaps not intentionally, did an injustice to the noble owner of the Northampton estate.

***MR. LAWSON**: I made no reference at all to the Northampton property; the agent over and over again said that the covenants did not enable him to take the course he wished.

***VISCOUNT LYMINGTON**: I am glad to have elicited that statement, because the hon. Member went on to say that the action of landlords went to encourage the unsanitary state of property. I

think I can best meet the evidence of my noble Friend by mentioning certain facts connected with the Northampton estate, and I add these to illustrate the absolute worthlessness of the Report on which we are asked to accept this Bill. The Commissioners never took the trouble to investigate a similar district in which houses were erected about the same time but which were held under a different tenure. They had not to go far afield. If they had only gone to the Italian colony, Saffron Hill, adjoining the Northampton estate, they would have found there the very worst evils existing. The whole of this district consists of small freeholds. Of this, Mr. Martin, a very able man, of the firm of Thurgood and Martin says: "Anything worse from any point of view cannot be imagined." Circumstances other than those of tenure, are accountable for the squalor of the Clerkenwell district. In the first place, just before the sittings and the Report of the Royal Commission, a great many houses in the neighbourhood were pulled down, and the demolition was due to the Gray's Inn Road improvements and the clearances for the Midland Railway. From this cause a large industrial population was displaced, and overcrowding was caused in Clerkenwell. In the second place there was at the time a very severe depression in the watch trade, the staple industry of the district; and the third cause was connected with the Northampton estate. A few years before the sittings of the Royal Commission a number of leases fell in on the Northampton estate. The houses were not so dilapidated as to necessitate rebuilding, and the occupiers were not sufficiently substantial men to induce Lord Northampton and his agent to grant them leases. What was done—and I must confess I think it was a great misfortune—was that the houses were let on seven years' leases to middlemen. The evidence before the Royal Commission showed that the state of the actual occupiers under the middlemen was infinitely worse than the state of the tenants under the long leasehold tenure. This has been used as a justification for leasehold enfranchisement, but the facts point in an exactly contrary direction. On the expiration of the long leasehold system the houses were let to middlemen on seven years' leases to collect the

rents, Lord Northampton and his agent feeling indisposed to collect the weekly rents. But these middlemen farmed the rents at an enormous profit, and these leases—occupation leases or leases in which middlemen intervene—are leases you cannot deal with and do not attempt to deal with under this precious Bill. The fact is that unless you can compel every lessee to occupy his own holding the effect of this Bill would only be to vastly extend the practice to which Dr. Dixon in his evidence before the Commission alluded when speaking of land property at Bermondsey. He said—"The owners do not care to be troubled with the property and let their houses on short renewable occupation leases." This was done with regard to the Penton estate and the Charterhouse property. I do not want to trouble the House by going into details, but if any hon. Member desires to verify my allusions, he will find them under questions before the Commission 3450-1. In fact, the Supplementary Report, on the authority of which we are asked to support this Bill, totally unprecedented in principle, is not only supported by evidence, but, as I hope I shall be able to show, it is in direct opposition to the facts of the case and the evidence subsequently taken by the Committee on Town Holdings. Evidence as to insanitary houses and overcrowding at Bristol, at Newcastle-on-Tyne, at Camborne and at Alnwick, was given before the Commission. At Camborne, the houses are built on leases for lives, and it was with Camborne that Mr. Vivian chiefly dealt in the much course of his evidence. I do not lay stress on Camborne, because I think it is generally accepted by hon. Members on both sides irrespective of their opinions as to leasehold enfranchisement that the system of leases for lives is bad in principle. The houses at Bristol, Newcastle and Alnwick are all built on the freehold system. At Bristol the houses stand back to back without any ventilation at all. At Newcastle you have tall houses built back to back or without proper yards. Some allusion was made to the City Baths in St. Luke's and it appears that these were built entirely on freehold tenure. I find it almost impossible within a reasonable limit of time to deal with the mass of

provincial evidence. I may, however, mention the fact that at Nottingham the insanitary area dealt with under the Cross and Torrens Act was entirely freehold, and at Nottingham to-day there are not less than 10,000 houses built back to back and without proper ventilation held by middle-men freeholders and let on weekly tenancies. If I turn to London which is made the battle ground of this question I find that the worst, the most degraded properties exist under the freehold system and I shall prove this to the House, not by vague and general assertions but by reference to authorities each of which supports and maintains the other. Honourable Members remember Mr. Mearn's "Bitter Cry of Outcast London" which produced a great impression, and those who have read the book will remember the terrible description of "Collier's Rents" which included Tabard Street, Royal Tent Court, Bull's Head Court, and Unicorn Court. As to this property we are able to arrive at precise information because "Collier's Rents" were dealt with as an insanitary area under Cross and Torrens Act. What was the result of the inquiry? It was necessary to ascertain at the time what were the conditions of tenure, and out of 41 houses dealt with under the Act, 36 were freeholds and five were small leaseholds, these five belonging not to large land owners, whom the hon. Member (Mr. Lawson) holds up to obloquy, but small middle men. In Tabard Street, supposed to be the worst street in London, 11 out of 12 condemned houses were freeholds. Turning from the particular to the general; while the average in London of leasehold to freehold houses is as seven to one, Mr. Vigers—a great authority, because under him every single clearance was carried out—states that out of 1,022 holdings dealt with under 21 schemes as insanitary under Cross and Torrens Act, 463, or nearly half, were held under the freehold system and let on short leases to the occupiers, the other 559 being small leaseholds. The House will note these illustrations as to the comparative effect of the leasehold and freehold systems. And now I call attention to the case of the Bedfordbury and the Soho property. These two cases deserve special attention, because Bedfordbury and

Soho were both at one time attached to the property of great landlords. Bedfordbury belonged at one time to the Bedford Estate, but it was granted out in the middle of the seventeenth century in plots to people for fee farm rents in perpetuity. Well, what was the consequence, or rather what happened? Bedfordbury became a bye word for a disgraceful property; the Metropolitan Board of Works was forced to step in to buy out the people and pull down the houses at the expense of the rates, and they granted the site to the Peabody trustees. What was the case in Soho? The worst part of Soho, through which the Shaftesbury Avenue now goes, belonged at one time to the Portland Estate, but it was sold at the end of last century to a large number of small freeholders. Well, I should like to ask, was there a more disgraceful place in London, more remarkable as the lurking-place of crime and degradation, for dilapidated houses and the absence of any sense of decency, than the Seven Dials? It is notoriously one of the worst parts of London, and the whole of the Seven Dials was in the hands of small freeholders. I suppose I shall be confronted with the example of Leeds. Leeds is a freehold city, and I wish to give every credit to its admirable Building Society, and I am sure the working classes owe a great debt of gratitude to that exceedingly well managed Society. But there is absolutely no similarity between a provincial town like Leeds and a great overgrown city like London. In Leeds the workman who owns his house can get from his house to his work, though the one may be in the suburbs and the other in the centre of the town, in a way that is absolutely impossible to the workman in London. In London, in the first place, workmen do not have houses with 20 years' leases unexpired. If such is the case, why did not the hon. Member give us a Return to show it? It is an invention, a perfect myth; they do not inhabit such houses. It is shown conclusively by the Returns we have that, in London, workmen do not care to own their houses; they prefer weekly tenancies. Look at the rules laid down by the Peabody Trustees, men who are supposed to have some acquaintance with the wants and wishes of the working classes. In regard to

the Peabody dwellings, the Trustees have passed a rule which enables a working man living in a Peabody building in one part of London to break his occupation in that particular dwelling in the middle of a week and remove to a similar dwelling in another part of London and finish his week without loss of rent. But suppose that the cases of Leeds and London are on all fours, which clearly they are not, what was the evidence of Mr. Fatkin, the manager of the Leeds Building Society? He stated:—

“We have plenty of land speculators in Leeds who have built and do build scores of houses on freehold land.”

That is to say, that he himself shows that leasehold enfranchisement would not put a stop to the middle man rack-renting a class poorer than himself. Mr. Fatkin says further:—

“Many members of the Leeds Building Society own as many as four or five houses besides their own houses which they occupy.”

What does this show? I do not condemn the members of the Society who own these houses; I hate the practice of looking on men of property with suspicion and distrust. But Mr. Fatkin himself in his own statement has shown that members of the Society, not only own the houses in which they live but other house property, which no doubt they can let to a poorer class at rents equal to those fixed by the great landlords. And now I come to the question, “Will leasehold enfranchisement benefit the traders.” It has been asserted by advocates of leasehold enfranchisement that the great body of London shopkeepers desire this Bill. Well, I can find no justification for that statement in the evidence given before the Committee. Mr. Martin of the firm of Thurgood and Martin gave three instances of people in a manufacturing business converting their freehold into leasehold, and Mr. Vigers, a man of considerable experience, gave us some very dramatic evidence with regard to Holborn Viaduct. The shops there were at one time all freehold, the people who put up the buildings bought the land, but every single one of these shops on Holborn Viaduct originally freehold has been since converted into leasehold, and the Crown has bought the ground rents. The fact is and it does not require a great deal of obtruse erudition to dis-

cover it, that traders cannot afford to lock up their money in freeholds. A trader does not want to lock up his capital at 4 per cent, he wants to have it free and to put as much of it as possible into his business; that is an explanation full, complete and satisfactory and based on common sense of why shopkeepers do not desire to own their shops. But much stress has been laid on another point, and it has been urged again with practically no tittle of evidence that the landlord is in the habit on the expiration of the lease of raising the rent on the basis of the goodwill value above that of similar property in the neighbourhood, and that the said landlord is able to enforce that rise in the rent by the loss which the trader would suffer if he ventured to remove his business. The hon. Member has given us no instance in facts and figures where this has occurred.

*MR. LAWSON: Yes, the evidence as to the case of the Co-operative Stores at Woolwich.

*VISCOUNT LYMINGTON: That is the only case the hon. Member can give, and to justify this Bill it is necessary to prove, not an isolated case, but a general practice. I do not say there might not be such cases. However, I am now dealing with the question of goodwill, and the first we have to consider is the goodwill due to the position of the shop or is it due to the ability and efforts of the particular shopkeeper? If the goodwill is due to the position and the neighbourhood, then it is the foresight of the landlord in putting the shop there that has created the goodwill not the shopkeeper. If the shopkeeper has developed the business, not through his own foresight, but owing to the development of the neighbourhood, I say distinctly it is the foresight of the landlord that has made the shop, and the shopkeeper derives during the term of his lease the whole of the unearned increment. But if the goodwill has been due to the ability of the shopkeeper, I do not believe it is taking a likely view of the interest of the landlord to say he will impose unfair terms upon his tenant. I do not say but that possibly one or two cases might be trumped up, but are there any number of cases to establish this as a hardship? It is not the interest of the landlord to deal unfairly with his

tenant the shopkeeper for this reason; first, the co-operative stores and general purposes shops have offered to owners of shop property as well as shopkeepers in London very severe competition; and in the second place there are few properties that are so large that a shopkeeper cannot move from one shop to another without leaving the district. But let us take the firm unanswerable ground that is afforded in Mr. Charles Harrison's evidence. This gentleman sent a series of questions to solicitors in every town of any size in England and Wales, for the purpose of eliciting evidence to show that rent is raised on goodwill. The result of this inquiry was that in 110 towns rent is not raised on goodwill. There are 14 towns in which rent was raised on goodwill, and of these 14 towns seven are freehold; three, including Southampton, 999 years' towns; and four only including Swansea, and Devonport, and, I presume, these are the exceptions which are urged in support of this extraordinary Bill—four only, including Swansea and Devonport, are leasehold. As a matter of fact, leasehold enfranchisement can and would offer no protection to the shopkeeper in regard to goodwill; to do that you would not require leasehold enfranchisement but tenant enfranchisement. The mass of shopkeepers are not tenants who hold under-leases having 20 years unexpired, they are shopkeepers holding under occupation leases from middlemen, and these are leases the hon. Member cannot and does not propose to touch under this Bill. It is really absurd to suppose that shopkeepers, twenty years before the expiration of the lease, would become anxious to preserve the goodwill, which, at the expiration of that period, might be worth nothing; it is ridiculous. I can use no other term. And now I come to the question of ground rents. The investors in ground rents are a very large and very meritorious class, they are a class of investors satisfied with a small interest in return for large reversions. As to the number and extent of the persons who invest in ground rents, I may mention that during the years 1884 and 1885, despite a time of depression, ground rents to the value of £900,000 were sold at the Mart. Now leasehold enfranchisement would destroy these in-

vestments, made, not only by trustees of large estates, but by small investors and small shopkeepers. This Bill proposes to establish a sort of roving commission, to allow the lessee to buy out his ground rent at any time, whenever he likes, and the injustice of this is obvious, for he would buy out at a time when money is cheapest, and you would have to re-invest at a dead loss. Secondly, the investor not only loses all the future increase in the value of his investment, not only loses the value of his reversion, but absolutely has no market for his security except the lessee, for who will invest in ground rents if he is liable to be bought out at any time? Practically the only market is the man who owns the house. There is another point that has not been considered in this very crude Bill, and that is the question of severance. If a house bears a separate apportionment, and in a great many cases it is an assessment of the block of buildings, not of each house, then the owner of the ground rent has to be paid off in driplets. You cannot compel a mortgagee to have say £5,000 paid off in driplets of £1,000 or £500 at a time. If the house does not bear a separate appointment you deprive the owner of the ground rents of that special commercial value which arises from their being held in blocks. It is obvious why these are more valuable. In the first place they are easier of collection, and secondly, when the property is under a single landowner it has been proved by evidence that such land owner is anxious to give to the lessee the beneficial interest in his lease, so as to prevent the possibility of the house being thrown on his hands in case of bankruptcy. For these reasons ground rents held on blocks are more valuable. The supporters of the Bill say they purpose to compensate owners of ground rents for their reversionary interest. It is exceedingly difficult to arrive at the value of reversions. It is easy enough to work out a rule of the theory on paper, but experience has shown that it is excessively difficult to get at the actual value of reversionary interests, especially where the reversions are distant. I may remind the House of a matter that occurred in 1857. At that time a Bill was introduced to

enable Ecclesiastical Commissioners to sell the reversion of some property at Finsbury, and this is alluded to by Mr. Matthews in his evidence before the Town Holdings' Committee. An able body of surveyors estimated the reversionary value at £12,000 a year. The Bill was referred to a Committee of the House of Lords, and the House of Lords—it is one of the many grounds on which gratitude is due to them from the community—threw out the Bill. And how were they justified? The leases were allowed to expire, and the value of the reversion which had been valued at £12,000 turned out to be £36,000 a year. The difference of £24,000 would in no way have gone to the advantage of the community, it would simply have gone into the pockets of the individual lessees. On this point, the extreme difficulty of assessing the value of distant reversions, I will not dwell further, but I may give hon. Members a reference that may be useful if they should wish to follow the point further in the evidence of Mr. Smith, May 10, 1858, before the Lords' Committee on the "Means of Divine Worship in Populous Districts," and of the Report thereon contained in a letter to the Secretary of State for the Home Department, signed by Lords Eversley and Chichester. Now I come to another point at issue—the observance of restrictive covenants, as to which there is some scheme in this Bill. In the first place Mr. Boodle and other experts say that they do not know any instance where the local authority has power to enforce or has ever enforced any of these covenants of amenity, and that the neighbours would be in a worse position if they had to move the local authority than if they had to go in the usual way to the landlord or his agent. This will be found in the reply to the questions of the hon. and learned Member for Somerset (Mr. Elton) 6729 and 30. Well, then, when we are told that the local Authorities are to enforce these restrictions, it is perfectly obvious that the landlord would have so little interest in the property if this became law that it is childish to imagine that he would go to the expense of enforcing covenants of amenity, and we must look for the enforcement of these amenities to the enlightenment of London Vestries. That I think will be leaning on a very

weak reed indeed. I was reading only a few days ago an able book edited by Mr. Charles Booth on the East End of London, and this is what is there given as the result of very careful observation. Speaking of the very worst street that came under notice "of property very old and with inhabitants devoid of all ideas of decency," of property absolutely rotten and bad, the reason assigned why no sanitary regulations were enforced was that the collector of the rents "happened to be the brother of the sanitary inspector." What would be the consequence of leaning on the intervention of the local authorities? Middlemen would get on the vestries. I do not see the hon. Baronet the Member for Cokermonth (Sir W. Lawson) in his place; but I should like to know what would be his view as regards the influence brewers would exercise. Brewers would at once enfranchise the leases of the public-houses, and at the present moment, with an utter absence of courage on the part of licensing authorities to refuse licenses, and an utter absence on the part of ratepayers of any control over the liquor traffic, we should have all these gin palaces—aptly called dens of iniquity—perpetuated. Can you trust your London Vestries and local authorities in this matter? Do you suppose those who have been guilty of laxity in enforcing the simplest sanitary regulations are going suddenly to be seized with eagerness to deal adequately with far more difficult matters. I am not a lawyer—and I speak in the presence of the Solicitor General, who will correct me if I am wrong—but having had experience of the common law both as an owner of property and as a trustee, I believe that a main principle in Common Law is that covenants restricting usage do not, as on leasehold land, bind persons in possession of freehold land unless those persons come into possession of the land with a notice of the existence of such covenants. In other words, the burden of restrictive covenants does not run with leasehold land as it does with freehold land. You would have under this proposal an immense deal of collusion. The leaseholder who wanted to sell his leasehold for a Public House or for some noxious trade would take very good care, and the man who bought it and gave him a good

price for it, would take good care that he—the purchaser—had no notice of these covenants. But take the case of a *bonâ fide* purchaser. The hon. Member has referred to a section of the Vendor and Purchaser Act of 1884, but I will refer to another section. There is one which says that 40 years is the longest title that a purchaser may demand, and that means that if a covenant were contained in the document anterior to this 40 years, the *bonâ fide* purchaser could and very probably would come into possession of the land without discovering this on the title. Now, I cannot refrain from alluding to the effect this Bill would have upon public property—on the property of the great corporations, of the universities, and the great educational and charitable institutions of the country. Take, for example, King Edward's School on which, according to Mr. Matthews, depends the entire endowment of education in Birmingham. The income of that school is almost entirely derived from ground rents. These rents rose from £11,000 in 1863 to £27,000 in 1885, due to lettings on building lease at increased value. [A laugh.] The hon. Member laughs at that but the money—the natural increment of this property goes to public purposes. Mr. Matthews estimates that the loss to income which would result if this proposal were carried would amount to over £9,000 per annum, and the loss upon capital to a quarter of a million, and he protests, and rightly protests, against the increase in land values being taken away from the community in order to benefit a few individuals. Take the case of the Mason Science scheme. The possession of the site was obtained gradually, as the leases in several cases had 20 years to run. What would be the effect of the Bill of the hon. Gentleman? Why, it would have rendered such a scheme as that absolutely impossible, because every single owner of a lease having 20 years unexpired would have turned round and demanded a most exorbitant price—blackmail, in fact—for his land. The Corporation of Birmingham have spent one and a half millions in purchasing an insanitary area in the centre of the town and in making a street through it, on the faith of their being allowed to run out 75 year leases,

and to obtain the ultimate increment of value at re-valuation. Let me give the House one more case. Take the case of Harper's Charity with a large property in London and its school at Bedford. Mr. Bourne says as to that property that its present income is £20,000 a year, derived almost exclusively from ground rents. If this Bill were passed, that income would drop within five or 10 years from £20,000 to £15,000 a year; and into whose pocket would the £5,000 a year go? Why, into the pocket of the people who might hold the sub-lease at the fag end of the term. It would be a monstrous thing to disorganize in this way the great educational and charitable institutions of the country—to set at naught these schemes of education and improvement. Then as to the effect of leasehold enfranchisement on the artisan class. It is a common practice now for gentlemen to ride their hobbies on the shoulders of the working classes, but I would ask what good could this Bill possibly do to the working classes of London? The poorer classes do not and cannot live in houses; they live in rooms. The managers of the three largest dwelling companies all object to leasehold enfranchisement, and all agree that artisan dwellings can not be built in central London to pay a reasonable interest on money unless the land is sold or leased for the purpose at less than the market value. Landlords will lease the land, but will not sell the freehold below the market price. The hon. Member for St. Pancras has referred to the case of Lord Portman and the great London landlords. Well, I must say that in the evidence we have received in regard to the land owners of London these great landlords have come out in a most satisfactory manner. According to Mr. Boodle's evidence the Duke of Westminster has granted various sites to artisans' dwellings companies at less than the market price; so has Lord Northampton and Lord Portman. Leasehold enfranchisement would buy out the great landlords who are now doing their duty to the public, granting—giving us, in fact—in some cases, land at 2d. per superficial foot when the market value is, in point of fact, 5d. or 6d. a foot, and enabling us in such places as Lisson Grove to let rooms, on an average, at 2s. 3d. per

room. By leasehold enfranchisement you would rob these great landlords, and we should have to deal with a lot of small owners in buying land for artisans' dwellings. I ask if the great London landlords acting on a sense of duty—and, if you like, inspired also by a sense that they are on their trial—give to bodies acting for the public advantage special terms to enable them to deal with land, why should Parliament step in and interfere with them and impose on the public the alternative of having to erect buildings at the cost of the ratepayers, a thing which would operate very hardly on the poorer ratepayers? To sum up; this Bill cannot be defended on any ground of principle or expediency. Suppose that the landlords are the enemies of the human race. Suppose that they always act from the meanest and most despicable motives, there is evidence that without the intrusion of this meddlesome and vexatious Bill they are obliged to deal with their land in different ways and on different building tenures to suit the wants of various localities. Lord and Lady Northbourne let their land on a 99 years' building lease at Yarrow, and sell it out and out at Gateshead. Lord Derby leases for 75 years in Liverpool, and for 999 years at Bury. The Duke of Devonshire leases for 90 years with the option of purchase at Eastbourne, and grants leases for 200 years at Carlisle, and sells or grants freehold rent charge at Buxton. That is quite sufficient to show that the ground landlords are obliged as it is to deal with these building tenures to suit the wants and wishes of the various localities. But on the ground of principle, what can be more monstrous or unjust than this Bill? Under it we should arbitrarily and without one sixpence of compensation override the sole condition upon which the landlord in a town would ever have agreed to surrender the use of his land. We should rob him and his heir of the reversion which the lessee distinctly undertook to surrender, and in return for which he has received value. The injustice is gross, glaring, naked, and not palliated by a single advantage to the community. The Bill would benefit no part of the community worthy of the slightest consideration. It would disorganize the building trade. It is not wanted by the trader; it could afford no protection to the shop-

keeper. It would rob the saving classes who invest in ground-rents. It would strike at the root of municipal enterprise, such as has changed the whole face of Birmingham and such as this House ought to encourage; it would plunder the educational and charitable institutions of the country, and it would convert London into a city of small and needy house owners beyond the reach of public opinion, utterly destitute of public spirit, and whose avidity and rapacity would render any dealing with land for public purposes, whether on the part of public authorities like the London Council or private companies for public purposes like the 'Artizans' Companies so expensive as to be impossible. Nobody and nothing would benefit, and the whole of the plunder would go into the pockets of some speculative middle-men or wealthy Radicals who want to enfranchise their houses in Grosvenor-square. All I can say is that if we, the landowners, are to be robbed, we should at least ask Parliament that the plunder should go into the pockets of a more deserving class.

Amendment proposed,

"To leave out from the word 'That' to the end of the Question, in order to add the words 'this House declines to consider the question of Leaseholds Enfranchisement until it has had an opportunity of considering the Report of the Committee appointed to inquire into the subject of Town Holdings.'"—(*Viscount Lynton.*)

Instead thereof

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

*MR. LEWIS FRY (Bristol, N.): In rising to second the Amendment, I would venture to submit to the House that the course taken by my hon. Friend the Member for St. Pancras in moving the Second Reading of this Bill at the present time is an extremely unusual one. The question of leasehold enfranchisement has been for a long time under the consideration of the Town Holdings Committee. That Committee has sat during three Sessions, has examined a large number of witnesses, and last year produced a Blue Book so bulky that very few hon. Members have taken the trouble to bring it within these walls. There has been no difference of opinion in the Committee as to the course of their proceedings. No one

has suggested that the Committee has occupied an undue length of time in considering the important questions submitted to them; and the Committee did not bring to a conclusion until the end of last Session the evidence which was taken on the subject of leasehold enfranchisement. The hon. Member for St. Pancras, speaking of my noble Friend's Motion, has said that it is a Motion of an insincere character, but it seems to me that the proceeding of the hon. Gentleman himself in moving the Bill is open to the observation of being most unusual. The question of leasehold enfranchisement was referred to the Committee in the most general terms, and the House will be surprised to hear that it was on the Motion of the hon. Member himself that this question was referred to the Committee. Therefore the Committee, as far as this question is concerned, is the Committee of my hon. Friend. Yet my hon. Friend now moves the Second Reading of a Bill which, if carried, would cut short the proceedings of the Committee and render it of no use. My hon. Friend has said that all the information which is before the Committee is also at the disposal of the House. That is no doubt true, but what a mass of evidence the Committee has at various times laid before the House. My hon. Friend has referred to certain publications in which the evidence is discussed. All those publications are more or less of a partizan character, and in no way take the place of a report which in the ordinary way a Committee would lay before the House. The Committee has not yet had an opportunity of discussing its report. Three draft reports have been laid before the Committee. One of those reports expresses the view of the Member for St. Pancras himself, and that has only been in the hands of the Committee during the last few days.

*MR. LAWSON: A fortnight.

*MR. L. FRY: A fortnight at a period of the Session when hon. Members are generally engaged in other pursuits than that of studying the question of leasehold enfranchisement! Now, what would be the effect of the House agreeing to the second reading of the Bill on the present occasion? Does my hon. Friend suppose that if his Motion is agreed to, the Committee will spend the time necessary to perfect

a Report? It seems to me absurd to ask the Committee to continue its proceedings and to report to the House, if the House to-day decide the question by passing the second reading of this Bill. I do not at all propose to follow the noble Lord into the numerous questions he has raised in the very able speech he addressed to the House, but I will endeavour to lay before the House the great importance of the questions which are involved in this Bill. First of all, there is no precedent, in English legislation at any rate, for a measure of this kind, and if it is passed into law it will be a new departure in the way of legislation. Reference has been made by various witnesses to the legislation which is supposed to form a precedent. The Bills authorising railways and other public undertakings have been referred to, but there is no similarity whatever between them and this Bill. The compulsory taking of land for railways has been authorised because Parliament has found it to be beneficial to the public. It is for a definite purpose, and the power to take land is confined to a limited and definite time. But the time during which a leaseholder has the option under this Bill of purchasing the reversion is unlimited in extent, and instead of being for a purpose which is directly beneficial to the public, it is, on the contrary, only directly beneficial to individual leaseholders. The nearest analogy to what is proposed by this Bill is the enfranchisement of copyhold property; but in that case the powers are mutual, and the lord of the manor has the option equally with the tenant of putting the law into force. In the case of Copyholds, too, the powers conferred were limited to those cases in which the interest of the tenant is of a terminable character. Attention should be directed to the enormous scope of the Bill; it applies to all leasehold land that has any kind of building upon it, and it touches a most enormous amount of property. The rateable value of the leasehold property belonging to the Corporation of Liverpool is £656,000 per annum. A competent witness estimates the capital value of leasehold property in Birmingham at 25 millions. In London the estimate of property, the greatest part of which is leasehold, is 630 millions. The leasehold property of the Universities

of Oxford and Cambridge brings in £150,000 per annum. These figures show that the House should be cautious in dealing with property, of which so large a proportion belongs to charities and corporations. When the Bill is put forward in the interest of the community, account must be taken of the injury that may be done to public bodies. I do not say that the considerations urged are altogether fatal to any legislation, but, at all events, they amount to a reason why the House should allow the Committee that is sitting to formulate its opinion before any action is taken by the House itself. I much doubt whether the working classes of the Metropolis as a whole will benefit by the operation of the Bill, the advantages of which will rather fall into the hands of those who stand between the ground landlords and the occupiers, and I fail to see what benefit the community will gain from converting these persons from leaseholders into freeholders. The evidence as to the desire of leaseholders to purchase is not at all conclusive, for where they have had the opportunity they have not shown any great disposition to do it. It is a well-known fact that when freehold ground-rents are advertised for sale they are not as a rule purchased by the occupying leaseholders, but they are bought by others merely as a form of investment. Of the leasehold system I perhaps take a less favourable view than my noble Friend. I represent a town in which the freehold system prevails, and on the whole I think it is the better system. But I am not on that account prepared to lay a rude hand upon the leasehold system and to do injustice to individuals. The circumstances of different places differ widely, and my own idea is that legislation should first be in the form of a measure applicable to places in which there is a felt grievance that ought to be remedied in the interests of the community. In certain localities may be found leaseholders, a large proportion of whom are occupiers, who may desire facilities of purchase, and in such a case an experiment might be advantageously tried. But I altogether object to the machinery of this Bill, by which individual leaseholders will be empowered to acquire the property of those who are joint owners with them. Where

a large number of the leaseholders are occupiers, and desirous and able to purchase the freeholds, I am inclined to think that local bodies might very properly be empowered on public grounds to acquire the interests of reversioners by agreement or, if necessary, by compulsion. In such cases there would be little or no difficulty as to compensation for severance, which cannot in the interests of justice be overlooked. It would rest with the local body to purchase the property as a whole. In this way the difficulties in the way of an unlimited and indiscriminate application of the scheme to the whole country would be avoided. It may be assumed that a local body would not do anything to injure a community by interfering with the property of a charity or a corporation. These and other aspects of the question deserve consideration in the light of the report that has yet to be presented by the Committee, and therefore I beg to second the amendment.

*Mr. T. E. ELLIS (Merionethshire): The hon. Gentleman who has just spoken prefaced his remarks by saying that this Bill is without precedent in the legislation of any country. I am quite willing to admit that that is so; but let me remind him that outside the United Kingdom there is no country in which such a system as prevails here would be allowed to exist at all, and although I join in admiration of the speech of the noble Lord, yet I must point out that he altogether omitted to deal with some of the most glaring instances of what we consider to be the unfairness which has been exposed before the Town Holdings Committee. I cannot here enter into the various arguments for and against leaseholds enfranchisement in London. That is a question which will, I think, admit of much argument, and the noble Lord has shown that it is beset by many difficulties. Even in London itself I believe the mischiefs of the short leasehold system have been many, and in some cases intolerable, but however numerous and however intolerable they are in London, I think that they are hardly to be compared with the grievances and injustice which have been suffered by working men and tradesmen in Wales and in the mining districts of Cornwall. I believe that there is a broad distinction between the case of London and

Wales. In London the housing of the people has been undertaken chiefly by speculative builders, and I dare say that legislation ought to be passed to meet their case; but in Wales, and especially in quarry districts and in all districts where localised industries prevail, the housing of the community has been undertaken by the working men themselves and not by speculative builders. Take, for instance, the quarry districts of North Wales. I know some of those districts very well. Now, we are sometimes told that this system is an optional system, and that the people in any district can practically have the choice between leaseholds and freeholds. Some of the witnesses who appeared before the Town Holdings Committee, tried to prove that, but in Wales, without one single exception in all the quarry districts, as well as in such places as Pembroke Dock and Holyhead, there has been no choice or alternative whatever for the working men. They have simply been compelled to build houses, shops, banks, co-operative stores, chapels, and British and Board schools on the short leasehold system. A great deal of property has been built on leases of thirty years, and others on leases for lives, and the majority of the houses and of the public buildings throughout the whole of Wales have had to be built on short leases. Let us take the case of the Festiniog district, in which some hon. Members have opened quarries, and which has been visited by many more of the Members of this House. Now, to this high mountainous district, working men came from various parts of Wales; they found no houses there; there was only rough mountainous land, practically of no agricultural value, and at first they experienced great difficulty in getting land on which to build their houses. They had to take it at first on the very ridge of the rocks that overhang the town. They were put to great trouble and expense in clearing the land. They had actually to scoop the foundations from the rocks, and then they had to build their houses, not through speculative builders, but by their own enterprise and judgment. I think it is almost touching to read the evidence given by gentlemen acquainted with this district as to the care and trouble these working men took in building

their houses. A question was put to one of the witnesses—"Did they work much for themselves on these houses?" "Yes," replied the witness, "they gave an hour or two every night after they came from the quarries, especially in the summer time, in order to blast the stone and get out the foundation and to do the heavy work which quarrymen can do, so that their houses might be built as cheaply as possible. Many a time they could be heard blasting the rocks as late as 10 or 11 o'clock at night in the summer time, and after the foundations had been cleared, they obtained working men, masons and carpenters to finish the houses for them." In order to accomplish this, they were compelled to borrow from £150 to £300 from a building society. Their lease as a rule was for 60 years; it took them from 35 to 40 years to clear off this debt, and then they only did it by great sacrifice and continued thrift. Aye, with more than thrift, with stinting themselves and their families—and then, having cleared off the debt, the lease had a few years to run, and, at its expiration, the property which they had themselves created, passed out of their hands into the hands of the ground landlord, who is generally an absentee; who has never spent one single penny in quarry enterprise, or in the public improvements of the place, and who will not allow chapels, or board schools, or British schools, or banks, or co-operative stores, or any other public buildings to be put up on any other tenure than a forty-five or sixty years' lease. Property to the value of £450,000 has in this place been created by working men and tradesman, and at the end of sixty years, all this house and public property, and all the improvements in the town will pass away from their hands into the hands of a few landowners, the majority of whom live away, and one of whom certainly has never set foot in Festiniog, or seen one of the houses that the quarrymen have built. This is only a type of what happens in all the quarry districts in Wales. That is not all, for the quarrymen instead of being independent as they were while their houses were their own, become weekly and monthly tenants of the landlords, who in Bethesda and Llanberis are their employers. This becomes

a moral and economic question, because we know that the owner and employer is diametrically opposed to the mass of working men and tradesmen in politics, religion, and social sympathies. I say it is necessary in the interest of the community that the working men should have some independence, some power to grapple with the employer and landlord on something like fair and equal terms. The present leasehold system renders that absolutely impossible, because it places the men at the mercy absolutely of the employer, where he is the owner of the houses. Moreover they cannot get the houses which they have built themselves, except at exaggerated rents. Let me cite a typical case of the result of the present system, quoted in evidence. A quarryman at Nantlle has built his house, which is worth £250, and has to pay a ground rent of ten shillings per year. The house was built on one of these rocky foundations, where the land is of no agricultural value. The lease falls in, and the man has to pay forthwith a rent of £4 10s. per year. In another case where the ground rent was £1, a house was built which was worth £400, and the rent was immediately on the expiration of the lease, raised to £9. Now if I am not wearying the House, I will give one other instance. A field near the Penrhyn quarries was, in 1856, taken on a lease for sixty years, at a ground rent of £6. By means of a building society the quarrymen built 100 houses on the property, together with a chapel. When the lease falls in the rental of these houses will be £400 a year, and the annual value of the field will have increased in sixty years from £6 to £400, without any outlay whatever on the part of the ground landlord into whose hands all the 100 houses will revert. It is on land taken on these terms that chapels and public buildings have to be built, and so strong was the evidence given before the Committee from all parts of Wales on this point, that only two land agents ventured to come forward and give evidence. And it must be admitted that the evidence which was given on behalf of the quarrymen or working men was not shaken in the slightest degree by the testimony of the two witnesses on behalf of the landlords.

Mr. T. E. Ellis

One of them, the agent for Lord Penrhyn, was asked with regard to the City of Bangor, what was the extent of cottage property built on leases held by his Lordship? He replied that a large number of leases for lives had expired, and that the property was occupied by monthly tenants at from £3 to £6 per year. These monthly tenants were in many cases the people who themselves had built the houses. I should like to give a few instances of the injury which occurs to tradesmen owing to this system, and here again I will take the case of Festiniog. One tradesman there spent £270 upon his house; another spent £882, and still another £800, yet when they applied for a renewal of the leases, they were absolutely refused. I could multiply these cases many times over, but I should like to point out that the Noble Lord who leads the Opposition to this Bill, as well as the hon. Member for Bristol, has not made the slightest effort to deal with this part of the case. I quite admit that the hon. Member for Bristol, who ably presided over the Committee, referred vaguely to certain localities where something ought to be done to remove the injustice caused by the leasehold system, but I venture to say it is difficult to calculate the extent of injustice which arises from it. And now let me refer for a few minutes to the question of the chapels in Wales. It will not be denied that an overwhelming majority of the working men and middle classes in Wales are opposed in religion and politics to the handful of men who own the land in Wales. [An hon. MEMBER: No, no.] I hear sounds of denial from the other side, but I should like hon. Members who dispute it to look through their Vachers or their Dods and find out who represent the Welsh people in this House, and on what side they sit. It will be interesting to-day to notice how the three or four Welsh Members who sit on that side of the House will vote. Unless I am very much mistaken the same thing will happen as has happened in regard to my hon. Friend the Member for Devonport, who, though he is a most loyal supporter of Ministers, feels bound on this question to leave his friends and walk with us into the Radical lobby in support of a Bill on which the noble Lord has piled epithets

over and over again, speaking of the promoters as plunderers and robbers, and using all the denunciatory words which he could pick out of a dictionary. It will be interesting to notice how the hon. and learned Member for Bangor will vote on this question; and how the representative for the Newport Boroughs will vote. I anticipate that they will find themselves forced to go into the Lobby with us in support of this Bill. I should like to know how the hon. Member for the Pembroke Boroughs will vote, seeing that one of the witnesses who came before the Select Committee was the treasurer of the local Tory Association, who said that among the working men and tradesmen of Pembroke Dock, without the slightest distinction of party, there was a universal demand for the enfranchisement of leaseholds. I believe the hon. and gallant Member will not dare to-day to vote against this Bill. But let me return to the question of chapels on the Penrhyn estate. On this estate there are 26 chapels, of which 20 have been built on land held on a 30 years' lease, and they cost, as a rule, between £2,000 and £3,000. In every one of these leases there is a clause prohibiting the holding on the premises of any but religious meetings. Now in this district the landlords will not allow any buildings, except Churches and National Schools, to be built on freeholds; and as there are no town or public halls in many of the mountainous and quarry districts, the only place where working men can hold their literary and political meetings are the chapels and schools. Yet Lord Penrhyn puts a clause in the lease that none but religious meetings shall be held, and when the lease is nearly expired, and the people become anxious for a renewal, they are obliged to be careful how they express their political opinions; and the ministers and deacons, as well as the trustees of the chapel, really cannot exercise their civil and political rights as citizens, because they fear that Lord Penrhyn or his agent will refuse a renewal of lease. Evidence was given from Festiniog that there were chapels for which—as soon as the leases had run out—the congregations were called upon to pay rent from year to year for buildings which they had themselves built. Now, this is not a finan-

cial question—it is a moral and religious question, and the feeling throughout the whole of Wales, as well as in many parts of England, is very deep and very bitter; and it is significant that in a volume which the landlords' Committee have published, they have deemed it necessary to deliver a sort of lecture or sermon to Welsh landowners, reminding them that it would be much better, in the interests of the community and of religious equality, not to do such foolish or unfair things as these, but to allow the chapels to be built on freehold, instead of leasehold tenure. There is another feature in this question of the chapel leases which adds to the bitterness. The Church of England in Wales and in all its industrial districts is, comparatively, the Church of the rich, yet—as compared with the Nonconformists—it is extremely weak. The landowner gives freehold land to the Church of England, on which to build churches and schools, and often he builds the church himself; whereas, for the majority of Nonconformist places of worship, he will only grant leases, and even then he often insists on hard terms. In order to compare the working of the two systems, take one instance from Holyhead, which is instructive as showing the difference between the leasehold and freehold system. The School Board there had a surplus piece of land at their disposal. They sold it by auction for £383, and there was sufficient ground for building 23 houses. The plots were bought by working men, each one paying £16 13s. 1d., and each purchaser proceeded to build a substantial house. Now, if the land had been leasehold, the rent charge—taking the average charge on adjoining property—would have amounted to £45 a year for the whole field, and in 60 years ground rents would have been paid to the amount of £2,700, whereas the men who built the houses on the freehold were enabled by thrift and self-sacrifice to wipe off the debt which they incurred with the building society in 30 or 40 years; the property then became absolutely their own, and they would not at the end of 60 years have to hand it over to the ground landlord, as most men have to do in that district and then have to pay a heavy rent for that which they have themselves created. To describe this Bill in face of these facts as plunder and

robbery, and to shower other epithets on it as the noble Lord has done is grotesque. The boot is on the other leg; it is actually the working men and the tradesmen who are robbed of the property which they have created—of the houses which they have built, in which they have brought up their families, and which consequently have very dear and tender associations for them. Here you have a clear case of injustice, and if hon. Members opposite will only read the evidence given from Wales on this question, I feel sure they will support this Bill which will put an end to a system of injustice and oppression. Whether the argument for London will stand or not, there is a clear case of injustice in Wales. By the Bill before the House no one who has not 20 years of a lease to run can enfranchise. Whatever may be the merits of the limitation for London, that limitation should not apply in the cases of the houses built by working men and tradesmen in Wales. The terms of their leases are generally short, and 30 or 40 years are required to pay off the debt incurred by building, so that it would be grossly unfair that persons who had 6, 10, or 12 years of their lease to run, should be excluded from the benefits of the Bill. As to the enfranchisement of long leases under great municipal corporations, after reading the evidence from various parts of the country, I should hardly support such a proposition. On the contrary, I think it will be found advisable to give power to municipalities to enfranchise leaseholds first, and then to deal with the various leaseholders. I ask the House to consider the facts which I have brought forward and the whole evidence as it affects Wales, because then they will agree with me that by the passing of this or some similar Bill it will be possible to prevent working men from losing the fruits of self-sacrifice and of long-continued thrift, and to secure to them and their families the independence which they lose under the leasehold system. You would perform to these men in Wales and in many districts in England an act of justice and of fairness which this House has seldom an opportunity of doing.

*MR. GERALD W. BALFOUR (Leeds, Central): The hon. Member who has just spoken addressed his arguments entirely to the general question,

and not at all to the Amendment moved by the noble Lord. But after the remarks made by my hon. Friend the Member for Bristol, and after the speech of the noble Lord, I think that probably few Members of this House will doubt the propriety of that Amendment. It is true that the hon. Gentleman the Member for St. Pancras has attempted, by anticipation, to meet the arguments brought forward by the Chairman of the Committee to induce the House not to entertain this Bill, but I think that if we examine the character of the contentions of the hon. Member we shall not consider them of any special value. If I understood him rightly the hon. Gentleman said it is not at all necessary to wait for the report of the Committee, as the evidence is already before the House and hon. Members could make themselves masters of it. Well, if any hon. Members not on the Committee have undergone the task of wading through these bulky volumes, they are to be congratulated on their industry. The hon. Member seemed to think that it would be a positive advantage to the Committee if they had a vote of this House before they reported, and that such a vote would brace them up to report in a sense favourable to the hon. Member's views. This suggestion reminds me of that kind of justice which hangs a man first, and then inquires into his guilt or innocence. If we were to adopt this principle I do not see what would be the value of the reports of Special Committees. I suppose that under the circumstances the hon. Member hardly expects that his Bill will be read a second time. But he has been fortunate in getting the first place on a Wednesday, and we have no right to complain of his taking this opportunity of laying his views before the House and the country. In one respect he may be regarded as singularly fortunate, inasmuch as he has been able to quote in the Memorandum prefixed to his Bill a passage from the report of a Royal Commission. It is true that it was only a supplemental report, and that it was only signed by a certain number of the Members.

*MR. LAWSON: By the majority.

*MR. G. W. BALFOUR: Yes, by the majority, but I think that in these cases we are entitled to weigh not merely

numbers, but also names. If you look at the names you will find that the weightier names are included in the minority. Among the names is that of Sir Charles Dilke, the Chairman of the Commission.

*MR. LAWSON: He could not sign.

*MR. G. W. BALFOUR: At any rate he did not. This Commission, however, was not really appointed to examine into the question of tenure at all, and the evidence before it on that subject was of a very superficial kind. So long as the report is not superseded it will however carry with it a certain amount of authority; but in a very short time it will be superseded by another report; and although the hon. Member has endeavoured to a certain extent to discredit that report before hand, by assuring the House that the witnesses who gave evidence on the other side were men personally interested in the matter, I do not think the House will altogether accept his view. Now I hold that the conclusion arrived at by the Royal Commission, that the leasehold system leads to bad building, bad repair, and high rents, was supported by an amount of evidence almost childishly insufficient. They investigated an insanitary area, and they discovered that those particular evils were exemplified on that area; forthwith they put the two things together and came to the conclusion that because certain evils existed on that area under leasehold tenure, therefore leasehold tenure was responsible for the evils. It is just as though some one was to argue that, because the House of Commons has been suffering from the prevalence of bad smells, and it is national property, therefore all national property must suffer from the prevalence of bad smells. I think the reasonable view to take is that leasehold tenure does not, to any very large extent, really affect either the character of the houses that are built, or the state of repair in which they are maintained. I except, of course, the case of short leaseholds, which are very detrimental to the public interest. It would, indeed, be a desirable thing to bring short leaseholds to an end. It may be granted, also, that when a man owns the land and builds upon it for his own occupation, the probability is that he will build a more substantial structure. The hon. Member cheers

that view, but how many such cases are there?

*MR. BROADHURST (Nottingham): Hundreds.

*MR. G. W. BALFOUR: Very likely; but how many houses are there; what is the proportion? That is the important question. I say that, of all the town houses that are built, perhaps there is only one in a hundred that is built by the freeholder for his own occupation; and in such a case it is important that we should not legislate for exceptional instances. It seems to me that one of the great evils of legislative proposals made in recent times has been the application of a universal remedy to meet solitary cases of grievance. That is not good; it is bad legislation, and the final result of such legislation often is to bring about the very opposite of the objects sought to be attained. Excluding the short leaseholds and the instance in which a freeholder builds for his own occupation, I do not think there is any evidence of a convincing kind to show that the property built on leasehold tenure is worse than that built on freehold tenure. The hon. Member in this connection referred to the evidence given before the Select Committee by builders, and said it was a significant fact that all of them were in favour of leasehold enfranchisement. But let me point out an equally significant fact, and that is, that two out of the three builders who were examined stated that they built exactly the same class of house on leasehold as they did on freehold land. The third built only on leasehold, and he complained of the stringency with which the requirements of the landlord were enforced, in consequence of the close supervision of the landlord's surveyor. And now I pass to the question of bad repair. Here, again, the evidence is most inconclusive. It is argued that as the freeholder would have a greater interest in the property than the leaseholder, he would be likely to keep it in better repair. But over the leaseholder there is a landlord who has interests to be protected. The great argument for supposing that leasehold tenure leads to dilapidation, is that the tenant avoids executing repairs at the fag end of the lease. As against this, however, it must be borne in mind that on the best leasehold estates the houses are completely rebuilt at the expiration

of the lease. It is a singular fact that, so far as the evidence goes, I doubt whether there is one case in which the powers of clearance possessed by local authorities have been carried out on leasehold property, whereas there are several cases in which these powers have been carried out as against freehold property. That is a strong argument for believing that where property gets into a bad state on freehold land it is likely to go from bad to worse; whereas on leaseholds there is a term put to the deterioration, and houses are, in the natural course of things, pulled down and rebuilt. With regard to the allegation that the leasehold system causes high rents, the evidence distinctly goes to disprove that proposition, and many of the witnesses examined before the Commission maintained that estates were more easily developed on the leasehold than on the freehold system. If, as is alleged, the system in question by depriving working men of the power of building their own houses takes away a powerful inducement to thrift, that would certainly be an argument for some change if other interests were not materially injured by it. But I am inclined to think that the benefits to the working classes arising from the passing of this Bill would be illusory, and that the only result would be loss, injury, and annoyance to other classes. No doubt, it is a fascinating picture that is presented to us of the working man owning his house and sitting under his vine, but surely it cannot be seriously contended that the leasehold system constitutes the obstacle to the attainment of that ideal. It appears to me to be perfectly ludicrous to make any such proposition. Nor would this Bill help the working man to become a freeholder, except in the most trifling number of cases. It operates by enabling leaseholders, whose leases have twenty years or more to run, to buy up the freeholder's interest. But how many working men own leases of twenty years, or indeed leases at all? It is evident the working classes will not be converted into owners by this Bill; who then will gain by it? Sir, the real gainer under this measure will be not the occupier, but the middleman, the holder between the freeholder and the tenant; and what in Heaven's name

has the middleman done that he should be treated with special tenderness by Parliament? For the sake of converting a certain number of the wealthier class of leaseholders into freeholders and for the sake of enabling the middleman to obtain the freehold of leasehold property what are you going to give up? In the first place you are going to adopt legislation for which there is no precedent whatever. The hon. Member cited one or two Acts which he seemed to consider were precedents for his Bill. He mentioned the Irish Land Act and says that that gives a precedent for the breaking of contracts. Now, I am not myself a great admirer of the Irish Land Act, but let me point out that the contracts which it interferes with differ greatly from those which this Bill will interfere with. Then the hon. Member referred to the Copyholds Act. But this only applies to those cases where there is no reversion because tenants have got perpetuity of tenure, and it therefore positively constitutes a precedent against the Bill because it shows where the legislature at that time thought it necessary to stop in dealing with the contracts. Further, the Bill would seriously injure those who now have a stake in ground rents and would be most unjust in its operations, for it provides no compensation for severance, nor for forced sale, neither does it provide on an adequate scale for the payment of costs. The Bill would inflict a gross injustice, not only on the large landlords, but on the owners of ground-rents, who are by no means a small body easy to attack like the landlords, and whose interest the House is bound to consider far more than the interests of the middleman. I have given the House some of the reasons, but by no means all the reasons, that induce me to oppose this Bill. I submit that if it were passed the public in general would suffer, while a limited number of individuals would gain. I regard it as not only a bad Bill, but a recklessly bad Bill, because, while it betrays a complete disregard of principle, it fails to display a single sign of statesmanlike perception or insight on the part of those who are responsible for it. They do not seem to have thought out the result of their own proposals. It is not for me to anticipate what the report of the Select Committee

Mr. G. W. Balfour

may be; but I cannot help hoping that when it does appear, not only will the refusal of the House to entertain this Bill be justified by that report, but its effect will be to save the House the trouble of considering such crude proposals for the future.

*MR. BROADHURST (Nottingham): I do not propose to devote much time to the task of following the speech of the hon. Member who has just sat down. I may, however, say that although I have heard a good many speeches directed against this proposal I did not hear anything particularly new in the speech of the hon. Gentleman. He declared that people entered into the contracts under the leasehold system with their eyes open, and that, no doubt, is true; but it is equally true that the leaseholders enter into those contracts with their hands tied, the land owner having a monopoly of a property of which the leaseholder is bound to possess himself under some condition or other, the result being that he has to comply with the conditions laid down by the only person from whom he can obtain what he requires. The other point of the hon. Member's speech seemed to be that the whole of the improvements of the land are due to the wonderful action of the leasehold system and of the landlords who are the authors of it. Well, Sir, we on this side of the House do not believe that that is the case; on the contrary, we think that most of the evils connected with the housing of the population are due to the leasehold system and not to the freehold system. The hon. Gentleman made a great admission when he said the houses of the best class were usually built on the freehold system.

*MR. G. W. BALFOUR: The hon. Gentleman somewhat misrepresents what I stated. What I said was that where the owner of the land built for his own occupation, houses of that class would

probably be more substantially built than others.

*MR. BROADHURST: But we are anticipating that the system of freehold plots for the erection of cottages will take the place of the leasehold system.

*MR. G. W. BALFOUR: I said that the best houses were those built by the freeholder for his own occupation, but that in 99 cases out of 100 the houses were built by speculative builders.

*MR. BROADHURST: Precisely so; there is no divergence of statement there. If the hon. Gentleman had listened to the speech of an hon. Member who represents a Welsh constituency he would have heard of the substantial erections which are placed by the Welsh workmen even on leasehold property; and I put it to the House what would be the case if the property were freehold instead of leasehold? That, in point of fact, involves the whole case. The hon. Gentleman stated that the witnesses before the Committee upstairs did not admit that they put up a worse class of house on leasehold property than they erected on freehold property. Does the hon. Gentleman imagine that that class of men are so innocent that they will admit they are doing their utmost to scamp all the work they do on leasehold land? The idea is perfectly absurd. They will admit nothing of the kind. I should like to say a word or two—and I do it with the greatest diffidence—with regard to the speech we have heard this afternoon from the noble Lord the Member for the South Molton Division of Devonshire (Lord Lymington). I am afraid that I must object to the arguments used by the noble Lord and the conclusions at which he arrived; but what I have specially in mind is the noble Lord's reference to the Report of the Royal Commission on the Housing of the Poor. The noble Lord, in his lofty and eloquent looking-down-upon-us position said "the recommendation of the Royal Commis-

sion—what is it? Who has signed that recommendation? No one of any consequence.”

***LORD LYMINGTON**: I hope I may be allowed to state that I did not say anything discourteous of the gentlemen who did sign; what I said was that the names of those who did not sign would carry more weight than the names of those who did, and that there was not a tittle of evidence to support the recommendation.

***MR. BROADHURST**: But the evidence is altogether another matter. I am referring to the noble Lord's declaration that the recommendation of the Royal Commission was signed by a body of persons of no consequence whatever, or, at any rate, of “no influence,” that, I believe, being the phrase used by the noble Lord. Of course the meaning was that all the gentleman of influence abstained from signing.

***LORD LYMINGTON**: That is not so.

***MR. BROADHURST**: I took down the words used by the noble Lord, and I must ask the noble Lord to allow me to maintain my position.

***LORD LYMINGTON**: I am sorry to interrupt the hon. Gentleman but I certainly never said what he has attributed to me.

MR. BROADHURST: If the noble Lord disclaims the statement, I am, of course, bound to accept his explanation, but as to the accuracy of my quotation, I still maintain that I heard him say, and I heard it with great surprise, that the Royal Commission was divided into sections—that is to say, that the Members of that body were weighed out into parcels by the noble Lord, the division being as to those who were of consequence, and those who were of no consequence. It is a long time since I have listened to such an argument. Now, let me for a moment refer to the names of those who signed the recommendation. One of the first signatures

was that of Cardinal Manning, then comes that of Lord Carrington, a nobleman who was held to be a proper person to send out as Governor of one of our important Colonies. There were also the Lord Provost of Edinburgh, Mr. Lyulph Stanley, Mr. Dwyer Grey, and Mr. Torrens, and then comes the name of a gentleman at whose feet the noble Lord is delighted to bend and pay homage—I refer to my hon. Friend the Member for the Bordesley division of Birmingham (Mr. Jesse Collings). Beyond these the recommendation was signed by another gentleman, who is well known, and whose worth is greatly appreciated—Mr. Godwin, and a further signatory was the late Mr. Samuel Morley. There were 10 signatures out of 17 forming the majority of the Commission to the recommendation, and yet the noble Lord taunts us with not having the signature of the Chairman, knowing, as he does perfectly well, that under the circumstances the Chairman of the Commission could not sign the Report. However, the Chairman of the Commission did something else. He assured us that his sympathies were entirely with that recommendation, and immediately after he obtained his freedom from the responsibility of his Chairmanship he delivered an address to his constituents entirely approving of leasehold enfranchisement, and after that he published a pamphlet endorsing the whole of the proposals put forward in that direction. What, then, becomes of the taunt of the noble Lord as to the absence of the signature of the Chairman of the Committee? There was one name that was not attached to the document, and it was that of the present Prime Minister. Well, we did not expect that he would have signed the recommendation. It is enough for us that the majority signed it, and had circumstances been otherwise I have no doubt that some of those whose names are not attached to the document would have signed it. The noble Lord went on to point out to the

Mr. Broadhurst

House the great national education disaster that would follow the passing of this Bill, especially with regard to Birmingham. It is remarkable that after the noble Lord should have selected Birmingham as the only place in this country that deserved notice in eloquent speech; and this is specially noticeable after he had placed his Friend the hon. Member for Bordesley in the category of those who are of no consequence and who hold no position worthy of consideration. But, Sir, we do not propose, as has been alleged, to rob Corporations of their funds—as anyone who has listened to the noble Lord would imagine was our intention—without purchase or compensation. I think I heard an hon. Member opposite say “hear, hear” when I spoke of our being charged with the intention of seizing property without compensation or purchase.

SIR W. MARRIOTT (Brighton): Without proper compensation.

*MR. BROADHURST: I challenge anyone in this House to say there is a single sentence or line in this Bill from title page to finish, showing the least indication of a desire to act otherwise than perfectly and legitimately and fairly towards the owners of property which we merely seek to transfer on a well advised system and under equitable conditions. I could not help thinking that the way in which the noble Lord put forward King Edward's School and the Mason's College at Birmingham as subjects for the sympathy and protection of the House was, in point of fact, a mode of using those institutions as a sort of armour-plate for the protection of the great landlords in other parts of the country. But happily the great landlords and institutions of the country are in no danger from this proposal. The greatest amount of danger in that direction arises from speeches such as that to which we have listened from the hon. Member for Leeds (Mr. G. W. Balfour), and the noble Lord the Member for the South Molton Division of Devonshire (Lord Lyvington). The

speech of the noble Lord will be more popular with the extreme reformers of this country than with the more moderate land reforming section of the community. The hon. Member for St. Pancras (Mr. Lawson) said he would be condemned by the Socialists and those in favour of the nationalization of land for making proposals that would inevitably create a larger number of landowners, and thereby make the work of land nationalization more difficult than it otherwise would be. The noble Lord has said we are promoting a measure that will benefit no class of the community worthy of consideration. I ask the noble Lord whether he still adheres to that opinion after the speech of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Merionethshire (Mr. Ellis)?

*LORD LYMINGTON: I do.

*MR. BROADHURST: Then I invite the House to notice that the noble Lord still maintains the opinion that the Bill would benefit no class of the community worthy of consideration. I regret beyond measure that the noble Lord should hold to that declaration after what has fallen from the hon. Member for Merionethshire with regard to the Welsh workmen. If the noble Lord would go into North Wales and South Wales, and also through nearly the whole of Cornwall, some parts of his own county, Devonshire, and a good portion of the north of England, especially what is known as the Tyneside; if he would also extend his researches to Worcestershire he would find thousands of honest workmen who have petitioned the House to pass their measure which, nevertheless, he says will benefit no class of the community worthy of consideration. I ask the House is not the class I have named that very class which it ought to consider. Are not the thrifty workmen of Wales and Cornwall a class whose interests this House ought to regard, and to whom it should be ever ready to give aid, guidance, and encouragement? This measure has been spoken of from the

religious point of view. I think it worthy of our consideration if it merely dealt with the question of the enfranchisement of places of worship; because I can conceive of nothing more cruel, oppressive and intolerant than the possession by the Landlords of such a monopoly of the earth's surface as to enable them to dictate whether the religious communities around them shall have a covering for their heads during the performance of worship. I am here reminded of what has taken place at Hatfield, where a nonconforming body have had to worship in a shed adjoining the roadside because the noble Marquess owning the property would neither sell nor lease suitable land to build a chapel upon, the only concession he would make was to offer a site upon a sewage farm. As I had charge of and prepared this Bill six years ago, and invited the House to discuss it then, I am glad to have the opportunity of testifying my satisfaction and that of the friends with whom I have been working on this subject, at the enormous progress this question has made, the only doubt in our minds now is whether the Bill before the House is sufficiently far-reaching to meet the necessities of the time. If by delay we should be able to obtain a greater measure, we shall be indebted for that result, not to our own poor services, not to the insignificant persons whose names are of no value and of no consequence—and who have no influence when they sign reports and recommendations—but rather by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Leeds and the noble Lord the Member for the South Molton Division of Devonshire.

SIR W. T. MARRIOTT (Brighton): Mr. Speaker, some of the speeches of hon. Members, and especially the last one, shows how very inconvenient it is to have a debate in this House on a subject which is now under the consideration of a Committee appointed by it. That Committee has to report, and whatever report they make it may be said that they have been influenced by the opinion expressed in this House to-night. There is one point to which I have been listening—the point raised

with regard to chapels. I admit that with regard to chapels a grievance has existed, but from the evidence given before the Committee I do not think the grievance is as great as has been stated. In my own view a landlord is not fit to be a landlord who on account of his own religious convictions will not give any body of Christians a place upon which to build a chapel. I have certainly not the slightest sympathy with such conduct. We have already had three Reports from this Committee, and let me tell hon. Members—I believe I am not really disclosing a secret, hon. Members or Members of the Committee will correct me if I am wrong—that in every one of those three draft Reports, though of course they are not yet sanctioned, it is suggested that something should be done to remedy this evil with regard to chapels. Therefore, without this discussion raised by the Bill of the hon. Member that evil would have been remedied. Reference has been made to the grievance in North Wales. There are many cases of grievance not only of working men, but other men who have put money into property and not received proper compensation. I can understand that many people hold strongly the view that it would be much better for the working classes if many of them were to become freeholders, and, in fact, I quite agree with what was said by my hon. Friend who proposed the Second Reading of this Bill. He says that he is very much against the Socialists; so are we. He says that this Bill would act against the Socialists. I quite agree that a large number of freeholds would act against Socialism, but it would also act against the Radical Party. I believe we should have a good many recruits for this side of the House from the freeholders. I certainly would increase the number of freeholders in this country. But, Sir, that is not the question. Comparing the speech of the hon. Member with the

Bill which he has brought in, I cannot help coming to the conclusion that he does not understand his own Bill nor how far it reaches. We are not now talking of the principle of leasehold enfranchisement. I quite admit there may be a system of leasehold enfranchisement that may be just. We have a Bill before the House, and I quite agree with the hon. Member on this point, that it has been met by a side issue in the Amendment proposed. I congratulate the noble Lord who moved the Amendment on his speech in proposing it. It was a most eloquent and able speech, but it was more adapted to the straightforward course which I propose, namely, that of throwing out the Bill. My objection is not to leasehold enfranchisement, and not to an increase of freeholders, but to this Bill, because it is an absolute sham. This Bill is not real, it is a Bill brought in under false pretences. It is brought in under the pretence that it will benefit the poor man, but it will benefit the rich man. It is a cowardly Bill, trying to do by a side issue what the author of it apparently dared not and could not do openly. If he wants to abolish leaseholds, why does he not bring in a Bill to abolish that tenure in this country, and when he has abolished the tenure, consider the contract in regard to it? He brings in a Bill which to a great extent would abolish it, but only for a term of 19 years and a certain number of days. Then, Sir, I shall show presently that the Bill is absolutely unjust, and that, in regard to the procedure it proposes, it is absolutely ludicrous. And I can only say that the result would be disastrous to every class—to the rich and to the working classes. It would be disastrous to the thrifty class, which we ought to protect. I must congratulate the hon. Member on the effect of his imagination, which was astonishing. I heard the noble

Lord speak, and I heard the Member for Leith speak, and I never heard any of the sentiments which the hon. Member attributed to them. He wished to make a little political capital to be able to go to the country and say that the noble Lord—what a terrible thing to be a Lord—had from his high position spoken disrespectfully of the working classes. That was his object; to stand here as the champion of the down-trodden working men, the poor people in Wales, the men with whom he sympathises, and to point to the noble Lord, who from the power of his noble position had denounced those working men. Never a more false issue was raised in debate. Nobody knows better than the hon. Member the great interest taken in the working classes by the noble Lord whom he has chosen to denounce. The hon. Member reminds me of some preachers who raise an imaginary man of straw only to knock him down, calling him first of all after the noble Lord, and then after the Member for Leith. Then the hon. Member was very much troubled about what had been said of some of the members of the Royal Commission who were appointed to act with regard to the Housing of the Poor. I would ask some members to look at the preamble of this Bill, which is very misleading. It says that the object of this Bill is to carry out the recommendations of the Royal Commission. Now when you speak of the Royal Commission you speak of the whole of the members as a body. What did that Royal Commission do? There were 17 members, and those 17 members made a Report of, I think, 12 pages, full of information and full of facts, and in which there were some very valuable suggestions. A supplementary Report was added of about 30 or 40 lines. Notwithstanding the severe remarks of the hon. Member (Mr. Broadhurst) I do think there is such a thing as weighing heads as well as counting heads. We can weigh

them and the brains that are in them too. The hon. Member read the names of the ten, but he did not read the names of the seven. Here are the names of the seven: H.R.H. the Prince of Wales, Lord Salisbury, Lord Bramwell, Mr. Goschen, Sir Richard Cross, the Bishop of Bedford, and Sir Charles Dilke, the Chairman. ["Oh!"]. I will not make any uncomplimentary remarks about the ten, but I think the hon. Member ought to admit the weight of these names, especially that of the Chairman. I know the Chairman made a speech in Chelsea, but we know what people before their constituents sometimes say. [Cheers.] As that sentiment was so much cheered, I will ask, to whom do you attach most weight, a speech made to the electors at Chelsea, or the Report of the Royal Commission, to which Sir Charles Dilke's name is attached? Sir Charles Dilke signed the Report, but he did not sign the supplementary Report. He may have had pressure put upon him afterwards. This issue is not raised by myself but by the hon. Gentleman who last spoke. He read out the names of 10 gentlemen, against whom I have nothing to say, but as he read out those 10 names I am justified in reading my seven, and the House will say to which they attach most importance. It is said sometimes that the wish is father to the thought, and I think that often in these Committees pre-conceived opinions are often father to the facts found. The volumes are not here from which the hon. Member quoted, in introducing the Bill, the evidence of Mr. Harrison, a solicitor of eminence, but there are any number of opinions which the hon. Member did not quote, and in those volumes you may get opinions that will support anything on a variety of subjects, and if you take only one individual opinion you may almost support any position you take up. But, in these reports, what you have got to do is to compare the different opinions, attaching weight to some and not to others. What is required is a judicial decision with regard to the result of this evidence, and that certainly was not given in the speech of the hon. Member who introduced the Bill. Now there comes the question whether there is a great desire upon the part of the working

classes to have freehold property. Some evidence was given as to this which was not quoted by the hon. Member for St. Pancras—the evidence of a Member of this House, the late Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. Heneage), holding property at Great Grimsby. This evidence was given as to his property, on which 989 houses have been built since 1860 on 99 years' leases. Of these, 350 are inhabited by working men at rents of less than £12 a year. In 1884 the ground landlord issued a notice to every one of those men that he was willing to enfranchise them at 25 years' purchase, and I think everybody will admit that 25 years' purchase of the ground rents, and no other compensation, was a very moderate amount to ask. But what has happened? Out of the 989 leaseholders only 32 had, up to the time the evidence was given last year, applied for enfranchisement; and this is the more remarkable because there are in Great Grimsby a dozen building societies very much like the one they have at Leeds. The societies cannot live for lack of money, and several of the witnesses said, when the question was put to them, they could have enfranchised their leaseholds, but did not care to do it. This was the effect of the evidence from Grimsby—that scarcely anybody, either individually or as members of a building society, cared to enfranchise their property. I can understand that there may be many cases in which workmen might like to have freeholds. I can understand it in mining districts, or in any place where there is constant and fairly certain work, and where a man is likely to spend the whole of his life; and if any measure were brought into this House to facilitate the acquisition in such circumstances of freeholds on equitable terms, I, for one, should certainly support it. The more freeholds the better. But I say that this Bill would not help these men except in very few instances, and in others, and those the majority, would do far more harm than good. It certainly would not help working men one bit in London, where they are likely to have to change and shift about to seek work. There are instances easily conceivable, indeed, in which a freehold property might be a great detriment to a man here. Suppose

he has acquired a house near what was a flourishing shipbuilding yard some years ago. The yard is closed, and not only has the man lost his work, but he has on his hands a house which he cannot leave. What is really wanted by certain classes is, rather, increased facilities for leaving particular neighbourhoods in search of work. Therefore I say that this Bill would not affect a single working man in London. [An hon. MEMBER: "Woolwich."] Well, Woolwich is not in London. Woolwich is just the very place where I should expect that working men would wish to have freeholds, because permanent employment is afforded by the dockyards. With regard to London proper, there is not one working man in a hundred thousand who has a lease of 20 years. [An hon. MEMBER: "Yes."] Well, there are comparatively very few, and if this Bill is passed I will tell the House who will benefit by it—it will be the rich people who live at the West End, in Grosvenor Square and Grosvenor Place, and above all the wealthy clubs in Pall Mall. I do not know whether the Members of those wealthy clubs think they have a friend in the hon. Member for St. Pancras. Just consider for a moment the result of the 4th Clause of this Bill, which states that the measure is to come into force on the 1st February next. Take the case of the Duke of Westminster. Many years ago he gave to Mr. Cubitt a lease of 99 years. Mr. Cubitt has built a house, and has leased it to Mr. Jones for 60 years. Mr. Jones has lived in the house 30 years and has leased it to Mr. Robinson, who has now 22 years to run. What, under this Bill, could he do? He could give notice to Mr. Jones, to Mr. Cubitt, and to the Duke of Westminster in accordance with this clause, and the case comes, as the hon. Gentleman says, before the County Court, which is intended for small debtors and the working classes generally, but which, if this labour is thrown upon it, will be overburdened. Well, Mr. Robinson gives his notice and, in due course, becomes a freeholder. He gains; Mr. Jones loses, Mr. Cubitt loses, and the Duke of Westminster loses. They lose the interest on the property they had, and they are put to two sets of costs—they

are actually out of pocket for the benefit of Mr. Robinson, because they have to pay the costs of the Court and the costs of reinvestment. [MR. LAWSON: "There is provision for costs."] There is, on a very low scale, but has the hon. Gentleman ever known taxed costs to come up to the whole amount? If this Bill is passed, I repeat, the Duke of Westminster, Cubitt, and Jones are all out of pocket by the costs, and have also, perhaps, to pay the investment securities, which will not give so much interest. The one person who gains is Robinson. The public do not gain. I can understand compulsory powers being put forward when there is a public advantage, but in this case the public does not benefit one iota. If this Bill became law, numbers of Members in this House would be gainers, and I should be one among them. I am not speaking against the principle of leasehold enfranchisement on equitable terms, but against the method by which it is proposed to give effect to the principle in this Bill. What the hon. Member is really doing by this Bill is that he is robbing certain people for the benefit, no doubt, of others. I do not know what the hon. Member holds about the law of contract. We have always held it in this country to be of a sacred character; it is really what has made this country flourish and become what it is, not only in commercial matters, but in every transaction, and in every dealing between man and man. I do not know whether my hon. Friend understands the difference between leasehold, freehold, and copyhold property. I rather think he does not, for this reason. He has given us an example of copyhold. Now copyhold has nothing whatever to do with leasehold. Copyhold property is like a fee simple estate, it descends from father to son just like the fee simple, but at certain times, such as deaths, there are fines. The Act of 1852, however, gave either the landlord or the tenant the power of enfranchising themselves by giving a fixed sum instead of these fines. Under this Bill the landlord has no power to compel the leaseholder to enfranchise. It is a Bill entirely in favour of the man who has got the last lease for 21 years, and it is against all the others. I can understand that some

contracts may be injurious. If they are injurious, let law be passed to abolish them, but let it also provide that those people who have honestly and openly entered into those contracts shall be fully and amply compensated. I repeat that this Bill would be very disastrous indeed to many classes. There is no class in the community which deserves more attention from this House than the thrifty and saving class, who deny themselves during their lifetime for the benefit of their children. There is evidence in the Report of this Commission with regard to ground rents, that numbers of people have been content for years with 1, 2, and 3 per cent—in one case less than 1 per cent—so that when the property falls in, in 30 years or more their children will have the advantage. This Bill would affect every lease for 999 years in Manchester, where there are constantly leases for that period. As the law now stands the value of those leases would be probably 30 years' purchase, say, £3,000. The moment this Bill passes, the value would drop to 20 years' purchase, £2,000, and I want to know why people who have put their money into an investment of this kind are to be robbed in this way without benefit to any public interest. Take a stronger case, that of a man who has been content with one per cent. He bought the property some nine years ago. He bought the ground rent with 30 years to run. For nine years he was satisfied with less than one per cent because he knew that in 30 years he would come into a large property for his children. But there is a leaseholder on it who has got it for 21 years; and if this Bill is passed, and he enfranchises in February, the unfortunate owner does not get any benefit whatever. There are a great number of investors in these ground rents. Thousands of ground rents are sold in London. They have all been sold on the faith of existing law. Everyone of these people would suffer by this Bill, and suffer for no benefit to the public. What I say with regard to this Bill is that it has been brought in under false pretences. Nothing could be more certain than that it will not benefit the poor. I quite admit that as population increases, as the country grows, larger power will have

to be given to local authorities. The County Councils and Municipal Authorities will want more power; and those who oppose this Bill because of its unjustness do not do it because they do not wish those bodies to have greater powers in the way of enabling them to provide better houses for the working classes. The principle of compulsion is well admitted in this House. It is admitted in the Allotments Act and in many other Acts, and it may have to be extended. But why I ask you to oppose this Bill is because it is practically a bogus Bill, and will not benefit the working classes. It is true that it suits a certain section of this House to say it will benefit the working classes. When they want anything for themselves it is always for the benefit of the working classes and of the poor. We look rather to action than to profession of this kind. Though we hear a great many professions from Members opposite, the legislation with regard to the housing of the poor was initiated by the Conservative Government. It was Mr. Disraeli who gave vent to the motto, *sanitas sanitatis omnia est sanitas*, and it was a Radical Member who translated it into a "policy of sewage." The greater part of the legislation for the benefit of the poorer classes has been initiated upon this and not upon that side of the House. The pretext here is the good of the poorer classes, but the result will be a great advantage to the wealthier classes, many of whom sit in this House. I sincerely hope that this House will support the amendment, and, if it has the opportunity, reject this Bill.

*MR. A. ACLAND (Yorkshire, W.R., Rotherham): I think this debate will be most remarkable for the concessions that have been made by various gentlemen who have spoken against the Bill. The only Member who has maintained the old point of view is the noble Lord (Viscount Lynton) who has spoken on this side. He comes under the category which was described by the noble Lord the Member for Paddington (Lord R. Churchill) who spoke on this subject four years ago. The noble Lord said there were still to

be found certain antediluvian Tories—the traces of whom were to be found by the antiquarian or the archæologist, but who did not and need not in the least alarm any practical politician. The hon. Gentleman who has just spoken is not one of these. He has shown what great progress this question is making. He charges us with urging these things on behalf of the poor and not meaning them. He himself—and I do not charge him in any sense by way of reproach—has said he would help working men in this matter if he could. He has told us that if a Bill was introduced that would enable the working men in the quarry districts of Wales or of Woolwich to get the ownership of their own houses he would support it. Let him bring in a Bill of that kind and we shall be getting on towards what we want. Then he says “your Bill is going to relieve the rich man too.” The difficulty of legislation of this kind is to know how to deal with one class without dealing with another; but if we can help the quarrymen of Wales and the arsenal men of Woolwich, I do not see why we should not help the hon. Member himself, and Mr. Robinson, of Belgrave Square, of whom he has spoken. The position broadly is this. There are in this country three methods under which houses are dealt with. The first is the freehold method, which is spread largely over the north and middle of England and to many parts of the south of England. In the freehold districts neither upper, middle or lower classes will look at a 99 years’ lease, however much you try to press it upon them. The landlords have found that out, and there have been many private Acts passed, beginning with recitals to this effect, that whereas in a district where the landlords have been tied up by settlements, the people will not practically look at anything but free-

holds, the landlords should be allowed by special legislation to meet the people on their own lines and grant them freeholds, or else they cannot develop their estates. Then there is a second system, which is perfectly adequate and satisfactory to many people, namely, the permanent ground-rent or feu system, which holds throughout Scotland, a great portion of Lancashire, and some other parts of the kingdom. We do not find that the people under that system make any complaint. Then we come to the third or short leasehold system, and we find ample evidence in all parts of England and Wales to show that the system does frequently, though not always, impose burdens which are grievous and difficult to be borne. The question is, how far in the public interest can we modify this short leasehold system so as to relieve those, whether rich or poor, whether business men or working men, who have obstacles placed in the way of their social and moral progress in consequence of it. Now, can we with equity and justice relieve them? There is ample evidence of a strong feeling on this subject in the country. Why has the London County Council already by something like two to one practically passed approval of schemes of this kind? It will not be said that the London voters who returned the London Councillors are all of them anxious to fulfil the words of the noble Lord (Lord Lymington), and to come into the category of people who wish to commit “injustice, gross, glaring, naked, palliated by no single advantage.” I take a case within my own knowledge, and I am not at all afraid of coming under a kind of sneer the noble Viscount made at the hon. Member for Devonport—namely, that he was only supporting this Bill because the leasehold system was felt to be a grievance in his own constituency. If it is a grievance, and the hon. Gentleman supposes his constituents are right, it is no shame to him to support the Bill. I have received, without any action of mine, from the

Town Council in my Constituency a unanimous petition in favour of this Bill. A similar feeling prevails in Sheffield, and I shall be pleased to see how the Members for that place vote. The Under Secretary for the Home Department (Mr. Stuart Wortley) voted in favour of this Bill in 1884, when he was a free man; how he may vote this year I really do not know. Then I happen to be a member of the County Council in Carnarvon, and only the other day it was agreed by that Council, by 36 votes to seven, that a petition be presented in favour of this Bill. What does all this mean? Surely there is a feeling of grievance amongst a large number of people, or else you would not have popular representatives taking action in this way. The real question is how far we can assist those who find difficulty in assisting themselves. The Government themselves will not, if they can possibly avoid it, allow Post Offices, Science and Art Schools, or other public buildings to be erected on leasehold land, and the reason is that it is wrong to erect public buildings upon terminable tenures. The reasons that influence the Government equally apply to private persons and undertakings. The case of chapels and co-operative stores has been referred to. No one who knows the North of England will venture to say a word against those co-operative societies which have taught working men how to save, which have taught honest and capable committee men to handle vast sums of money, taught them, in the best sense of the word, what the ownership in property means. How have they developed themselves? They have begun with small cottages, and grown gradually, until some of them have now a turn-over of a quarter of a million sterling. But they never think of building upon anything but freehold land, or upon land acquired upon 999 years' lease. As a consequence they built substantial establishments—they have built for posterity. What do we find in the case of the dock yard men at Woolwich? They have got a Society doing £100,000 a year, but they have been crippled, because, instead of being able to build upon freehold land they have been obliged to put up their establishments on terminable leaseholds. As a consequence they have simply put up temporary buildings, coverings with

iron roofs, and so forth. I maintain that in the interests of working classes, as well as other classes, a system of this kind, which cripples industry and hinders thrift, is bad for us all. You may say, "Oh, we will meet that case—you want co-operative societies especially dealt with in the public interest, can't you introduce a special Bill to meet that case?" Working men gave evidence on this subject. They said, "we speak in the name of thousands of men who have been building houses through the money in these societies; we want them to have the same opportunity we have in our own co-operative stores." There are a great many arguments used against this proposal of ours with reference to London; one is, "we know so much better what is good for the working man than he knows himself." Working men have expressed their opinion on this subject in a variety of ways; and even if you can show, as the last speaker tried to, that the working man may have to move from place to place in order to follow his industry, you have not undermined our case, because many building societies enable a man to purchase his own house by payments which very little exceed the rent he would otherwise have to pay. But, even if a man does sacrifice something, I say he is a better man for having done it; if he had not made the sacrifice very likely he would never have saved the money at all. Now, as to chapels, we have had considerable concessions made to-day on the other side of the House, and hardly any Member of the House will justify the present practice. In the Committee I asked Lord Penrhyn's agent whether he did not think a system whereby there were no less than 20 chapels on leases under 30 years, nine-tenths of the people being nonconformists, while all the churches and schools were all on freeholds, was not calculated to produce a sore feeling in the minds of the people of the district? The agent said he did not think that had much to do with the question under consideration. Land agents did not seem to understand that the House of Commons was making these enquiries with a view to consulting the benefit of the community. Again, in many of these leasehold districts there is no freedom of contract

at all. I was talking the other day to a very distinguished professor at Oxford—a strong supporter of the present government—and he thought it was monstrous he should not be able to obtain in the residential part of Oxford a house which he could enlarge at his leisure and hand it on to his children afterwards. This leasehold system is utterly unknown in the towns on the Continent. The general run of the reports from the Continent is “Land for building is sold almost without exception unconditionally,” and yet we are told that this wonderful leasehold system is almost a providential arrangement for the advantage of the people. We have been told that the Socialists do not approve of any scheme of this kind, and the Socialists in this matter no doubt will prove themselves the friends for the moment of the Duke of Westminster and the great London landlords. The Socialists are so anxious to tax what are called ground rents, and so afraid of putting a single penny into the pocket of any landlord that I believe some of them would almost oppose a railway or other beneficial scheme for fear some of the money would find its way to the landlord class. If some day ground values are rated, there would be two-thirds of Great Britain practically untouched by the system. The ratepayers in any district will always exceed the number of owners, and therefore I think the Socialists are wrong. I would sooner get a clear, definite, immediate advantage than wait for generations for an advantage which may never come. The one thing we have to do in this country is to increase the number of people who enjoy the permanent ownership of their own houses. The noble Lord (Viscount Lynton) made a sort of *non possumus* speech, but the hon. Member (Mr. L. Fry) seconded the Amendment in a very different kind of speech. He is the Chairman of our Committee, he has listened to all the evidence, and has made what is a most important concession; we may almost say a concession of the whole case. He has said that he has seen that there are localities where there are a large number of occupying owners, and where perhaps in the interest of the community some measure of this sort ought to be introduced. And he further says that he thinks in some

cases local bodies might rightly have compulsory powers to enfranchise. As far as I am concerned, that concedes the whole case. This will become more and more a burning question. I hope we shall deal with it without delay, and, as I believe we can, both equitably and effectively:

SIR J. PULESTON (Devonport): As I have been frequently mentioned in the course of the debate as a supporter of the Bill, I should like to point out that the debate has really turned upon details which could be best settled in Committee. My right hon. Friend the Member for Brighton (Sir W. Marriott) has, however, gone much further; indeed, from his speech, I almost expect to have his vote in the division Lobby. He has admitted with great frankness and ability that he is in favour of increasing the number of freeholders in the country. That is one of the principles for which we contend. He has further admitted that there are many places, and I thank him for particularly naming dockyard constituencies, where the principle of this Bill ought to prevail. Now, although I shall support the Second Reading of the Bill, it must not be taken that I shall not be prepared to propose in Committee a good many amendments to improve the Measure. I think there are many hon. Members who will go into the Lobby in favour of the Second Reading with the same intention.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. MATTHEWS, Birmingham, East): I shall not stand long between the House and the Division. On behalf of the Government, I desire to say that we are entirely opposed to this Bill. We are opposed to the principle because we believe it to be unjust; we believe the Measure would establish a precedent for taking a man's property, not for the public advantage, not for the use of the public for any public purpose, not with full compensation, not upon terms that are fair and equitable to the person obliged to part with his property. We resist it therefore on that ground. We also resist it on the ground that the proposal is premature and inex-

pedient; because a Committee of this House which has sat for three years and accumulated a mass of evidence is about to report on the evidence. The Chairman of the Committee, the hon. Member for Bristol (Mr. L. Fry), has seconded the Amendment of the noble Lord (Viscount Lymington), and I think it would be contempt of the Committee so to speak to proceed to a decision on this Measure before we receive the Report of the Committee. On these grounds, we intend to oppose a Second Reading of the Bill.

The House divided; Ayes 157, Noes 186; (Div. List, No. 90).

Words added:

Main Question, as amended, put.

Resolved, That this House declines to consider the question of Leasehold Enfranchisement until it has had an opportunity of considering the Report of the Committee appointed to inquire into the subject of Town Holdings.

ADVERTISEMENT RATING BILL.

(No. 35.)

Read a second time, and committed for Tuesday 14th May.

DEEP SEA OYSTERS BILL. (No. 157.)

Order for Second Reading read, and discharged.

Bill withdrawn.

CRUELTY TO CHILDREN PREVENTION BILL. (No. 87.)

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1.

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon Wednesday next.

DRUNKENNESS (CONVICTIONS)

(ENGLAND AND WALES).

Address for—

“Return for England and Wales of the total number of convictions in respect of such offences under the following enactments as involve drunkenness, 3 and 4 Vict. c. 97, s. 13; 10 and 11 Vic. c. 89, ss. 29 and 61; 35 and 36 Vic. c. 94, s. 12, committed during the four years ended the 31st day of December, 1888 (1) after 12:30 (noon) on Sundays; (2) at any other time, whether on Sundays before 12:30 (noon), or on any week day, under the following heads:—

Mr. Matthews

1885.

Place.

Population.

On Sundays 12:30 noon to midnight.

At any other time.

Total.

1886.

On Sundays 12:30 noon to midnight.

At any other time.

Total.

1887.

On Sundays 12:30 noon to midnight.

At any other time.

Total.

1888.

On Sundays 12:30 noon to midnight.

At any other time.

Total.”

—(Mr. Cavendish Bentinck.)

MOTIONS.

—o—

MASTER AND SERVANT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Howell, Bill to repeal certain statutes, relating to Master and Servants in particular manufactures, which have ceased to be put in force, or have become unnecessary by the enactment of subsequent statutes, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Howell, Sir Henry James, Mr. Mundella, Mr. Hunter, Mr. Bradlaugh, Mr. T. M. Healy, Mr. Hoyle, and Mr. Fenwick.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 205.]

TEMPORARY DWELLINGS BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Burt, Bill to provide for the Registration and Regulation of Vans and other Vehicles used as Temporary Dwellings, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Burt, Mr. Caine, Dr. Cameron, Mr. James Campbell, Mr. Elton, Mr. Matthew Kenny, Mr. John Kelly, and Colonel Makins.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 206.]

SCHOOL BOARD ELECTORS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. J. B. Balfour, Bill to amend the Law relative to the qualification of Electors of School Boards in Scotland, ordered to be brought in by Mr. J. B. Balfour, Mr. Donald Crawford, Mr. Hozier, and Mr. Angus Sutherland.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 207.]

CHAIRMEN'S PANEL.

MR. OSBORNE MORGAN reported from the Chairmen's Panel, that they had appointed Mr. Osborne Morgan to act as Chairman of the Standing Committee on Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping and Manufactures.

Report to lie upon the Table.

House adjourned at Ten Minutes before Six o'clock.

HANSARD'S PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES.

No. 10.] THIRD VOLUME OF SESSION 1889. [MAY 10.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Thursday, 2nd May, 1889.

The Earl of Lucan—took the Oath.

LEE-ON-THE-SOLENT (LIGHT) RAIL- WAY BILL.

Order of the Day for Second Reading read, and discharged. The Chairman of Committees informed the House that the promoters do not intend to proceed further with the Bill. Ordered that the Bill be not further proceeded with.

SALE OF GOODS BILL [NO. 49].

A Bill for codifying the law relating to the sale of goods—Was presented by The Lord Herschell; read 1^a; and to be printed.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) PROVISIONAL ORDERS BILL.

Read 2^a (according to order), and committed to a Committee of the whole House on Monday next.

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION PROVI- SIONAL ORDER CONFIRMATION (ACTON, &c.) BILL [No. 19].

House in Committee (according to Order); Bill reported without Amendment; and to be read 3^a to-morrow.

HORSEFLESH (SALE FOR FOOD) BILL [No. 41].

SECOND READING.

*EARL BEAUCHAMP: My Lords, I have to ask your Lordships to give a Second Reading to this Bill, which has come up from the other House. The title is not a very ornamental one, but the subject is one which seriously

affects a large number of people. The object of the Bill is to provide that no person shall buy horseflesh under any misconception as to the nature of what he is purchasing. It is drawn on the lines of the Act which passed your Lordship's House some years ago and became law—the Act known as the Margarine Act. So far as it is possible to legislate upon matters so dissimilar as horseflesh and margarine, the Bill follows on the lines of the Margarine Act. Another portion of this Bill is taken from the unsound meat clauses of the Public Health Act, which have been found a great protection to the purchaser, and have been a very useful means of preserving the health of the community. I believe it is now rather more than forty years ago since the question was first mooted of the consumption of horseflesh as an article of human food. In 1847 the first steps were taken in Berlin to bring horseflesh as an article of food for the community. I am told that horseflesh is by no means unpalatable, and that it possesses certain qualities which are agreeable to the taste of many persons. Whether that is so or not, I think your Lordships will agree that those who intend to buy what is ordinarily known as butcher's meat, ought not to have palmed off upon them, at the price of butcher's meat, meat which is really horseflesh. I need not go into the chemical question as to the component parts of horseflesh; but I may simply say this, that whatever the peculiarities of taste may be which makes horseflesh differ from ordinary butcher's meat, a very simple test will show whether it is horseflesh or not, for the specific gravity of the chemical constituents of the fat of horseflesh is

such that it is very easy indeed to place beyond all doubt whether the meat in question is horseflesh or not. I am told that in certain cases the vendors of horseflesh remove the fat from horseflesh, and substitute the fat of beef or mutton for the fat that properly belongs to horseflesh. We know that various trades have their various tricks, and we need not go into that closely. But what I want to point out to your Lordships is that it is a very serious grievance that one class of meat should be foisted upon the unsuspecting purchaser for another. The feeling on this subject is very great in those places where the attention of the public has been called to it. In Lancashire, in Manchester and in Salford, I am told, there is a great consumption of horseflesh. A few years ago, the price paid by the Manchester Zoological Gardens for the carcase of a horse was only 25s. I am told now that from some mysterious cause or another the price of horseflesh has risen, and the directors of the Manchester Zoological Gardens, instead of buying their carcasses for 25s., have to pay no less a sum than £3. I think that shows a considerable alteration of the conditions under which horseflesh is sold. No one can wish that this traffic should be carried on surreptitiously, and that innocent purchasers should be induced to purchase horseflesh thinking it good, sound, wholesome beef. The Bill will not in any way interfere with proper traffic. There is no desire whatever to interfere with the sale of horseflesh. All the desire is, that horseflesh when sold shall be sold as horseflesh, and not sold as anything else. Power is, therefore, given to the medical officer to apply to the Justices of the Peace for a search warrant where he has reason to believe horseflesh is being sold as beef. I understand that it was stated at a banquet held in London in 1868, that there were 75,000 horses which were annually wasted through not being consumed as human food. I think it is quite possible that under proper restrictions the sale of horseflesh may be developed, and it may become a proper article of consumption for the public; but it must be done in a manner open and without fraud, and not so as to delude the innocent purchaser into the belief that he is buying that

which he is not supplied with. Moreover, I have been looking up to this time to the question merely from the consumer's point of view, but I think something should be said from the tradesman's point of view. It is very hard that an honest butcher who is selling butcher's meat should be undersold by those who sell horseflesh, who are able, of course, to undersell him, and interfere very seriously with his sale of beef. It is desirable to put the trade under such proper restrictions as, without interfering with the convenience of the public, will secure the genuineness of the article sold, and also take care that the honest trader is not placed at a disadvantage. I am informed that in a very few days a petition has been got up, not to your Lordships, but to the other House of Parliament, signed by 23,000 people, who are aggrieved at the conditions under which the trade is carried on. I need not mention the localities, but I understand that in a very few days this petition, signed by 23,000 people, was got up and presented to the House of Commons in support of this Bill. The restrictions contained in this Bill are, as I have said, copied from the Margarine Act so far as they are capable of application. The first clause provides that no one is to sell or to offer for sale any horseflesh except in a place which is to be registered for that purpose, and he shall have in a conspicuous position over his shop or stall words indicating that horseflesh is sold there. The second clause, borrowed in the main from the Margarine Act, provides that any purchaser purchasing horseflesh unless he asks for horseflesh shall be supplied with a label of a certain size and so forth, so that he may know exactly what he has bought. Clause 3 provides that the Medical Officer or Inspector of Nuisances, or any other officer of the Local Authority acting under proper instructions, may at all reasonable times examine any meat that he has reason to believe is horseflesh. That is taken from the Unsound Meat Clauses of the Public Health Act which have worked exceedingly well. Then follows Clause 4, which enables Justices of the Peace to grant a warrant on the application of the Medical Officer of Health. Clause 5 provides for the disposal of the horseflesh which has been seized under the

foregoing clauses, and the remaining clauses are really unimportant. My Lords, I think I have shown that legislation is required for the protection not merely of the consumer, but also of the honest tradesman; and I also think I have shown that the Clauses are copied from similar Clauses, which have been found by experience reasonable and suitable, and therefore I hope your Lordships will now give a Second Reading to this Bill.

LORD LAMINGTON: My Lords, I do not rise for the purpose of making any objection to the second reading of this Bill, which is practically similar to one which I introduced last year called the Foreign Meat Bill. That Bill, consisting of one clause only, insisted upon any butcher who sold foreign or colonial meat putting distinctly on a board that the meat sold was foreign. I withdrew that Bill last year because the noble Lord at the head of the Government promised that a similar Bill should be introduced this Session by the Government. [The Marquess of SALISBURY expressed dissent.] I certainly understood that such a promise was made, and I am sorry to hear that I am mistaken and that no Bill of the kind will be introduced by the Government. However, the principle of this Bill (and it was also the principle of the Margarine Act) is that people ought not to be deluded into purchasing something other than that which they think they are purchasing.

*VISCOUNT TORRINGTON: On behalf of Her Majesty's Government it is not my intention to oppose the second reading of this Bill. As I understand its principle, it is, shortly, that a purchaser who buys meat as butcher's meat should be protected against having horseflesh palmed off upon him.

LORD HERSCHELL: I do not intend to vote against the second reading, but I would like to point out to your Lordships that in some respects the Bill will need revision. For instance, by Clause 6 it is provided that—

"In any proceedings against any person for offending against the provisions of this Act, it shall not be necessary to prove that any horseflesh which may have been sold, offered, exposed, or kept for sale, was intended for human food; but the onus of proving that any such horseflesh was not intended for human food shall rest with such person."

Now, if I rightly understand that Sec-

tion, a cats'-meat man who sells horseflesh would be bound to prove that he sells it not for human consumption.

LORD THRING: I think that in some clauses the measure is too stringent. For instance, one of the provisions is that anyone selling horseflesh for human food must supply the purchaser with a label on which shall be printed in legible letters, not less than an inch in length, "horseflesh;" and by Clause 6 a trader who does not comply with that provision is liable to a penalty "not exceeding £20." The Bill will require examination on this and other points in Committee.

Bill read 2^a according to order.

*EARL BEAUCHAMP: I beg to move that the Bill be committed to a Committee of the whole House.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (the Marquess of SALISBURY): After what has been said upon the Second Reading, it seems to me that this is a Bill which should go to one of the Standing Committees. Perhaps the noble Earl will agree to its going to the Standing Committee for General Bills.

*EARL BEAUCHAMP: The only reason for my wishing to refer it to a Committee of the whole House is that we have no knowledge whatever when the Standing Committees are going to meet. The question is a pressing one, and, unless it is clear that the Bill would be considered by a Standing Committee within a reasonable time, I would prefer that your Lordships should bring your collective wisdom to bear upon it in Committee of the whole House, so that the Bill may become law before Whitsuntide.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: I understand that the Chairmen of the Standing Committees will meet shortly to make provision for the despatch of the business before them. There is no such hurry as the noble Earl seems to suppose for passing the Bill, because, judging from the state of affairs in the House of Commons, they are not likely to be waiting for the noble Earl to send them business.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: I really think that, although it is very undesirable that horseflesh should be sold fraudulently as butcher's meat, and although it may be very wise to

legislate upon the subject, there cannot be any extraordinary urgency about the matter; and I therefore beg to move that the Bill be referred to the Standing Committee for General Bills.

*EARL BEAUCHAMP: I will not trouble your Lordships to divide.

Bill committed to the Standing Committee for General Bills.

TRUST COMPANIES BILL. (No. 10.)

Committed to the Standing Committee for Bills relating to Law, &c.

House adjourned at a quarter before Five o'clock, till To-morrow, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thursday, 2nd May, 1889.

QUESTIONS.

THE TOWER GARDENS.

MR. MONTAGU (Tower Hamlets, Whitechapel): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that the public have largely availed themselves of the recently conferred privilege of access to the Tower Gardens, and that no case of disorderly conduct has been reported; whether he will extend similar facilities of access to the "River Side Promenade," to which the public were formerly admitted; and whether he will request the Tower officials to allow a Military band to play on Saturdays in the afternoon during the summer months, and to provide that two or three "beefeaters" should act as caretakers, with the view of reducing the cost of maintaining order in the Gardens and Promenade?

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (MR. STANHOPE, Lincolnshire, Horncastle): I am glad to be able to answer the first question in the affirmative. I am afraid, however, that I must adhere to the decision not to extend similar facilities of access to the Tower Wharf. There is no band at the disposal of the Tower authorities for the purpose suggested in the question.

THE LIST OF GENERALS.

SIR GEORGE TREVELYAN (Glasgow, Bridgeton): I beg to ask the

Earl of Kimberley

Secretary of State for War whether he is now prepared to state the arrangement which he is prepared to make with regard to the list of Generals?

*MR. E. STANHOPE: I am disappointed at not being yet able to state to the House my proposals with regard to the general officers' list. I do not think I should be justified in doing so until Treasury sanction has been obtained, and so many details are involved in the draft Royal Warrant that its technical preparation has taken longer than I expected. But I will certainly do it as soon as possible.

POST OFFICE OFFICIALS.

MR. DONAL SULLIVAN (Westmeath, S.) asked the Postmaster General whether the following recommendation made by the late Mr. Fawcett to the Treasury, on 13th June 1881, and which was sanctioned by the House of Commons, "That payment as overtime work be given for all Sunday work performed by the indoor staff, whether telegraph or postal, which in a month of four Sundays may be in excess of eight hours, *i.e.* an average of two hours per Sunday," has been strictly adhered to up to about six weeks ago; whether the Surveyor of the Leeds district lately issued a regulation which reduced the Sunday pay to less than one-half, and in many cases to *nil*; and whether this new regulation decides that every officer shall work 44 hours per week for night duty and 50 hours per week for day duty before any claim can now be made, whether performed on Sunday or weekdays?

*THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (MR. RAIKES, Cambridge University): I have received no representation in the usual manner from any officers of the Department on the subject referred to in the hon. Member's question, but I may say that his quotation from the late Mr. Fawcett's letter of 13th June, 1881, is correct as far as it goes. The paragraph, however, must be read in connection with, and subject to, a preceding paragraph, which prescribes one period of ordinary night attendance for the week—namely, seven hours for the six nights, or 42 hours for the week, and two hours on Sundays, making 44 hours in all. In a few cases, postmasters have inadvertently overpaid certain clerks, paying for overtime on Sundays when

they have only given 35 hours' night attendance instead of 42. No new regulation has been made, but the irregular payments have been discontinued, so as to make the practice accord with the decision of 13th June, 1881.

GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS — OPERATIVE WEAVERS' STRIKE.

MR. BROADHURST (Nottingham) asked the Secretary of State for War whether it is true that the female operative weavers employed by the firm of Messrs. Colbeck Brothers, of Avertorpe, Yorkshire, who are now on strike against a further reduction of wages, have been weaving cloth for the use of the War Department at wages of about half the rate given by other firms in Yorkshire for similar work; and whether Messrs. Colbeck Brothers obtained the contract direct from the Government or through some other agency?

*MR. E. STANHOPE: The contracts held by Messrs. Colbeck, of Avertorpe, were obtained direct by open competition. The War Office has no cognizance of the relations between the firm and its operatives beyond the fact that a strike has taken place.

STAMP DUTY ON BONDS AND SHARES.

MR. S. MONTAGU asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will state the amount received from the one shilling per cent stamp duty on bonds and shares to bearer from 1st July, 1888, to 31st December, 1888, and the amount so received from 1st January to 31st March, 1889; whether the receipts from this source are likely to decline in consequence of the issue of fully-stamped bonds in lieu of old bonds converted or paid off; and whether, in view of the small and possibly declining revenue from this duty, and of the great trouble and inconvenience entailed by affixing so many adhesive stamps, he will see the advisability of substituting a small *pro rata* tax on brokers' contracts for the purchase and sale of such securities to bearer?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN, St. George's, Hanover Square): Since I made my Financial Statement the results of the last quarterly stamp stocktaking have been received, and they somewhat modify the estimate then given by me in a direction favourable to the revenue.

The receipts from the 1s. per cent stamp duty on bonds to bearer were from the 1st of July to the 31st of December, 1888, £66,600; from the 1st of January, to the 31st of March, 1889, £45,400, making a total of £112,000. The figures from January to March are still only an approximate estimate; but there is no longer room for much variation. I do not think that a decline in this duty is likely to take place. On the one hand, no doubt, bonds subject to the 1s. duty are paid off; but, on the other hand, it often happens that bonds not liable to the duty are replaced by bonds which are. The substitute for this duty which is suggested by the hon. Member was fully considered last year. I think the hon. Member would find that it would be even more strongly objected to than the 1s. stamp. Such, at least, was my impression last year.

THE EDUCATION CODE, 1889.

MR. JEFFREYS (Hants, Basingstoke) asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education whether, in view of the difficulties which an immediate application of Clause 85 in the New Code would cause to voluntary schools (many of which have been built or enlarged with the approval of the Education Department to give an area of eight square feet to each child), the increased area of ten square feet will be required in existing schools or in new buildings only; and whether a difference could be made in the area required for country schools as compared with those in large towns.

THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL ON EDUCATION (Sir W. HART DYKE, Kent, Dartford): There has never been any intention to give immediate application to Article 85 A in the New Code so far as existing schools are concerned; and in cases in which the Department has sanctioned a certain amount of accommodation for a certain number of scholars such arrangements will not be disturbed. I fear that such an arrangement as indicated in the last paragraph could not well be made.

MR. J. MORE (Shropshire, Ludlow): May I ask whether in all cases the Board Schools will be treated on the same lines as the voluntary schools?

SIR W. HART DYKE: I cannot answer that question at this moment.

MR. SAMUELSON (Gloucester, Forest of Dean) asked the Vice-President of the Committee of Council on Education whether he would lay upon the Table of the House a statement of the objects intended to be effected by the various changes introduced into the Code and Schedule of 1889, as set forth in the "Appendix of Articles modified and new Articles," and to what extent these changes carry out the recommendations of the Royal Commission on Elementary Education.

SIR W. HART DYKE: The object of the proposed alterations is simply to endeavour to carry into effect many of the changes advocated both by the majority and minority report of the late Commission. How far these objects have been attained is a matter which will be best elucidated by debate in this House.

THE SUGAR CONVENTION.

MR. BLUNDELL MAPLE (Camberwell, Dulwich): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies if it is his intention to introduce a Bill prohibiting the importation of confectionery and sweetened provisions made from bounty-fed sugar?

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Baron H. de Worms, Liverpool, Toxeth): No, Sir.

MR. KNATCHBULL HUGESSEN (Kent, Faversham): Is it intended to prohibit the importation into this country of jams made from bounty-fed sugar?

BARON H. DE WORMS: No, Sir.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton): Is the hon. Gentleman aware that the introduction of the Bill has been attended by a rise in the price of the sugar of the poor all over the country?

BARON H. DE WORMS: I am not aware of that fact. I am aware that a rise in the price of sugar has taken place, but it is owing to the existence of the unfortunate Bounty System.

MR. H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.): Will not the Bill prohibit the importation of confectionery and sweetened provision made from bounty-fed sugar?

BARON H. DE WORMS: Certainly not.

CONDENSED MILK.

MR. CHANNING (Northamptonshire) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the Federal Council of Switzerland has approved a Bill giving a drawback of five francs per 100 kilogrammes of sugar contained in condensed milk; whether the Council have stated that the existing duty on sugar imported into Switzerland enhances the cost of condensed milk by three per cent., and places the Swiss product at a disadvantage of one franc 50 centimes per chest of 48 boxes in the English market, compared with the cost of production in a "free sugar" country like England; and whether, if the International Commission consider that part of this drawback acts as a bounty, the importation of condensed milk from Switzerland will be prohibited.

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir J. FERGUSSON, Manchester, N.W.): Her Majesty's Government are informed that although the Swiss National Council had adopted this Bill, the Council of States has rejected it. Accordingly the matter stands over until next Session in June.

MR. CHANNING: Do not the facts stated in the second part of the question appear in the official reports of the Board of Trade?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: I am not prepared to answer, without reference, whether it is the case or not.

CHILD MARRIAGES IN INDIA.

MR. SAMUEL SMITH (Flintshire) asked the Under Secretary of State for India whether his attention has been drawn to the statement made by Dewan Ragunatha Rao regarding the existing state of the law in India with reference to infant marriages, and to his statement of a recent instance where "a child wife, aged eight years, was driven to attempt suicide rather than continue to submit herself any longer to the capricious tyranny and odious intimacy of her so-called husband, aged 47 years"; and whether Her Majesty's Government will communicate with the Indian Government and recommend some restrictions on child marriages?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Sir J. GORST,

Chatham): The attention of the Government of India has long been directed to the evils which arise from infant marriages in India, and they have made, and will continue to make, all such efforts to correct those evils as are consistent with the pledge of the British Government to respect the religious and social customs of all classes of Her Majesty's Indian subjects. I may remind the House that one satisfactory result of these efforts is to be found in the Resolution of the Rajputana Chiefs in March, 1888 (quoted in a House of Lords Return of the 20th July, 1888, No. 227), as follows:—

"As a rule, boys and girls are married at an early age, notwithstanding that the evils of such a custom are well known to all, and need no description. In inviting attention to the subject, it seems proper to lay down that boys and girls should not be married before the age of 18 and 14 respectively. As regards engagements concluded before this date, the marriage can take place as soon as the girl completes 14 years, irrespective of the boy's age."

FOOT AND MOUTH DISEASE.

SIR EDWARD BIRKBECK (Norfolk, E.): I beg to ask the Vice Chamberlain whether the Royal Agricultural Society of England have found themselves not in a position to accept the proposal of Her Majesty's Government, that they should send over to the Netherlands to inquire into the security afforded against the possible exportation of foot and mouth disease; whether the attention of Her Majesty's Government has been called to a resolution passed at a council meeting of the Royal Agricultural Society on the 16th instant, in which they desire to impress upon the Government the necessity of postponing from 1st June to 1st September the operation of the order to admit animals free from Holland, so as to give time for further inquiry; whether the Privy Council have received a Copy of the Report unanimously agreed to by the Council of the Central and Associated Chambers of Agriculture on the 30th April, censuring the admission of live animals from Germany while foot and mouth disease was known to exist in that country, and urging the withdrawal of the Netherlands order; and whether, in view of the present state of agricultural feeling on this matter, and the announcement that the propriety of

further legislation on the Contagious Diseases (Animals) Acts, with reference to the charge for compensation and the powers of the central authority, is under the consideration of Her Majesty's Government, the Privy Council will withdraw the order of the 1st March, or postpone its operation until a decision is arrived at with reference to the legislation proposed.

THE VICE CHAMBERLAIN (Viscount LEWISHAM, Lewisham): The subject was considered at a meeting of the Lords of the Committee for Agriculture yesterday; and an order was passed, the effect of which is to postpone the operation of the Netherlands order to September 1.

SIR E. BIRKBECK: Have Her Majesty's Government given consideration to that portion of the Report referred to in my question, which indicates that the anxiety of agriculturalists cannot be dispelled except by the abandonment of the proposal to receive from a country of the geographical situation of Holland live animals without, at least, the precautions insisted on since the Act of 1878?

MR. MUNDELLA (Sheffield, Brightside): Is there any justification whatever for the exclusion of the healthy cattle of the Netherlands from free importation into this country at the present moment?

VISCOUNT LEWISHAM: That is a question rather of debate. As regards the question of my hon. Friend, the subject was considered, and the decision arrived at is what I have already stated. If the hon. Gentleman wishes, I will communicate his desires to the Agricultural Department.

MR. MUNDELLA: I must press the noble Lord for an answer to my question, namely, whether there are any known diseases in the Netherlands, and whether under the circumstances and under the Act there is any justification whatever for the exclusion of healthy cattle from that country.

VISCOUNT LEWISHAM: Perhaps the right hon. Gentlemen will give me notice of the question.

MR. CHAPLIN (Lincolnshire, Sleaford): Is it not a fact that disease is known to exist to a considerable extent in Germany and on the other side of the frontier line between the Netherlands and Germany?

VISCOUNT LEWISHAM: It is a fact that disease is known to exist in Germany.

SIR J. SWINBURNE (Staffordshire, Lichfield): Is it not the case that a very few weeks ago a cargo of cattle was landed at Hartlepool from Holland suffering from foot and mouth disease?

VISCOUNT LEWISHAM: No; a cargo of sheep suffering from foot and mouth was landed at Hartlepool from Germany. As far as Holland is concerned there has been no diseased animals landed.

MR. CRAIG (Newcastle-upon-Tyne): In what part of Germany does the disease prevail?

VISCOUNT LEWISHAM: Germany is a large country. I think that in 12 different parts of Germany there is disease, but without notice I cannot say offhand exactly in what portions of the country the disease exists.

NAVAL INSTRUCTORS.

MR. HERBERT KNATCHBULL-HUGESSEN (Kent, Faversham) asked the First Lord of the Admiralty whether it is the fact that, up to quite recently, it has been the practice in the dockyards for the instructors of apprentices to receive 2s. a week for their trouble; that this remuneration is now withdrawn in the case of instructors of apprentices who have served four years of their time; and that the men are expected to instruct these apprentices without the slightest remuneration; and whether he will direct that this payment be restored to the men.

*THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Lord G. HAMILTON, Middlesex, Ealing): The facts are as stated in the question. The decision to discontinue the remuneration for the instruction of apprentices, who have served four years of their time, was come to after very full consideration, it being clear that a course of four years' actual instruction was sufficient. I do not propose to rescind the recent orders issued in consequence of that decision.

MR. H. KNATCHBULL-HUGESSEN: In consequence of the reply of the noble Lord I beg to give notice that I will call attention to the matter on an early day.

HANSARD'S DEBATES.

MR. PICTON (Leicester): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether it is with the sanction of the Treasury that, under the new *Hansard* arrangements, abbreviated reports are given in the first person, thus making an erroneous impression that they are verbatim reports; whether he is aware that Members frequently decline to correct proof reports of their speeches, because it is impossible by any reasonable labour to bring them into such a form as to justify the insertion of an asterisk; and whether he will recommend a return to the former system of adopting the third person in abbreviated reports?

SIR R. LETHBRIDGE (Kensington, N.): Before my hon. Friend answers that question will he permit me to ask another, of which I have given him private notice on the same subject—namely, whether it is true that no new arrangements whatever have been made in regard to the method of reporting for *Hansard's Parliamentary Debates* other than ordinary attempts to improve the details in accordance with suggestions made to the Editor by hon. Members; whether it is true that the majority of hon. Members who have communicated with the Editor have expressed a preference for reports in the first person; whether it is true that in the recent numbers of *Hansard* at least nine-tenths of the speeches are marked as having been revised by hon. Members; and whether means cannot be devised by which the Editor can be authoritatively informed of the general wish of the House in regard to this and similar details in connection with the reports?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (MR. JACKSON, Leeds): I must answer the first three questions of my hon. Friend in the affirmative, and in regard to the last, I believe that the Editor of *Hansard* is always very glad to receive suggestions from hon. Members and is most anxious to do the best he can to meet the general wish of the House. In regard to the question on the Paper, I may say that the Treasury have not given any directions about the adoption of the first person in the reports. The matter is within the discretion of the Editor.

SUGAR IN BREWERIES.

MR. PICTON asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he could state the amount of sugar and of glucose used in the breweries and distilleries of the United Kingdom?

MR. GOSCHEN: In the year to the 30th of September, 1888, the sugar and glucose (which cannot be separated) used in breweries amounted to 1,524,808 cwt. The sugar used in distilleries amounted to 39,237 cwt., or, together, 1,564,045 cwt. The molasses used in distilleries amounted to 210,621 cwt.

THE TRUCK ACT.

MR. BRADLAUGH asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the District Factory Inspector for the Burnley district was, on 5th April, aware of breaches of the Truck Act which had taken place at Higherford Shed, Barrowford; whether by inquiry, on an inspection on that day, he obtained *prima facie* evidence of such breaches; and whether any, and what, steps have been taken to enforce the law for the infringement which has been found by the Inspector to have taken place?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (MR. MATTHEWS, Birmingham, E.): The facts are as stated. The Inspector ascertained that the employers were deducting one halfpenny per week per loom from the wages of their weavers towards the expense of providing a man to oil the looms. I requested the Inspector to point out to the employers that such a deduction was contrary to the Truck Act, and I am informed that the system complained of has now been abandoned.

MR. BRADLAUGH: Is not this one of the many cases in which the passing over of offences against an existing Statute tends to bring the law into disrepute, and ought not punishment to be enforced where there has been a distinct breach of the Act?

MR. MATTHEWS: The hon. Member knows as well as I do that the Truck Act has been the subject of conflicting decisions in the Courts of Law, and it would appear that upon some points the law is not thoroughly clear. I think the most desirable course would be, in the first instance, to call the

attention of employers to breaches of the law, and if they immediately comply with the representations made it is not necessary to prosecute.

MR. BRADLAUGH asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he is aware that breaches of the Truck Act by Mr. Haynes are alleged to be still taking place at Harpenden: whether, so far back as July last, Mr. Gould, the District Inspector of Factories, reported in favour of prosecution in this case, and with whom the responsibility rests of hitherto preventing the enforcement of the law; and whether the Treasury will commence a prosecution, and in the case of reluctant witnesses take the usual steps to enforce the attendance of such persons before the magistrate?

MR. MATTHEWS: Yes, Sir. This matter was brought to my notice in July, 1888. Careful inquiries were then made by the Treasury Solicitor, the result being to show that proceedings would probably not be successful. The matter was again investigated in January of this year, but at that time it was found impossible to procure the necessary evidence. Fresh evidence has now been laid before the Treasury Solicitor, and proceedings will be taken, the usual steps being adopted, if necessary, with respect to reluctant witnesses.

HOURS OF LABOUR.

MR. BRADLAUGH asked the President of the Board of Trade whether he would, through the Department of Labour Statistics, cause inquiries to be made as to the number of hours per day averaged in different kinds of employment throughout the Kingdom, and whether in any and what cases double shifts prevail, and how far the hours of labour in this country are longer or shorter than they were thirty years since, and how the hours of labour in this country compare with those of other European countries in like industries; and whether he would lay the result of such inquiries upon the Table of this House?

MR. C. GRAHAM (Lanarkshire, N.W.): Will the right hon. Gentleman at the same time cause inquiry to be made as to how it is that trades in this country, which work shorter hours than the same trades in foreign countries, nevertheless manage to hold their own.

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Sir M. HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): I do not think that any inquiry I can make would throw much light upon the matter referred to by the hon. Member for Lanarkshire, but with regard to the question of the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh) I may say that the Royal Commission on Trade Depression caused inquiries to be made, amongst other things, as to changes in the hours of labour in different employments in the previous twenty years, and a large amount of information on this head in reply to their circulars is contained in the appendix to the Report. They also obtained similar information as to foreign countries. The Return as to wages for fifty years recently laid before Parliament by the Board of Trade, and the Annual Report of the Trades Unions by the Labour Correspondent of the Board, also contain information as to hours of labour. If the hon. Member will make any definite suggestion for adding to this information, I shall be glad to consider it, and in any case special attention will be given to this subject in the annual General Report for next year, by the Labour Correspondent of the Board.

GRANTS IN AID OF LOCAL TAXATION.

MR. ROBERT SPENCER (Northamptonshire, Mid) asked the President of the Local Government Board when the substitution for the Government Grant hitherto received in aid of local taxation will be paid to the county authorities; and if he can state what the amounts will be.

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. RITCHIE, Tower Hamlets, St. Georges): I am very desirous of meeting the convenience of the County Authorities in this matter, and I hope to arrange that an instalment shall be paid in July, and a second instalment in October or November next, the two together making up an amount not much less than one-half of the sum which it is estimated that the authorities will be entitled to receive in the course of the year. A further instalment will be paid to the counties in February or March following, and the balance in May, when the precise amount collected from

licences and the Probate Duty Grant will have been ascertained.

EMPLOYERS' LIABILITY BILL

MR. AIRD (Paddington, N.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he can now state when the Government propose to bring forward the Employers' Liability Bill?

MR. MATTHEWS: I am unable at present to name a day when it will be possible to bring forward the Employers' Liability Bill; but the earliest available opportunity will be taken.

MR. AIRD: Is the Bill which the right hon. Gentleman proposes to bring in drawn on the lines of the Bill which passed through the Standing Committee last year?

MR. MATTHEWS: When the Bill is brought in it will be based on the lines of the Bill of last year.

FRENCH TRAWLING VESSELS.

SIR EDWARD BIRKBECK asked the First Lord of the Admiralty whether his attention has been called to the fact that upwards of twenty French trawling vessels have been fishing during the last ten days on the north coast of Norfolk, off Blakeney, Sheringham, and Cromer, within the three-mile limit, and committing serious depredations; and whether he will at once order a gunboat to proceed to the fishing grounds in question for the protection of the local fishermen?

LORD G. HAMILTON: Some French trawlers having been noticed within the three mile limit off Blakeney, a gunboat was ordered to cruise in that neighbourhood. At no other place within British limits have French trawlers been reported. The Coastguard Officers on the Norfolk coast have not heard of any depredations or damage being done. One of the gunboats attached to the North Sea Fisheries is now cruising off the Norfolk coast for the purpose of protecting the fishing interest.

SOUTH AFRICA. POLICY OF COLONIAL EXTENSION.

SIR G. CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if the attention of Her Majesty's Government had been drawn to a telegram in the papers of 30th April, purporting to give the substance of a speech of Sir Hercules Robinson,

Governor of the Cape and High Commissioner for South Africa, in which he advocated strongly the policy of Colonial extension and the eventual handing over native territory to the Cape and Natal, and used these words—"No place remains in further South Africa for direct Imperial rule"; and whether Her Majesty's Government had adopted that policy; or, if not, whether they could permit a high functionary to go so far in promoting a policy not yet determined, or would ascertain if there be error in the telegraphic report?

BARON H. DE WORMS: In answer to the hon. Member, I have to say that it is undesirable to take any action upon a telegraphic summary of certain portions of a speech, and that Sir Hercules Robinson sailed for England yesterday morning for the purpose of discussing fully with Her Majesty's Government the policy to be pursued in future in regard to the native territories in South Africa.

THE COLLECTOR OF ROAD ASSESSMENT, CREICH.

MR. ANGUS SUTHERLAND (Sutherland) asked the Lord Advocate whether he was aware that the collector of road assessment for the parish of Creich, county of Sutherland, failed to account to the Road Trustees for certain moneys collected by him in his official capacity; and, whether the said Road Trustees reported the matter to the proper authorities at the time or since; and, if so, why no action had been taken by the Crown authorities with regard to it.

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. P. B. ROBERTSON): I am informed that no complaint has been made to the criminal authorities in Sutherland against the Creich Road Assessment Collector. If the hon. Member will furnish me with specific information, inquiry will at once be made.

THE NEW TONNAGE BILL.

MR. DONKIN (Tynemouth) asked the President of the Board of Trade whether, in the event of the new Tonnage Bill becoming law, British ships being treated retrospectively, and the tonnage of many being increased, foreign shipowners who have practically adopted our system of measurement by the Act of 1854, will be also compelled

to have their ships measured under similar circumstances, and the tonnage of such ships be similarly increased?

*SIR MICHAEL HICKS BEACH: In the event assumed by the hon. Member's question, foreign ships which have on application of their owners been measured under the *Isabella* case in this country, would certainly be liable to re-measurement, and to be treated in the same manner as British ships, if they again come to a British port.

MR. DONKIN: My question refers only to the Act of 1854. The *Isabella* decision arose out of the Act of 1867.

*SIR M. H. BEACH: I do not understand the hon. Member's question.

THE STEAMSHIPS *ANGLESEY* AND *DUCHESS OF SUTHERLAND*.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.) asked the President of the Board of Trade whether he would lay upon the Table of the House a memorandum showing in detail the calculation by which the net register of the S.S. *Anglesey* was brought down to the figure of only 45 tons, by deductions and allowances from her gross measurement of 827 tons; and similar figures for the *Duchess of Sutherland*, showing how, with an original gross measurement of 908 tons, and net register of 446 tons, when she was a paddle steamer, her net register is now brought down to only 111 tons since her conversion into a screw steamer?

SIR MICHAEL HICKS BEACH: If the hon. Member will move for the Return, it shall be given.

PAYMENTS TO HIGHLAND PARISHES.

MR. HUNTER (Aberdeen N.) asked the Lord Advocate for what purpose £22,317 8s. 10d. was paid to 232 parishes in the Highlands, as stated in the Return dated 4th March, 1889.

*MR. J. P. B. ROBERTSON: The money was paid to the Highland parishes in aid of the expenses incurred for the relief of the poor.

THE BOARD OF TRADE STEAMER *GADFLY*.

MR. SUTHERLAND (Greenock) asked the President of the Board of Trade if he could state the number of seamen sent to their homes from the Clyde through the Board of Trade steamer *Gadfly* during the last three

years; and the total annual cost of maintaining this steamer, including all charges; and whether the work connected with carrying out the transmission service on the Clyde could be accomplished more economically by the staff of the Mercantile Marine Office in Greenock than under the existing system?

*SIR MICHAEL HICKS BEACH: The following is the number of seamen sent to their homes from the Clyde through the *Gadfly* in the years ending March 31st, 1887, 1,024; March 31st, 1888, 1,078; and March 31st, 1889, 1,400, at a cost of £1,418 6s. 8d., or an average of £472 15s. 7d. per annum. There is also a staff of River Police at Gourcock, whose cost during the last year was £886 10s. 4d. A small percentage of the work only could be done without the *Gadfly*, unless row boats were substituted for her, and the cost of maintenance of the ship and of the working of the scheme would not be reduced by transferring the work to other management. I must add that the transmission service is only a part of the services on which the *Gadfly* and her staff are employed. For instance, to facilitate the trade of the Clyde, the staff connected with the *Gadfly* witnessed the engagement of over 1,500 seamen on board ship during the year. She and her staff are not instituted with reference to the requirements of Greenock alone, but of the whole trade and seamen of the Clyde.

NAVAL RESERVES.

MR. GOURLEY (Sunderland) asked the First Lord of the Admiralty if he was aware that no Report since that of H.R.H. the Duke of Edinburgh has been issued relative to the condition of the Naval Reserves. And, whether he would cause a Report of the Admiral last in command to be laid upon the Table of the House?

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: No general report has been since made on the condition of the Royal Naval Reserves. The information now given in various returns shows the precise condition of the force, and the new regulations recently issued contain all the decisions which have been arrived at on any proposed modifications, and the arrangements made for the well-being of the Naval Reserves. Under the

circumstances a special periodical report has been considered unnecessary, especially as the Admiral Superintendent of Naval Reserves is in direct personal communication with the Admiralty.

THE MERCHANDIZE MARKS ACT.

COLONEL EYRE (Lincolnshire, Gainsborough) asked the Secretary to the Treasury whether his attention had been called to the fact that the English "patent" is often used on goods of foreign origin, thereby inducing the belief that they are of English manufacture. Whether the use of such word without the addition of the name of the place of origin was an infringement of the Merchandize Marks Act. And, whether he would cause the attention of the Customs Authorities to be called to this practice, with the view of steps being taken for its prevention?

MR. JACKSON: There are two classes of goods covered by the question of the hon. Member. First, goods which are marked patent in this country, and secondly, articles so marked as referring to another country. As to the first, the use of the "patent" or "registered" is governed by the "Trades Marks Act," but as to the latter, the Commissioners of Customs do not see how they can interfere when the word is used in conjunction with an intimation of foreign production.

THE INTERNATIONAL LABOUR CONFERENCE.

MR. CUNINGHAME GRAHAM asked the President of the Board of Trade if the Government had made up its mind as to sending representatives to the International Labour Conference summoned by the Swiss Government at Berne?

*THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (MR. W. H. SMITH, Strand, Westminster): Communications are passing in reference to this subject, but no result has yet been attained.

MR. BROADHURST (Nottingham, W.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury whether the Government was in possession of any proposal from the Swiss Government with regard to a Conference between the two countries on the question of the hours of labour of females and young persons; whether there was any correspondence on the

subject between the two Governments which could be presented to the House; and, whether, if such a conference was contemplated, what other European nations would be invited to take part in it?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I think the hon. Gentleman must have understood from answers to previous questions that this subject is under the consideration of Her Majesty's Government, and no decision has yet been arrived at.

MR. BROADHURST: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman to keep the House well informed on this subject, and especially those who are chiefly interested and who consider it a matter of great importance?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: As soon as a decision is come to upon the communications now passing, information will be given to the House.

SALVATIONISTS IN SWITZERLAND.

MR. JAMES STUART (Shoreditch, Hoxton) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether his attention had been called to the case of Miss Sterling, a member of the Salvation Army, who was, on 17th October, 1888, sentenced in the Canton of Vaud, in Switzerland, to 100 days' imprisonment, for inviting children, without their parents' consent, to a Salvation Army meeting? Whether he was aware that it was stated in her defence that, on the occasion in question, the children were only allowed to enter the meeting on giving their word that they had their parents' consent, and that after Miss Sterling had undergone about half of her imprisonment she was liberated on bail, pending an appeal to the Federal tribunal as to the constitutional character of the law under which she was convicted? Whether his attention had been called to the judgment delivered by that tribunal on 15th March last, affirming the constitutional character of the law? Whether, under these circumstances, Miss Sterling was required again to go to prison for the 47 days still remaining of her sentence? And whether, considering the following sentence in the judgment of the Federal Court:

"It goes without saying that the Federal tribunal, whose functions are not those of a Court of Appeal in penal affairs, has not to do

with the question of the application of the sentence pronounced, nor consequently to inquire whether, considering the circumstances of the case, the sentence passed on the applicant is not out of all proportion to the gravity of the facts brought to her charge,"

he would make inquiries as to whether a sentence of such severity had ever been pronounced for a similar offence in the Canton of Vaud, with a view of obtaining, if possible, from the Cantonal authorities some mitigation of the sentence on Miss Sterling?

*SIR JAMES FERGUSSON: Her Majesty's Government are well acquainted with the case of Miss Sterling, the general facts of which are as stated by the hon. Member. They were not able to interfere officially in it, while proceedings were pending in the Swiss Courts, but unofficial representations were made on her behalf, as her sentence was severe, and as she was said to be suffering in health from her imprisonment. Some years ago sentences passed upon Salvationists in Switzerland were carefully examined by Her Majesty's Government, and it was considered that we had no ground for interference, inasmuch as the law applied equally to natives and to foreigners.

ZAMBESI.

MR. BUCHANAN (Edinburgh, W.) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether it was true that Mr. D. J. Rankin, a British subject, has discovered a good navigable channel, called the Chindé, in the delta of the Zambesi; whether the Portuguese were going to establish a custom house there; and, whether Her Majesty's Government would take immediate steps to insist on the opening of the navigation of that river to the flags of all nations by International agreement or otherwise?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: Mr. Rankin has reported the existence of a good navigable channel through the Chindé mouth of the Zambesi river, and further inquiries are being made about it. Nothing is known as to the intentions of the Portuguese Government in regard to it. If the discovery should prove to be of real value, it will have an important bearing on the question of access to the upper waters and to the lakes. Her Majesty's Government adhere to their previous declarations of their claim of right to navigate the river.

THE COLONIES AND THE SUGAR CONVENTION.

SIR LYON PLAYFAIR (Leeds, S.) asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the self-governing Colonies, especially Canada, Victoria, Natal, and the Cape, had given their opinion on the Sugar Convention; and, if so, would the Government communicate the correspondence to the House?

BARON H. DE WORMS: As stated at the meeting of the Conference on April 5th of last year, all the Colonies had at that date accepted the Convention except Tasmania and New South Wales. Since then Tasmania has telegraphed acceptance, but no expression of opinion has been received from New South Wales. As, however, the Government of that colony has had the Convention before it for a long period it is understood that no objection is there raised. There is very little correspondence on the subject beyond that published in the Blue Book, and as it is incomplete and does not convey any expressions of opinion on the Convention there would be no advantage in presenting it to Parliament.

THE SUGAR BOUNTIES BILL.

SIR W. LAWSON (Cumberland, Cockermouth): May I ask is there any truth in the statement that appears in a Conservative newspaper this morning that it is the intention of the Government to withdraw the Sugar Bounties Bill?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: The hon. Baronet often asks questions of that kind. He must be aware that newspapers live by paragraphs, and these paragraphs succeed in their object and are exceedingly interesting to credulous readers.

THE WESTMINSTER ABBEY BILL.

MR. FRANCIS POWELL (Wigan) asked the hon. Member for the Central Division of Bradford whether he intended to proceed with the Westminster Abbey Bill to-morrow?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: I think it will be for the convenience of the House that I should state that there have been communications between the Government and the Dean of Westminster and myself with reference to the Westminster Abbey Bill and the overcrowded

state of Westminster Abbey, and that in all probability the Government will institute an independent inquiry into the subject. In these circumstances I shall not think it necessary to proceed with the Bill.

THE ZULU TRIALS.

MR. WALTER M'LAREN asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether it was true, as reported in the *Times*, that the Special Court at Etshowe had adjourned *sine die*; and, if so, had Zibebu been tried for the murder of Umsutshwana, as promised by the Colonial Office; and, what had been the result of the trial?

BARON H. DE WORMS: The Secretary of State has no official information as to the adjournment of the Court *sine die*. The Governor reports that the Commission has terminated. Preliminary magisterial proceedings against the persons charged with the murder of Umsutshwana were still in progress on the 28th ultimo, when Usibebu was still in custody. If the prisoners are committed for trial, they will, in due course, be brought before the proper tribunal.

IRELAND—CONDUCT OF LIEUTENANT GEOHEGAN.

MR. THEOBALD (Essex, Romford) asked the Secretary of State for War if it was true that the appeal of Lieutenant Geoghegan against the sentence passed on him for brawling in a church had been heard, and that the sentence had been reserved by the Superior Court, which had thereby justified the action of the Lieutenant?

*MR. E. STANHOPE: Yes, Sir. The Court of Quarter Sessions at Clonmel has unanimously reversed the sentence which had been passed on Lieutenant Geoghegan.

CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ANIMALS) ACTS.

SIR E. BIRKBECK (Norfolk, E.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury whether the attention of Her Majesty's Government had been called to a resolution passed at the Council meeting of the Royal Agricultural Society on the 16th instant, and to the report unanimously adopted by the Central and Associated Chambers of Agriculture on the 30th instant, recommending that the

existing Acts with regard to the Contagious Diseases of Animals should be harmonized, strengthened, and consolidated; and, whether he would introduce a Bill at the earliest opportunity to give effect to such resolution?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: The Government have given their attention to the resolution to which my hon. Friend refers, and they fully admit the advantages which might be obtained by the consolidation of the existing Acts, but in the present state of public business they do not think it would be possible to pass such a measure in the present Session.

THE ROYAL COMMISSION ON MINING ROYALTIES.

MR. BRADLAUGH, on behalf of Mr. Burt (Morpeth), asked the First Lord of the Treasury if he could now state the terms of reference to the Royal Commission on Mining Royalties; and, whether he could give the names of the Commissioners?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: The reference to the Royal Commission will substantially be in the following terms, though I do not say that a word or two may not be altered. These terms will give the House the full meaning of the reference—

“To inquire into the amounts paid as royalties, head rents, and way-leaves on coal, ironstone, iron ore, and other minerals worked in the United Kingdom, and the terms and conditions under which those payments are made, and into the economic operation thereof upon the mining industries of the country, and, further, to investigate the system of concessions prevailing in some foreign countries, and the conditions under which mining enterprise is conducted in the colonies.”

I am unable to give the names of the Royal Commissioners at present, but I hope to do so in a few days. I may mention, however, that Lord Northbrook has undertaken to preside over the Commission.

MR. W. P. SINCLAIR: May I ask if the right hon. Gentlemen will consider whether the terms of reference to the Commission could be made to include inquiry into the royalties and rents that obtain in relation to taking clay for making bricks or other purposes?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I must ask to have notice of this question. I was not aware that there was any desire that

the making of clay should be included in the inquiry.

GENERAL PURPOSES GRAND COMMITTEE.

SIR G. CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury whether the Government would consent to a General Purposes Grand Committee, to which Bills not referable to the Law or Trade Committees may be referred if the House so pleases?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: The Government think that it is not desirable that such a Committee should be constituted. I am under the impression that the existing Standing Committees are capable of taking any Bills which the Government might think it desirable to refer to them. It would be undesirable also that such a Standing Committee should be constituted, thus withdrawing hon. Members from the House for that purpose, and adding to their duties.

SIR G. CAMPBELL: I beg to give notice that I will take an early opportunity of calling the attention of the House to the extremely miserable result of the present system of Grand Committees, and the need for the further extension of the system.

DISTRICT COUNCILS BILL.

MR. T. ROBERTSON (Gloucester) asked the First Lord of the Treasury if he could name a day for the introduction of the District Councils Bill.

*MR. W. H. SMITH: Till the business of the House is further advanced I shall not be able to name a day for the District Councils Bill.

BUILDING SOCIETIES AND INCOME TAX.

MR. PICTON (Leicester) asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether his attention had been called to a memorial addressed by the Leicester Temperance and General Permanent Building Society in January last to the Commissioners of Inland Revenue, whether he was aware that while 95 per cent of the members of this society were in humble circumstances, and not liable to income tax, the Board of Inland Revenue insisted on either charging the tax, in order to return it, or on making the society collect the tax from the 5 per cent of members who were liable; whether he had considered the amount

of trouble and expense, and friction that must be caused in either case to a society promotive of thrift among the poor; and whether, in view of his statement in the analogous case of co-operative stores that "when the shareholders in any such stores are notoriously all, or almost all, persons of an income less than £150, it would not only not be a gain, but would be a positive loss to the revenue to levy a tax, nearly all of which has to be returned," he would cause the memorial of the Leicester Society to be reconsidered with a view to a more favourable answer than had yet been received.

MR. GOSCHEN: My attention has been called to the memorial in question, and I accept the statement of the hon. Member that 95 per cent of the members of the Leicester Building Society to which he refers are not liable to income tax. It is just to meet cases of this kind, and to avoid the trouble, expense, and friction to which the hon. Member refers, that an arrangement has been proposed by the Inland Revenue to avoid the cumbrous process of collection and repayment of duties in such cases. This arrangement, which has been accepted by a number of building societies, has been declined by the one in question, but I cannot help hoping that its refusal may be reconsidered. The case of co-operative stores is not analogous, but in many respects different from that of building societies. But in either case it is the constant object of the Inland Revenue to avoid the necessity of collecting duties which have to be returned.

MR. PICTON: May I hope that the answer I have referred to will be reconsidered, that there is a possibility of a more favourable answer being given to the memorial?

MR. GOSCHEN: I do not know whether the hon. Member has seen the proposal of the Inland Revenue Department which has been accepted by other Building Societies, but I hope this particular Society will see its way to come to an arrangement with the Inland Revenue to avoid the friction which he and I deplore.

THE PARIS EXHIBITION.

MR. E. ROBERTSON (Dundee): asked the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs whether his attention had been

called to a communication from the Vienna correspondent of the *Standard* stating that the absence of the British Ambassador from Paris was on all fours with the attitude of the Austrian Government, and that the French Government sought to distinguish between the commemoration of the Revolution of May 5th and the opening of the Exhibition on the 6th; whether any similar representation as to the distinction between the political and business ceremonial had been addressed to the Government; and whether the absence of the British Ambassador was the result of an understanding with the other Continental Powers.

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: No, Sir; no such representation has been made to Her Majesty's Government. No invitation has been addressed to the British Ambassador, and there has been no concert between Her Majesty's Government and any other Government on the subject.

ORDER OF BUSINESS.

DR. CAMERON (Glasgow College): May I ask the right hon. Gentleman if he can name a day when he will take the Scotch Local Government Bill?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I am not yet in a position to name a day. We shall not propose to take the Bill on Monday.

SIR W. HARCOURT (Derby): Perhaps it might be convenient to state what business will probably be taken next week.

*MR. W. H. SMITH: We propose to proceed with the Navy Bill on Monday and I hope to take the second reading of the Customs and Inland Revenue Bill on Thursday.

MR. HARRISON AND MR. CONYBEARE.

MR. ATHERLEY-JONES (Durham, N.W.): May I be allowed to say that I had a desire to ask leave to move the adjournment of the House for the purpose of discussing the arrest of Mr. Harrison and the prosecution of Mr. Conybeare, but in view of the fact that the matter is now under magisterial investigation, and in deference to the opinion expressed by you Mr. Speaker, I propose to defer the matter till after magisterial investigation is concluded.

THE NEW MEMBER FOR BIRMINGHAM.

*MR. SPEAKER: I have to intimate to the House that I have received the

Return of the Writ for the election of a Member for Central Birmingham, and therein I find that the gentleman returned is by a clerical error described as Albert John Bright, whereas I understand his name is John Albert Bright; I have to ask if any hon. Member can certify from his personal knowledge that this is so?

VISCOUNT WOLMER (Hants, Petersfield): I can certify from my personal knowledge that the name of the gentleman returned for Central Birmingham is John Albert Bright.

*MR. SPEAKER: The Clerk of the Crown will make the necessary correction, and I will then ask the hon. Member to come to the Table.

THE ROYAL COMMISSION ON THE VACCINATION LAWS.

MR. PICTON (Leicester): May I be allowed to ask the President of the Local Government Board a question in regard to the interpretation of the terms of reference to the Royal Commission on the Vaccination Laws. Paragraph 5 refers to inquiry into the working of the provisions of the Act in respect to repeated prosecutions for non-compliance with the requirements of the Vaccination Act. I have to ask, will not the insertion of the word "repeated" before "prosecutions" lead to the exclusion of what I understood was intended, inquiry into the principle of compulsory vaccination pure and simple?

*MR. RITCHIE: I am glad the hon. Member has put the question, because the word "repeated" might undoubtedly be understood as the hon. Gentleman suggests. It is not intended so to narrow the reference. The word appeared in the original draft copy of the reference, but subsequently the word "repeated" was struck out with the view of showing there is no intention of limiting the inquiry in that sense.

IRELAND—COASTGUARD STATION, BANNOW, COUNTY WEXFORD.

MR. W. REDMOND (Fermanagh, N.) asked the First Lord of the Admiralty whether it was a fact that the owner of the houses occupied by the Coastguards as a Coastguard Station at Bannow, county Wexford, had received a three months' notice that the houses are to be vacated; that these houses were built

about fifty years ago by the grandfather of the present owner at the request of the Government of the day, and that of recent years they were enlarged and considerably improved; was it intended to abolish the Coastguard Station at Bannow; and would any compensation be given to the owner of the houses?

LORD G. HAMILTON: It is the case that the owner of the houses referred to has received notice that the houses will be vacated, the reason being that they are not kept in proper repair and they are in an insanitary condition. It is not known by whom the houses were originally built or when, but there is no reason to suppose they were built at the request of the Government or taken at other than a quarterly tenancy. The houses were improved by the landlord in 1866. It is not intended to abolish the Coastguard Station at Bannow. There is no ground for a claim for compensation by the owner.

KING JA JA OF OPOBO.

MR. W. REDMOND (Fermanagh, N.) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs when the promise given by him to allow King Ja Ja to return to his own country would be carried out; whether it was true that Ja Ja has been suffering much in health since he has been in St. Vincent; and whether there had been disturbances recently in Opobo in consequence of the discontent amongst the Natives there at their King's exile?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: The decision in the case of Ja Ja was that he should be deported for a term of not less than five years. Ja Ja has complained of ill-health, but his statement was not corroborated by the local authorities. The recent disturbances in the Opobo river were not owing to discontent in consequence of their late King's exile, but to a renewal of the interruption to trade in the river similar to those which Ja Ja formerly occasioned.

MR. W. REDMOND: May I ask whether it is not a fact that the right hon. Gentleman himself stated in answer to a question I put to him in regard to this sentence, that, probably, the King would be allowed to return before the expiration of the term.

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: I remember saying that when there were no evil consequences, no danger to be appre-

hended, there would be no objection to Ja Ja's return, but the circumstances referred to in the hon. Member's question show that that period has not arrived.

MR. W. REDMOND: Will the right hon. Gentleman cause further inquiry to be made into the complaint that the climate of St. Vincent is injurious to the health of the King?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: The matter has been inquired into and, I believe, it has been proved that there is nothing in connection with Ja Ja's residence injurious to his health.

DINIZULU.

MR. W. REDMOND (Fermanagh, N) asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether it was true that Dinizulu had been sentenced to 10 years' imprisonment; and, if so, whether the Government, in consequence of Dinizulu having voluntarily surrendered himself, could see their way to mitigate this sentence; and whether all the papers in connection with the trial would be laid before Parliament.

BARON H. DE WORMS: As I stated on the 30th of April, this sentence has been passed. When the Secretary of State reviews the case, as he will do when the record of evidence is complete, the circumstance referred to by the hon. Member in the first paragraph of his question, will be considered with all other material circumstances in the case. When all the papers have been received in full and reported upon there will probably be no objection to laying them before Parliament, but the Secretary of State would prefer not to give a decided answer until he has received them.

NEW MEMBER.

Made the affirmation required by law—John Albert Bright, esquire, for the City of Birmingham (Central Division).

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

WAYS AND MEANS.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee).

ESTATE DUTY ON PERSONAL PROPERTY OF THE OF £10,000 AND UPWARDS, PASSING BY WILL OR ON INTESTACY.

1. Resolved—That, towards raising the Supply granted to Her Majesty, there shall be

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levied and paid to Her Majesty the following Duties (that is to say):

Where, in the case of any Probate or Letters of Administration granted in England or Ireland on or after the first day of June one thousand eight hundred and eighty nine, or in the case of any Inventory exhibited and recorded in Scotland on or after that day, the estate and effects in respect whereof Duty is charged on the Affidavit or Inventory by section twenty-seven of "The Customs and Inland Revenue Act, 1881," shall be above the value of £10,000

Duty.—At the rate of One Pound for every full sum of £100, and for every fractional part of £100 over any multiple of £100;

Where the Personal or Moveable Property included in an Account delivered according to section Thirty-eight of "The Customs and Inland Revenue Act, 1881," on and after the first day of June one thousand eight hundred and eighty-nine, shall be above the value of £10,000.

Duty.—At the rate of One Pound for every full sum of £100, and for any fractional part of £100 over any multiple of £100;

The said Duties respectively are to be Stamp Duties in addition to the Stamp Duties charged on the Affidavit required from Persons applying for Probate or Letters of Administration in England or Ireland, and on the Inventory exhibited and recorded in Scotland, or in addition to the Stamp Duties charged on such Accounts of Personal and Moveable Property as are specified in the section thirty-eight of "The Customs and Inland Revenue Act, 1881," but are not to be deemed "Probate Duties," within the meaning assigned to that expression by section twenty-one of "The Local Government Act, 1888."

ESTATE DUTY ON SUCCESSIONS OF THE VALUE OF £10,000 AND UPWARDS.

Motion made and question proposed,

2. "That, towards raising the the Supply granted to Her Majesty, there shall be levied and paid to Her Majesty in respect of the value of the entire personal property passing upon the death of any person dying on or after the first day of June, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-nine, as a Succession or Successions under "The Succession Duty Act, 1853," and in respect of the value of every Succession to real property under the said Act, upon the death of any person so dying, the following Duty (that is to say):—

DUTY.

Where such value is above £10,000.

At the rate of One Pound for every full sum of £100, and for any fractional part of £100 over any multiple of £100.

The said Duty is to be a Stamp Duty in addition to any Duties chargeable under "The Succession Duty Act, 1853," and Section twenty-one of "The Customs and Inland Revenue Act, 1888," provided that the said Duty shall not be payable upon the interest of a Successor in leaseholds passing to him by

will or devolution by law or on property included in an account delivred according to section thirty-eight of "The Customs and Inland Revenue Act, 1881."

The value upon which the said Duty is to be charged and assessed shall be ascertained in accordance with "The Succession Duty Act, 1853," subject to the following provisions:—

(a.) In the case of a Successor who is entitled to the real property comprised in his Succession for an estate in fee simple, or in fee according to the custom of any manor, or for lives renewable under any custom, or under any leases for lives, or for any estate in tail, or to possession of such real property under an entail, whether strict entail or otherwise or is entitled to any such property for life, and competent to dispose as he shall think fit of a continuing interest therein, the value shall be the principal value of such property after making such allowances (if any) as ought to be made under section thirty-four of the said Act:

(b.) In the case of an increase of benefit accruing to a Successor, and chargeable to Succession Duty by reference to sections five, twenty, and twenty-five of "The Succession Duty Act, 1853," where the value of the Succession, apart from the increase of benefit, shall exceed ten thousand pounds, such increase of benefit shall be chargeable with Duty in conformity with this Resolution, whatever may be the value thereof; and where the value of the Succession, apart from the increase of benefit, shall not exceed ten thousand pounds, the value of such increase of benefit, as well as of every preceding increase of benefit, shall be added to the value of the Succession for the purpose of the said Duty.

*MR. CHILDERS (Edinburgh, South): This Resolution is of course the Resolution which raises the whole question of the new duty. I do not, however, at the present moment rise to discuss the question, but for the purpose of obtaining information. When my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer brought in his Budget I listened with great attention to his speech, and I think I said it would be impossible to understand this new duty until we had the Resolution before us, and that probably it would be impossible to do so until we had the Bill itself before us. Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman will now be good enough to answer this question: Is it proposed that in the case of real estate which is the actual property of the person inheriting the duty of 1 per cent shall be paid upon the capital value of the estate, or according to the life-interest of the successor? Before going into a discussion, which must be

a very long one, it is desirable that this point should be made clear.

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN, St. George's, Hanover Square): I confess I thought this was clear. I will not put the matter in legal language or form, but I may say the intention of the Government is that where there is an absolute power of disposal it is not the life-interest but the capital value of the succession on which the duty will be taken.

*MR. HALDANE (Haddington): Is the Committee to understand that this duty is of a wholly different character from the Succession Duty, which varies according to consanguinity. Are we to understand that this is altogether a new duty analogous, if anything, to the Probate Duty levied in a lump sum in the case of personality, and a duty which is to be levied in a lump sum in the case of realty?

MR. SHAW-LEFEVRE (Bradford): What is the meaning of "the principal value of such property" in the Resolution? Is the principal value of freehold ground rents to be estimated according to the real value, or, as is now the case under the existing Acts, without reference to the real value, which may be four or five times the amount of the nominal value?

*MR. GOSCHEN: I would ask the right hon. Gentleman to be good enough to wait to see the Bill. I may say generally that the principal value would be ascertained in the manner in which it is now ascertained in taxing the property of Corporations. There are already provisions for taxing the capital value of real property, and these provisions will be applied to the present case. That is my general answer to the question. With respect to the question of the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Haldane), this is essentially a new duty, resembling the Succession Duty in some respects and the Probate Duty in others. The hon. and learned Gentleman is right in saying it is an additional tax which falls equally on any one who may obtain the succession, whatever his relationship to his predecessor, and so far it may be said to be like the Probate Duty. But I think to describe it simply as a sort of Probate Duty on Land would give a false impression. It is an increase of

scale of the Succession Duty by 1 per cent on all successions above £10,000.

*MR. HALDANE: But it is not affected by the degree of consanguinity.

*MR. GOSCHEN: No. Those who pay one and a-half per cent now will pay two and a-half; those who pay four and a-half now will pay five and a-half, and so on. It is irrespective of the relationship of the successor.

MR. RATHBONE (Carnarvonshire, Arfon): Is the new duty of 1 per cent to be charged on the whole capital value of personal property, but only on the life interest of realty?

*MR. GOSCHEN: I think I have made it plain that it is not so. Personality and realty will be treated alike. As regards instalments, the payments in the case of realty will follow the Succession Duty, rather than the Probate Duty.

*MR. H. H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton): Then for the purposes of this new duty is the scale of consanguinity abolished?

*MR. GOSCHEN: I do not think that is the proper way of putting it. This duty is an increase of the scale of the duty paid before. It is an equal addition of 1 per cent all round, the addition being calculated on a somewhat new system.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE (Edinburgh, Mid Lothian): The question is one of some perplexity. There is some difficulty in finding a proper appellation for the duty. It is hardly proper to call this a mere addition to the Succession Duty, because in certain essential particulars it departs from the principle of the Succession Duty. The principle of the Succession Duty as applied to land, is that it is taken upon the limited ownership, rather than upon the capital value. It is an entire change of the principle of the Succession Duty, when you impose the duty that is to be taken on the capital value without respect to the question whether the ownership is limited or absolute. So far, I think, we clearly understand the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and there can be no doubt about the matter whatever. In point of fact this additional charge in the case of the Succession Duty is to be levied as the property tax on the subject to which it applies. The Succession Duty, it will be remembered, affects

real property with two most important limitations, one being the distinction drawn between limited ownership and absolute ownership. That point has been completely cleared up. But the Succession Duty likewise affects, in a most important manner, the amount of the tax which is to be paid. As I understood the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the consanguinity scale will still remain in force with reference to this tax—the tax will be levied according to the degree of relationship. [“No.”] I do not mean that the tax will be levied—it will be an absolute tax of 1 per cent, not upon the capital value simply without any deduction, but upon the capital value estimated according to the consanguinity scale. Is that so? If not, let us understand how it is.

*MR. GOSCHEN: I have been asked whether it is the abolition of the consanguinity scale, and I have said that I do not look upon it in that way. I look upon the consanguinity scale as not having absolutely anything to do with the new duty. The Estate Duty is levied equally upon the value of the succession, whatever the degree of consanguinity.

MR. GLADSTONE: I am glad to hear that, but it is out of place to call it an Estate Duty.

*MR. GOSCHEN; I call it an Estate Duty so as not to mix it up either with the Probate or the Succession Duty. This Estate Duty is a separate duty. It resembles the Probate Duty in some particulars, and it resembles the Succession Duty in others.

MR. GLADSTONE: I perfectly understand it. It appears to me that those points in which the new duty resembles the Succession Duty are of a peculiar character. But the two essential points which limit it as a tax are, first, whether the ownership is absolute or limited, and, secondly, whether it is limited under the consanguinity scale. I am not in the least blaming the Chancellor of the Exchequer; but I have observed that an idea has obtained considerable currency which is misleading as to the character of this new duty; and I gladly accept the appellation which has been given by the Government to this duty—that it is an Estate Duty. Although in its form it resembles the Succession Duty, especially in the most important matters of being levied

on the entire value of the property and taking no cognizance of the consanguinity scale, yet its analogy really is to the Probate Duty, and not to the Succession Duty; but it is an Estate Duty quite distinct, as I understand, from both. It is to me very satisfactory on more grounds than one, inasmuch as it is founded on the principle of equal taxation as between personalty and realty. It is also of very great importance, because it now introduces for the first time into succession the principle of taxing capital value. I do not myself entertain any doubt as to the main principle of taxing capital value in contradistinction to other inferior interests, especially interests which might be earned out of the capital value; but, of course, the question will arise, if the principle of valuation of property is applicable on the occasion of death, may it not be made applicable on other occasions? This is a very large question indeed, and one of the utmost importance; but it is a question to which the present financial proposals of the Government obviously open the door. Although I intend to support the proposal of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, I would remark that the limitation of it to estates above £10,000, is the introduction of a great novelty into our taxing system; and I should like to know whether the Chancellor of the Exchequer believes that the proposal he has made can possibly remain permanently limited within the bounds he has fixed. I can understand that there is no injustice in the principle of what is called graduated taxation. In itself it is not unjust that richer members of the community, who have a greater abundance of this world's comforts, should make a larger proportional contribution to the Exchequer than poorer members; but, on the other hand, there is this difficulty. I have never been able to observe any absolute rule by means of which that graduation is to be kept within bounds. It is quite clear that it is capable of being carried to a point at which graduation would become confiscation; and I should be glad if we could be told whether there is any fixed rule which, in the judgment of the Government, would apply to the custodians of property and to proprietary interests, for the purpose of distinguish-

ing what is moderate and just from what is immoderate and unjust. I do not see how it is possible if it is held that estates of £10,000 ought to pay more than estates of £9,000 or £8,000, to say that estates of £10,000 ought to pay at the same rate as estates of £50,000, £100,000, £500,000, or £1,000,000. I am quite prepared to rest satisfied with what is now conceded; but I believe that no long period will elapse before others will improve upon the precedent now set, and will attempt to apply, within the bounds of moderation and justice, something like an ascending scale to the larger estates, now that the principle is, as I understand, unanimously endorsed by both parties, and is not objected to by the supporters of the present Government. Because we must observe that we have just passed unanimously the Resolution dealing with the limit of £10,000 to personal property. This unanimity is a fact of great importance, and it will probably be prolific of consequences in the future. It will rest with the judgment and discretion of the House to keep those consequences within safe bounds, and I have no doubt it can be done; and if it is done the Chancellor of the Exchequer will have been the prime cause of the achievement of a result which will be favourable on the whole to the interests of justice. I gladly accept, on the responsibility of the right hon. Gentleman, a proposal with regard to which it has always been felt that there is great difficulty in guaranteeing its limitation within due bounds. It is quite impossible for the Opposition, even if they were disposed to attack exemptions, to look with a jealous eye upon a proposal of this character, proceeding from such a source; and undoubtedly I shall record it on my financial memory as an important and material fact that the proposal embodied in the first Resolution should have received the unanimous, and even the silent acquiescence of the House.

*MR. GOSCHEN: I think the right hon. Gentleman has failed to remember the basis upon which, in my opening statement, I fixed the limit of £10,000. The right hon. Gentleman seems to think that this is the introduction of a new system of graduation; but in the Budget speech I stated that £10,000 was adopted as a limit which was analogous to the

limits existing already in the case of the income tax. £10,000 may be held to represent an income of about £400 a-year, and that is the basis upon which, as the mouthpiece of the Government, I rest the proposal. Any step which goes beyond £10,000 in the direction of graduation would run as much counter to the proposals of the Government as would the graduation of the income tax on incomes above £400. I acknowledge there is always a danger in admitting these exemptions; but exemptions from income tax already exist, and it has not been argued that these exemptions are the beginning of graduated taxation. I must protest against its being suggested that because we have followed the analogy of the income tax therefore we are taking the first steps towards a system of graduation. I do not quite understand whether the right hon. Gentleman is or is not in favour of graduated death duties, for he spoke with some reserve; but for myself I do not wish to exercise a similar reserve; and I repeat that the Government have adopted this line of limit thinking it is analogous to income tax exemptions, and by no means as indicating any approval of a general scheme of graduated taxation. Then, as to the suggestion that the levying of taxes on capital value will not stop with the Estate Duty. That revives a point which arose in a controversy which I had with the right hon. Gentleman last year as regards the existing taxation of landed property. While land is less heavily taxed than personality in respect of Death Duties, it is more heavily taxed in respect of income tax; and in my judgment it would be extremely unfair to rectify the disadvantage which personality may be under as regards death duties without at the same time rectifying the disadvantage under which realty stands to so great an extent as regards income tax. The Government have maintained the *status quo*; they have not extended any advantage which realty enjoys as regards Succession Duty to the new tax; but they distinctly affirm that you cannot extend the principle of capital value to Succession Duty without at the same time recasting the income tax.

MR. GLADSTONE: I cannot accept the statement that the limit of £10,000 is only equivalent to the exemptions

from income tax which stop at £400, for in this commercial country a capital of £10,000 will yield more than £400—not if put into the New Consols, but if employed in business, as a vast amount of the wealth of this country is. But that is not the point. That is not the question. I think incomes of £400 a year are entitled to a deduction—I rather believe of £120. Therefore, the consequence is, that under £400 is taxable, and that the favour received is a very light one. But I should say that there is no analogy between this sum of £10,000 and the distinction of the limit of exemption under the income tax. But what I wish to point out to the House is the likelihood, nay, the moral certainty, that proposals of this character will produce in future times other proposals in the same direction, and going beyond the scope of the present proposal. As far as I am concerned, I have always taken a severe view of these matters. When I was Chancellor of the Exchequer I proposed that limit of exemption from the income tax, which Sir Robert Peel had put at £150, should be reduced to £100, and the House accepted that proposal. That was a rather stringent measure, perhaps, and that was the only Act I ever proposed touching this matter, as Chancellor of the Exchequer. But when Lord Iddesleigh proposed to raise the limit of exemption or partial exemption to £400, we pointed out to him that he must not suppose that the proposal would remain a dry and barren fact, but that other new proposals would be certain to be founded upon it. And so now the proposal of the Government has been founded upon the proposal of Lord Iddesleigh—beyond which it goes—and I confidently predict that before a very long time either the present or some other Government will submit proposals which will go beyond this proposal, and that a considerably larger application of the principle will be devised, proposed, and adopted. All I say is, Sir, that I trust that these applications will be kept within the bounds of reason and justice. And, in my opinion, there is no ground of reason or justice on which you can propose that estates of £10,000 shall be subject to a specially stated tax of 1 per cent—which is not to apply to estates of smaller value—and at the

same time contend that it would be otherwise than just to apply a higher charge to estates of much greater value.

*MR. HALDANE: I must say in the first place that so far as regards the analogy between the £10,000 value and the limit of exemption which exists in the case of the income tax, there is no analogy at all. The House observes that in the case of these estates of £10,000, you tax them by probate, succession and legacy duties, and in the case of the income tax, you except certain incomes from taxation altogether. Therefore, it is a case of graduated duty. You are imposing a new and additional duty on estates of the value of £10,000. We have reasons to congratulate ourselves on this side of the House, and also those opposite, in a somewhat wider sense than we usually do, because those of us who remember the controversies of 1885 between the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Goschen), and the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Chamberlain), have not forgotten that perhaps the bitterest of those controversies was waged about the subject of graduated taxation. It is perfectly true that this is only the first step, but it reminds me a little of Madame Recamiers' famous answer to the gentleman who said he had seen St. Denis walk first a mile and then at least one step with his head under his arm, that it was only the first that counted. This is the first step in graduated taxation, and you are committed to the principle. I am not at all opposed to graduated taxation within limits. It is a difficult subject, and requires careful consideration. I believe the majority of Members on this side of the House are practically prepared to consider it an open question, and to discuss it on that basis. But we should certainly like to approach it in a little more workable fashion than it seems to have been approached by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. I do not know whether the House realises that the Chancellor of the Exchequer proposes to add a fifth Death Duty. From the four already existing, complications arise, and I should rather have thought it desirable to consolidate these taxes than to propose a new duty. In the first place there is the Probate Duty, which has existed, I think, from the middle of

the 17th century; then there is the Legacy Duty, which is levied exclusively upon successions, and which the landowners succeeded in confining to movable property. Then, in 1853, came the new and intricate Succession Duty, which I understood from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian was something in the nature of a compromise. The Government at that time took what they could get, and it was impossible for them to get any more, because their own supporters consisted of gentlemen connected with the landed interest, with which they were dealing for the first time. In 1881 a duty was imposed by which it was sought to attack voluntary gifts made by the people during lifetime for the sole purpose of evading the Death Duty. That duty I am glad to see is to be made more binding and stringent by one of the resolutions. But surely, when you have four duties already, the time has come when you should try something in the way of simplification instead of imposing a new duty. The Lord Chancellor in the other House has a Bill affording facilities for the constitution of a real representative of the landed estates of deceased persons, and all you have to do is to allow that Probate Duty to attach to real as well as to personal estate. Instead of that you propose to create a duty which is a departure from the position which you took up last year. I find in *Hansard* that the Chancellor of the Exchequer at the conclusion of a long and powerful speech, said—"We have endeavoured to remedy certain inequalities so far as we think they ought to be remedied; but so far as the Government is concerned, we show our whole hand, and say that we have no further proposals to make."

*MR. GOSCHEN: That had reference to the rectification of existing duties; it was not a general declaration that we would not deal with the Death Duties. We showed our whole hand, and the Government have made no further changes as between realty and personalty.

*MR. HALDANE: Our point last year was that the whole system of the Death Duties should be put on a more even footing, but I accept the explanation which the Chancellor of the Exchequer has given, that the Government objected to take up the question of the Death

Duties unless in an entirely new and thorough-going fashion. We have got a new departure, but it is one which we on this side of the House have no reason to regret; on the contrary, we are entitled to congratulate ourselves, though, at the same time, we are entitled to complain that no attempt has been made to deal with the subject as a whole.

*MR. CHAPLIN (Sleaford Division of Lincolnshire): I will not detain the Committee more than a few moments. But I think it necessary to say one word of protest, more especially after the closing observations of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian, and his adhesion to the proposal. The proposals of the Budget are before us, but I confess I am not very much enamoured of them. They were made just before the Easter Holidays, and for my own part I frankly own that I have been more pleasantly occupied than in a discussion of the Death Duties; and, without the figures and details I should not be in a position to enter upon any considerable discussion. When I first heard the statement of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, I listened to it with a good deal of suspicion, and that suspicion has certainly not been in the slightest degree allayed by the way in which the proposals have been received on the other side of the House. I remember that the hon. Member for Northampton patted the Chancellor of the Exchequer on the back and congratulated him on his proposals, observing that they were far more satisfactory than he could have anticipated. Then to-night the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian rightly and properly called attention to the future, and significantly remarked that although the House may be satisfied upon the present occasion, it must necessarily be the first step towards a much larger proposition in the future. Sir, I frankly confess that the more I consider the propositions of the right hon. Gentleman the less I am disposed to accept them. It seems to me that they open up questions of the largest character, which we on this side of the House would certainly do well to consider much more carefully than they have been considered up to the present time. There is no doubt about this. He is going to propose an additional burden, and a very serious burden, upon the

land, and that at a time when probably it is less able to bear it than ever it has been before. Under these circumstances, although I take no further part in the proceedings at this time, I rise to say that I reserve to myself the fullest right to take whatever course I please with regard to the question on a future occasion.

MR. RICHARD CHAMBERLAIN (Islington): I wish to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer one question. On the Succession Duty, the time for payment is protracted, in order to enable the heir, without inconvenience, to find the money. The Chancellor of the Exchequer stated that with regard to the duty under discussion, equal time would be guaranteed for payment. One result of that would be that if the heir dies before full payment has been made, the country loses. I wish to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether, in providing for the extension of the time, he will enhance the amount of the duty by so much as will cover so much of the prospective loss, owing to the expectation of life in some cases being less than in others?

MR. RATHBONE (Carnarvonshire, Arfon): I understand the Chancellor of the Exchequer to say that the charge will lie equally on personal and real estate, while the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian said it would be charged on the capital value of the succession. I think the Chancellor of the Exchequer is a great deal too modest. His proposal is in my opinion a very bold, but at the same time, a very just one; and if our Conservative friends will consider the matter they will, I think, agree that it is a very Conservative proposal. Now that the Democracy are in power, they ought to insist on this matter being put on a fair footing, either on the ability of a person to pay or on the benefits he receives from the Government. Probably on both those grounds it is right that those who leave large fortunes behind them should be liable to pay a larger proportion than they have done of the value of the estate.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Sir R. WEBSTER, Isle of Wight): I may perhaps be allowed to say a few words with the view of removing any doubt that may exist in the mind

of my hon. Friend in regard to the wording of the resolution. The tax to be levied is, as I understand the matter, to be leviable on personalty and realty alike. If a man should succeed for life to £12,000 personalty, then the capital value of his life interest in that personalty is taken. If he succeeds for life to real property of the value of £12,000, the capital value of his life interest is to be taken. If his interest is absolute, then the case contemplated by the hon. Member for Wolverhampton would apply, and he would pay on that capital value. It makes no difference whether it is a succession to personalty or a succession to realty. With regard to the remarks of the hon. Member for Haddington (Mr. Haldane), I would point out that there are not four different kinds of duties, but practically only two, although they have different incidence.

*SIR H. DAVEY (Stockton): I am glad to understand that the fee-simple owner on succeeding will pay the duty on the fee-simple value, and not merely on the life interest. Death Duties should be levied on the same principle as personalty and realty. It is a Succession Duty to all intents and purposes. If that be so, why should a difference be made in the mode in which this Succession Duty is to be levied and the way in which the Succession Duty is levied in the Act of 1853. A much more simple way would be to alter the Succession Duty Act of 1853, and make all Succession Duties under that Act liable on the fee-simple value of the property. With regard to the limit of £10,000, I think explanation given will hardly be satisfactory to hon. Gentlemen opposite. Let them take the case of a man who under one appointment succeeds to £4,000 personalty and £6,000 realty. Is it clear that he would pay on the whole value of the estate—viz., £10,000? Is the payment assessed on the total value of the Succession, whatever the quality of the property might be? In my opinion, the Estate Duty should be paid on the whole value of the estate, whatever may be its character. Is the payment assessed on the total value of the succession, whatever the quality of the property may be? Is it paid on the whole value, whether it is real or personal estate? Would a man who succeeded to £10,000 half in

personalty and half in land pay the Estate Duty? In my opinion, the Estate Duty should be paid on the whole value of the estate, whatever may be its character.

*SIR R. PAGET (Somerset, Wells): I wish to take this opportunity of saying a few words on this important matter, and I agree very much with what fell from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin). I think it is our duty to examine carefully the propositions which have been put before us by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, but having gone so far with the right hon. Gentleman, I am unable to go further with him. I confess that I do not share the fear with which he regards the proposals of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. On the contrary, it appears to me that in many respects they are worthy of support. I detect in them the principle of absolute equality of taxation in regard to personalty as well as realty, and in that principle I entirely concur. I go with the Chancellor of the Exchequer and say that it would not do alone to effect an equality in regard to Death Duties, but that that equality of taxation must be carried further. At present there are far more serious and heavy burdens imposed upon realty than upon personalty, and I should be glad, if possible, to remove every one of those inequalities and render the burden equal. That is the reply to the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite, who with great emphasis asked, "Why introduce this new Estate Duty—why not get rid of the unjust action of the Act of 1853?" The answer is plain. You cannot get rid of that injustice unless you deal with the matter of taxation as a whole. If you can possibly do this, then I admit that the inequality must go. The matter has been one of great difficulty. Most of us dislike taxation in any shape, and special objection is taken to a new tax. The Chancellor of the Exchequer has displayed much ingenuity in designing new taxes which are to be borne by the community at large. New tax after new tax have been introduced with little or no irritation, and have been borne with equanimity. [Cries of "The Wheel Tax."] Yes; but that did not pass. I am only speaking of those which are the law of the land, and I must congratulate the

right hon. Gentleman on having introduced new taxes which have excited so little objection. If the elements of a graduated taxation are objectionable, we have had them on our Statute Book for years. From the moment the system of exemptions from income tax was introduced, there were, to a certain extent, instances of graduated taxation. As far as I can see, the present proposal is on all fours with the graduated taxation imposed in the income tax. It might possibly be made still further on all fours with it if the Chancellor of the Exchequer had followed with greater nicety the precedent of the income tax, and instead of fixing one point of £10,000 capital, below which the new Estate Duty should not apply, had introduced an automatic sliding scale, following the graduated exemptions now given to incomes below £400. There is no novelty in a system of graduated taxation to the extent I have mentioned; on the contrary, its application has already been recognized by Chancellors of the Exchequer on both sides of the House. This is only a re-application of the principle in dealing with the Succession Duty. I do not see any reason why we should fear that this is to form the groundwork of a new system of taxation, seeing that it has long since been enforced. I certainly approve heartily of a plan the leading features of which are identity and equality of taxation upon all property whatever.

*MR. H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.): I am sorry that the Attorney General has left the House, because I wanted to call attention to one remark he has made; but perhaps the Chancellor of the Exchequer will be able to clear it up. The Attorney-General, speaking of this new tax—this estate duty, said that it was to be in every sense of the word levied on the value of the succession. That is not so. In Sub-section A of the Resolution, in a certain description of property where the successor succeeds to an estate in fee simple, the duty is to be levied on the principal value of the property, and not on the value of the succession. Let me take the case of a man who dies possessed of a real estate of the value of £12,000, and leaves that estate to his son liable to the present Succession Duty. The income of the

estate has to be ascertained, certain deductions have to be allowed, and the net value of the income has to be capitalized according to the scale of the Succession Duty Act. Possibly the son is of such an age that the value of the succession is £5,000. A Succession Duty of $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent is levied upon it, but if this Estate Duty is passed, that calculation will not be made in respect of it, but the authorities will ascertain what is the capital value of the whole property, and assuming that it is worth £12,000, the new Estate Duty would be 1 per cent upon £12,000, in addition to the duty upon the value of the succession as defined by the Succession Duty Act as the value of the son's life interest in the property. But although this proposal does introduce a most valuable alteration—one almost of priceless value—it is, nevertheless, limited to the case of absolute bequests. Where a father leaves an estate to a son for his life, and then to his grandchildren, the new duty will not be levied on the capital value of the property, but on the life interest of the son and on the ultimate interest of the grandchildren. Therefore, what we have is this—that where the succession is created by settlement or by will, as far as real property is concerned, this new duty will be levied on precisely the same principle as the old Succession Duty, but where real property passes absolutely, then the new duty is levied on the *corpus* on the same basis as it is levied on personal property.

*SIR G. O. TREVELYAN (Glasgow, Bridgeton): I hope I may be allowed to supplement by one word what my right hon. Friend has said. I do not think the House is quite aware what a serious proposition, from one point of view, has been laid before it. Take an estate of the value of £20,000. At the present moment a heir succeeding under the ordinary conditions would pay £135, taking the income at £600. Fifteen times 600 is 9,000, and $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent on £9,000 is £135. That is what the heir would pay at present. Under the Estate Duty, if the property is settled by will the heir will pay in addition £90. If on the other hand it is left absolutely he will pay £200. And so in the case of landed property, which is left absolutely, as in my opinion, all landed property ought to be left. The tax of the right hon. Gentleman opposite will

increase the Death Duty paid by the heir from £135 to £335, an addition so enormous that I really doubt whether the right hon. Gentleman below the Gangway (Mr. Chaplin) during the agreeable Easter holidays he recently passed fully mastered it. It is the most serious proposal in regard to the taxation of a class which has ever been made, but it is an addition which I was delighted to hear proposed, and which I shall be delighted to see passed by Parliament. Under this new tax if the estate is left absolutely, the heir will have to pay £335, but if it is left through an entail he will only have to pay £225. Multiply that by ten, so that it may apply to the size of important estates in this country, and it will be seen that an entailed estate, every time it passes from one proprietor to another, will have an advantage as against an estate which passes absolutely of more than £1,000; and we know very well that the heirs of those entailed estates generally find themselves in a position, owing to the many family claims upon the estates, in which the additional £1,000 will be a serious burden indeed. And therefore I would ask the Committee to consider what an enormous premium the Chancellor of the Exchequer is putting on the deleterious practice of tying up land. There can be no doubt that an additional inducement will be offered by this proposal in favour of tying up land greater than has been given by any proposal which has been made for many years past. The advantage given to entailed property should as soon as possible be abolished, and therefore I trust that all of us will do our best to hasten the day when these duties will be placed upon a thoroughly comprehensive footing.

*MR. GOSCHEN: I do not know whether the right hon. Gentleman who has just spoken is aware of the proposal which was made in 1885 by the right hon. Member for Edinburgh (Mr. Childers).

*SIR G. TREVELYAN: Oh, yes.

*MR. GOSCHEN: Then surely he ought to have raised the same objection to it which he has raised now. It was open to precisely the same objection as that which he has taken to the present proposal. Under the proposal of the right hon. Member for Edinburgh there

would have been on property that was entailed only the charge for the life interest, whereas upon property that was not entailed there would have been a charge on the capital value. The late Government, in 1885, proposed, without any compensation such as is claimed by my hon. Friend behind (Sir R. Paget), to raise the Succession Duty to 3 per cent not on estates of £10,000 only, but on all successions. Right hon. Gentlemen opposite were going to put realty and personalty on the same footing as regards the death duties, but to leave realty under other burdens and disadvantages as compared with personalty. My belief is that when we remove some of the existing inequalities of these duties, but deal at the same time with the burdens which unjustly lay upon land, it will be found that the landed interest is in a more favourable, because more just, position than it is now. I have been asked several questions. The hon. and learned Member for Stockton (Sir H. Davey), after endorsing what I have done in charging the Estate Duty in certain cases upon capital value, asked why I did not apply this principle to the whole of the existing Succession Duties? My reply is that the Government would not consent to so apply it until at the same time they were able to relieve realty from the injustice to which it is subject in other respects. The hon. and learned Gentleman asks whether, if a man left £10,000, half in land and half in personalty, it would be liable to the Estate Duty. My reply is that that would not be. It would require further changes in the general administration of the Death Duties to be able to effect that object. I accept the statements of the right hon. Member for Wolverhampton as being a correct general description of my proposals. When my hon. and learned Friend the Attorney-General spoke of the value of the succession, I think he used these words not in any legal and technical sense, but he meant that the property is taxed at what it is worth to the successor. The right hon. Gentleman says he expects that in the Bill the whole method of valuation will be set forth. I cannot promise that. In the Succession Duty Act, there are Clauses which point out the mode of valuation; and it is by reference to them that I think the matter is dealt with by the present

Bill. The right hon. Member for Bridgton (Sir G. Trevelyan) has selected a case of 15 years. Of course, that is entirely an arbitrary selection.

*SIR G. O. TREVELYAN: It is the average as given by the right hon. Gentleman himself.

*MR. GOSCHEN: It may be perfectly true, as regards the new duty, that it does fall more heavily on the landed interest than the existing Succession Duty; but if we compare the position of land with that of personalty it will be seen that the increase on personalty is also severe. The right hon. Gentleman may try to alarm some of our friends as to the character of our proposals; but it rests with the Government to show, as we are able to do, that we have not forgotten the true interests of realty any more than we have neglected the true interests of personalty. We do not profess to favour either the one class of property or the other, but to observe a just measure between them when we are in the disagreeable position of having to impose any fresh taxation at all. One hon. Gentleman has said that we ought to have dealt with the Death Duties as a whole. For reasons which I have explained at considerable length it was impossible to do so in the present year.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE (Bradford, Central): I understand that the right hon. Gentleman has answered the important question put by the hon. and learned Member for Stockton in the negative. My hon. and learned Friend asked whether £10,000 left by a testator, evenly divided between realty and personalty, would pay duty under the present proposal, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer has answered that in the negative. That will lead to very extraordinary results. Supposing a testator leaves £20,000 evenly divided between realty and personalty, under the present proposal that aggregate property would pay £200 to the Exchequer. But supposing the testator leaves £18,000 also evenly divided between realty and personalty, that would pay nothing. If, on the other hand, the aggregate property was £18,000, £10,000 in realty and £8,000 in personalty, the realty would pay £100, and the personalty would pay nothing. That seems to me to be a very strange state of things, and I cannot but think

that the Government would do well to reconsider their proposal with reference to the anomalies I have pointed out. The Chancellor of the Exchequer made a very effective *tu quoque* reply to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Bridgeton Division of Glasgow (Sir G. Trevelyan) but he did not touch the merits of the case. The point of my right hon. Friend's remarks was that under the proposal of the Government we add a fresh premium to entailed property inasmuch as entailed property will be less heavily burdened than property left absolutely to the heir. I have endeavoured to make a comparison as to what the results will be in the two cases—in the first place, of personal property of the value of £10,000, and in the other case of realty of the same value. I find that under the present law the personal property would pay £300 in the shape of Probate Duty, but in the case of real property, assuming the heir to be forty-five, payment would be made on a capitalized sum of £5,500—1½ per cent—namely, £82; and this would be reduced by the money being spread over eight instalments, on which discount would be allowed, to £75. Therefore, in one case there would be a payment of £300, and in the other a payment of only £75. Under the proposal of the Bill, £100 would be added to the amount payable in respect of the personalty, making £400. I assume that the property is left absolutely to the heir, and in the case of the realty £100 would be added, making, in that case, £175. That, also, is subject to discount. My right Friend was, therefore, quite correct when he said that the effect of the present proposal will be to increase the inducements to entail property. This, we feel, is a matter worthy of the serious consideration of the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

MAJOR RASCH (Essex, S.E.): I desire to say a word on behalf of the small owners of land. The Chancellor of the Exchequer is, perhaps, unaware that in the Eastern Counties small owners of land are divisible into two categories—those who are ruined, and those who are going to be. This proposal will only precipitate the latter catastrophe. It does not effect the big men, the persons who own 200,000 acres, or the 800 persons who own 3,700 acres of land and upwards, but it

comes down uncommonly heavily on the 180,000 people, who own 350 acres and a smaller quantity, and I do hope that, as the agricultural lamb has been sufficiently shorn already, the Chancellor of the Exchequer will temper the wind which blows from the Exchequer with reference to the small owners.

*SIR J. SWINBURNE (Staffordshire, Lichfield): I should like to know when the first instalment in the case of landed property will be due. An heir may succeed to an entailed estate, and yet have to wait eighteen months before receiving a farthing of rent, as on many estates the tenants hold their farms with "a running half-year's rent" allowed. Consequently, if the first instalment of the Death Duty is to be paid immediately, the heir may have to go to prison for non-payment of the Queen's Taxes, while he may not have received a shilling from the property he has inherited.

SIR G. CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy): I always welcome any steps towards a graduated taxation of property, and with that view I very much welcome the proposal of Her Majesty's Government. I was also pleased to hear the observations of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian. It is perfectly clear, as the right hon. Gentleman so forcibly showed, that you cannot stop at £10,000. Something has been said about confiscation, but it seems to me there is a great distance between 1 per cent and confiscation of property. I think that if you put 1 per cent on the amount of £10,000, you might reasonably put 4, 5, 6, or even 10 per cent upon the property of the millionaires. I hope the same system of graduated taxation will be applied to the income tax. The only doubt I want to suggest with regard to the proposal of the Government is whether it is prudent to put the whole of the taxation on the Death Duties; whether it would not be better to revise the income tax. I fear that if you put it all on the Death Duties, the consequence will be that Members will be apt to spend their incomes.

*SIR W. BARTTLELOT (Sussex, North West): I think we must all agree that a great deal of information has been afforded in the debate of to-day, and I hope the Chancellor of the Exchequer will give us plenty of time to carefully

consider the very serious proposals he has made. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian laid down, as he always does with regard to finance, the case as clearly as it could possibly be laid down. I wish to endorse one thing he said, and certainly adhered to, in the early part of his career as a financier, and that is that taxation should begin as low as it possibly can, and be kept upon a uniform scale, and that we should not have a graduation of taxation according to the property which a man may hold. But the right hon. Gentleman said a great deal to-day. The right hon. Gentleman has said that this tax might be converted into a tax upon estates totally irrespective of the Death Duties, and that the tax might be made use of for other purposes at another time. I gathered from the right hon. Gentleman's speech, not that he is anxious to see this done, but that these proposals will open a door to those who may wish to impose taxation upon property in a different way from that which has been adopted up to the present moment. This is a serious proposition, and I wish to call the special attention of my right hon. Friend to it. Such warnings of what may occur in the future deserve the serious consideration not only of the right hon. Gentleman, but of hon. Members who sit on the Ministerial side of the House. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian also warned us that an ascending scale may be made use of on large properties in regard to the income tax, the Death and Estate Duties, and that the consanguinity scale in the Death Duties might be abolished. That is another important point to be seriously noted by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, for though it is urged that the proposals are safeguarded, I would point out that the same argument was urged with respect to the Reform Bill of 1867, but before the Bill left the House all the safeguards on which we on this side had depended were eliminated. May not the same fate overtake the proposals of my right hon. Friend? He proposes certain things which he thinks are safeguards, and I should like to know how the safeguards are to be maintained. As an illustration there is the case of two men who recently died, their property falling to their sons, neither of whom is going to reside

(on account of their pecuniary inability to do so), on their properties, but both intend to sell them. It is difficult for hon. Members opposite to realize the position of men who inherit landed property, small or large, and who have not other means whereby to live. It becomes a severe hardship to such to be taxed more heavily than at present, especially when we consider the present condition of agriculture. Hon. Members opposite will give us credit for trying to deal leniently with our tenants and therefore we ought to receive consideration at the hands of the House.

SIR W. HARCOURT (Derby): I am not very much surprised at the remarks of the hon. and gallant Gentleman. I think that what he has said is true, but it is the truth of what he says that commends these proposals to hon. Gentlemen who sit on this side of the House. It is a fact that nobody can deny that the proposals of the Budget open up in the future a great number of very important questions, such as graduated taxation, applicable equally to the income tax, and to the Succession and Probate and other Duties. The great question at the bottom of graduated taxation is, whether or not people with enormous means shall contribute in a greater ratio to the necessities of the State than people with humbler means. This was established to a certain extent some years ago in reference to the income tax; it was afterwards extended, and now it has been established in reference to the Death Duties by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. It is a characteristic of stones of this kind that when set rolling, they acquire the peculiar property of rolling faster and faster. These proposals also open up the question why property should only pay on the accident of death, and why it should not, as in other countries, contribute annually to the necessities of the State. It is quite true as the hon. and gallant Gentleman has said that all these questions are brought forward with great weight and authority coming as they do from the Conservative Party in this country, and I hope they will receive increased force from the political situation. What I want now to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer is whether I fully understand the position of the right hon. Gentleman in dealing with the point raised by the right hon.

Member for Mid Lothian. The right hon. Gentleman cannot mean that a property worth £18,000, equally divided between land and personalty, should pay nothing, because each of the properties would be £9,000, and therefore below the limit. He cannot possibly mean that when a man inherits £10,000 in realty, or £10,000 in personalty, he shall pay the tax, but not if he inherits less. The proposition is so absurd that the right hon. Gentleman cannot possibly mean it, and I hope he is prepared to tell us that the Bill will be amended in this respect. If the £18,000 is divided in this way, £10,000 in realty and £8,000 in personalty, is it to pay on realty and not on personalty? But surely the principle is that if a man inherits anything above £10,000 he should pay the Duty, without regard to the way in which the property is divided.

MR. PICTON (Leicester): I wish to put a simple question to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, which I asked when the right hon. Gentleman made his Budget speech; he did not think it necessary to answer it then, but I hope he will not refuse to answer it now. The question is whether the 1 per cent extra is to be levied on the whole property, or is it to be levied on the portions which the successors may receive? I understand that an estate of £9,000, received by one child, would not pay the 1 per cent duty, but if a man leaves £12,000 to be divided among 12 children, then I understand on the other hand, that the extra 1 per cent is to be paid by each. ("No, no.") Well, there is evidently a difference of opinion on the subject, and I therefore hope the Chancellor of the Exchequer will explain what is the real position of the matter. I do not pretend to be learned enough to understand the legal language of these resolutions. I am glad, however, to find I am not so simple but that there are others who agree with me. If the case is as I have put it there will undoubtedly be a considerable inequality, and an inequality by which some persons will be painfully affected. Where a large property, consisting mainly of personalty, is divided among a number of persons, those who happen to receive small sums from the estate and have to pay 1 per cent however small their portion may be will certainly have their feelings painfully

excited. Perhaps it is felt that those who are fortunate enough to receive any legacy at all would probably be in a generous humour, and would willingly pay anything that might be demanded from them. At the same time I think it is of importance that the matter should be clearly understood, or otherwise mistakes may be made.

*SIR R. FOWLER (London): There was a point put by the right hon. Member for Derby (Sir W. Harcourt), which I should like to see made clear. The right hon. Gentleman put the case of a testator leaving £18,000—£9,000 in realty and £9,000 in personalty, and he asked whether in that case, so far as the duty is concerned, the estate is to escape scot free. But suppose a testator leaves £20,000 and it consists of £10,000 realty and £10,000 personalty, is the tax to be levied separately as between the one and the other?

SIR W. LAWSON (Cumberland, Cockermouth): I merely rise for the purpose of congratulating the Chancellor of the Exchequer upon the Budget. It is very not often that the right hon. Gentleman receives compliments from this side of the House, and I therefore think it is incumbent on me to say what I feel on this occasion. I consider that the right hon. Gentleman has had the honour of inaugurating in this country a fiscal revolution; and those who heard the speech of the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian will agree that I am not overstating the case. I look with the greatest pleasure on this scheme of graduated taxation, and I hope the Chancellor of the Exchequer will carry it to a triumphant issue. It all illustrates the saying that "Everything comes to him who waits." We have not had long to wait in this matter, because the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian was defeated on this very question. The right hon. Gentleman wanted to increase the Death Duties, and the Beer Duties, placing an additional tax upon death and another upon beer which is the means of death. A great defeat of the Liberal Government occurred in consequence, and yet in less than four years, we are coming here to support a Tory Government in carrying out the very same proposition which turned out the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian. It is a very encouraging incident, and I feel

sure that after this Budget we shall now go on increasing the taxation of that most mischievous creature, the rich man, and make him far more useful to the State than ever he has been before. I congratulate the Government heartily all the more that their own supporters appear to be a little lukewarm in regard to the present proposal.

*SIR R. LETHBRIDGE (Kensington, N.): The difficulty stated by the right hon. Member for Bradford (Mr. Shaw Lefevre), and emphasized by the right hon. Member for Derby (Sir W. Harcourt), might be very well met by my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he were to reckon his limit of exemption from the new Estate Duty by reference to the amount of the income which passes rather than to the capitalised amount. I think a plan of that kind would do something to abate the apprehensions of those who fear that this new duty will press unfairly upon the landed proprietors. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian has endeavoured very skilfully to arouse the apprehensions of hon. Members on the Ministerial side by dwelling upon the fact that this is the thin end of the wedge for the introduction of a general system of graduated taxation. I must say that for my own part I regret very much that the right hon. Member for Sleaford (Mr. Chaplin) allowed himself to be drawn like a trout that rises to the fly skilfully thrown over his head. It is perfectly obvious to common sense that we have been accustomed in the exemption of the smaller incomes from income tax, to such an exemption as that which the Chancellor of the Exchequer proposes, and it has never been dreamt of that the exemption of the smaller incomes really was to lead to anything like a graduated income tax. Therefore, I do not see why this proposal should be regarded as leading to graduated taxation of any kind, and I shall support the Chancellor of the Exchequer's proposals most unhesitatingly. I believe that he will be supported by the country at large, and that his proposals will have the approval not only of hon. Gentlemen opposite, but of the majority of Members on this side of the House.

*SIR H. DAVEY: There is one point to which I think the attention of the Chancellor of the Exchequer ought to

be drawn. It is a somewhat technical point, but I am sure the right hon. Gentleman will follow me. Real estate only pays Succession Duty; it never pays Legacy Duty. The Succession Duty is paid on the real estate which is devised or passes by will, but where personalty is bequeathed by will it does not pay Succession Duty but Legacy Duty. As I read the resolution the new Estate Duty is only to be imposed on personal property passing by the death of any person dying on or after the 1st day of June, 1889, as a succession or successions under the Succession Duty Act 1853. What I wish to point out is that if £10,000 is bequeathed by a will to, say, a son, it would not be a succession under the Succession Duty Act 1853, but would be a legacy and liable to Legacy, not Succession, Duty, and therefore, as I read the resolution as framed it would not be made to pay the new Estate Duty. I do not suggest to the Chancellor of the Exchequer that this is intended, but I think it is a matter worthy of his consideration in order to ascertain whether it is so or not. If the first resolution is intended to cover this case of course the question will not arise.

*MR. GOSCHEN: It is intended to cover it.

*SIR H. DAVEY: Then I hope the right hon. Gentleman will see his way to meet the anomaly which my right hon. Friend the Member for Derby and I have pointed out, namely the case of a man who leaves an estate of £18,000 one half in realty and the other half in personalty. In that case Succession Duty will not be paid at all. That, I am afraid, is an anomaly which cannot be altered in his Bill, but must be altered in the resolution.

*SIR R. WEBSTER: This point has not escaped our attention, but it is one of a practical nature. I quite agree that if the matter were reasoned out logically some scheme ought to be devised to meet a complex case of a man leaving £7,000 of personalty and £7,000 of realty, but we had to consider the matter from a practical point of view and we found that it would delay so extremely the collection of the Probate Duty that we were obliged to proceed tentatively, in order to see whether the plan is capable of further development. The point submitted by the hon. and

learned Member has, however, not been lost sight of.

SIR W. HARCOURT: I apprehend that it will be necessary to insert some provision in the Bill.

*MR. GOSCHEN: I am sorry to have to trouble the Committee so often. In the case put by the hon. Member for Leicester (Mr. Pictou), I may state that the Estate Duty so far as personalty is concerned follows the Probate Duty, and would be paid out of the *corpus* of the estate before it came to a division. This being an extension of the Probate Duty, it would follow the lines of the Probate Duty. It may almost be said the Probate Duty is put at 4 instead of 3 per cent. My object as Chancellor of the Exchequer, has been not so much to reform the Death Duties as to get £800,000 into the Exchequer. The idea of the new duty is that it is to be an addition to the Probate Duty, and the Succession Duty. If it were to be made an increased Legacy Duty instead of an increased Probate Duty, I suppose not one-half of the duty would come into the Exchequer in the present year. With regard to complex estates, composed both of realty and personalty, I have urged upon the officers of the Inland Revenue to have a practical plan prepared which can be put before the Committee; but as hon. Members acquainted with legal affairs are aware, it takes a much longer time to ascertain the value of realty than of personalty, and the difficulties in the way of framing such a plan are very great, though not, I hope, insuperable. Our desire would be, if possible, to bring such estates under the tax, and I will express to the able officers of the department the view of the Committee that this ought to be done if the difficulties can be overcome. I endorse the remark that has been made by an hon. Member behind me that the criticisms of the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian and others are simply an attempt to frighten hon. Members on the Ministerial side, and to stir within them a spirit of disgust with the Chancellor of the Exchequer, on the ground that something like our present proposals has been a part of the Liberal programme for years past. In 1885 the Government of the right hon. Gentleman, the Member for Mid Lothian, proposed an increase in the Succession Duty and the Beer Duty, and the main

ground on which their scheme was resisted by my right hon. Friend the President of the Board of Trade, was that it would be unfair to increase the duty on land until relief was given to Local Taxation. But since then the present Government have surrendered considerable sums out of the Imperial Exchequer for local purposes. It was not contended in 1885 that there ought to be no approach to the equalization of the Death Duties, but only that such a step ought not to be taken until the House had redeemed the promise it has made to the ratepayers that some relief should be given to Local Taxation. This, however, has since been done, and the fact that it has been done makes all the difference between our position now and that of right hon. Gentlemen opposite in 1885.

*MR. GEDGE (Stockport): I desire to point out the inconvenience experienced by executors owing to their having to pay the Probate Duty before they can touch the property in respect of which it is due, and I wish to know whether this extra duty will be payable under similar conditions. When a man dies his executors are naturally anxious to prove his will as quickly as possible, and until 1881 they could do so, as they were allowed to estimate roughly the value of the estate for probate, and any mistake was rectified afterwards. But in that year the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian compelled them to make an account returning the estate with full particulars in the first instance, and this has greatly impeded them and delayed proving the will. If the proposals of the hon. Gentleman opposite be entertained and the value of the real property be added to that of the personalty for the calculation of the new Estate Duty, and if that is to be paid on proving the will, a delay of 8 or 9 months may take place before the value of the real property can be ascertained, and everybody concerned will be put to immense inconvenience.

MR. DE LISLE (Leicestershire, Mid): I wish to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he has read the letter of Lord Addington which appeared in the *Times* a few days ago, suggesting the application of the consanguinity table to the payment of this tax, as in the majority of cases the persons coming under this tax would be widows and

orphans. As the main object of the right hon. Gentleman is to find money for the Exchequer, I think he ought not to abandon the opportunity afforded him of raising a still larger sum by adopting the principle of the consanguinity table. I think it would be a mistake to throw away entirely this means of raising additional revenue.

*SIR W. PLOWDEN (Wolverhampton, W.): Before the Chancellor of the Exchequer rises to answer the questions which have been put to him, I wish to call his attention to the point which has been raised by the hon. Member for Leicester (Mr. Picton). It certainly seems to me that to tax an estate of £12,000 passing to 12 persons, each receiving only £1,000, and to allow an estate of £9,000 passing to a single individual to escape the duty altogether, is an anomaly. I do not think that so far the right hon. Gentleman has dealt with this matter. Is it the intention that the estate of £12,000 divided among a number of persons should pay the duty, while the estate of £9,000 should not pay it?

*MR. PICTON: Will there be any difference made between the Succession Duty and the Probate Duty? I presume that in the case of real estate the Succession Duty is charged not on the *corpus* of the estate, but on individual successors. Therefore, if real estate of, say, £12,000, be divided among several successors, persons receiving less than £9,000 would not pay the 1 per cent extra, whereas an estate consisting of personalty descending to a number of persons would pay Probate Duty on the *corpus* of the estate, and would also pay the one per cent extra. That is, each of twelve children, among whom £12,000 of personalty is divided, would have to pay the extra one per cent from which realty in similar circumstances would be free.

*MR. GOSCHEN: I fully realize the difficulty referred to by the hon. Member for Stockport (Mr. Gedge), and all that is possible will be done to meet it. But the Bill proposes that this tax should be paid as a Stamp Duty simultaneously with Probate Duty. There can be no doubt that the Bill proposes an increase of the Probate Duty, as far as personalty is concerned, as distinguished from Legacy Duty. I have seen the letter of my noble Friend, Lord

Addington, and I am surprised to find the suggestion as to the consanguinity table being applied to this tax. It would be quite inappropriate, having regard to the principle upon which Probate Duty is assessed. My noble Friend calls it a widow and orphan's tax, but he might as well call the Probate duty a widow and orphan's tax. The principle is to obtain the duty in proportion to the bulk of the property that passes, and it amounts to an addition to the present Probate Duty above a certain line. It will apply to the widows and orphans of very rich men who at present pay no Legacy Duty, as well as to those of persons who have a moderate, but not a small, fortune. I was surprised that a wise man like Lord Addington should try to create prejudice against the proposal by calling it a Widows' and Orphans' Tax; and I am afraid that it would only complicate the matter if the new Duty were to be varied according to the table of consanguinity. In regard to the point raised by the hon. Member for Leicester as to succession to personalty, there can be no doubt that the Estate Duty, so far as it applies to realty, will follow the principle of the Succession Duty. The Succession Duty is different from the Probate Duty in the fact that there is no *corpus* that is taxed, but that it is the individual interest of each successor which the tax takes. That difference will necessarily exist in the Bill as it is drawn.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE: The Chancellor of the Exchequer has entered rather into the question of machinery than the principle of the Bill—the different modes of dealing with personalty and realty respectively. The case which has been put by the hon. Member for Leicester certainly affords a striking instance of the different manner in which personalty and realty are treated. Under this proposal, if £12,000 personalty is left to be divided among 12 children, 1 per cent would have to be paid on each £1,000, the share of each child; whereas, in the case of succession to realty of the value of £12,000 divided among 12 children, no cognizance is taken of the gross amount. The £12,000 of realty would not pay, whereas the £12,000 of personalty would pay. That is a point which requires serious consideration. That

exemption goes to the man whether he has children or not. We know nothing about children in the case of income tax; we say there is no analogy at all with the case of personal estate, where probate is taken up, between children, and each child suffers. There is no argument on the ground of analogy. I am afraid here is a new and rather striking inequality introduced in the modes of dealing with personalty and realty to this extent. Suppose an estate of £12,000 personalty goes in one portion, and suppose at the same time a succession value of £12,000 passes to a single individual in the nature of realty, these cases will receive identically the same treatment; they will also be dealt with in exactly the same manner when the sums in respect to which probate is taken out does not amount to £10,000, for then, whether they go to one or several individuals they pay nothing in respect to the new duty; but if £12,000 personalty is left to be divided among 12 children, 1 per cent will have to be paid on each £1,000, the share of each child. However, I do not wish to prolong the present discussion. When the matter comes before the House in the shape of a Bill, we shall be able to form a more mature opinion upon it. The novelty of introducing, for the purpose of raising revenue, a permanent inequality in the treatment of personalty and realty appears to me to be a very serious matter.

MR. ILLINGWORTH (Bradford, W.): Suppose the succession value of a real estate is say £27,000, and it is divided among three persons, the Chancellor of the Exchequer will lose all the benefit in each case, for each portion will be under £10,000, and so also of real estate of very large amounts if they are sufficiently sub-divided. I wonder the Chancellor of the Exchequer, when his friends made these complaints of new taxation, did not reply that the money is wanted for increased Army and Navy expenditure. The hon. Baronet the Member for Sussex (Sir W. Barttelot) is one of those who had not a word to say against this increase, and he has the satisfaction of knowing that it is for the defence of the country that the Chancellor of the Exchequer makes his demand. I think this discussion will be immensely valuable, for on this side of the House

there appears to be almost unanimity in corroboration of the principle that graduated taxation is the system we must look forward to and develop in the future; and the Chancellor of the Exchequer has been successful in committing the Tory Party to approve of that principle. There are two other points on which I wish to say a word or two. The Chancellor of the Exchequer has maintained that tenderness of treatment towards entailed estates which from first to last I condemn. The system of entail is of no advantage to the country, and is a most pernicious practice. So far from the Committee being called upon to show special tenderness to estates thus treated, I think we should be doing the State a special service by putting a new and special burden upon estates so entailed. I am amazed that the Chancellor of the Exchequer should lend himself to the maintenance of this system. Those who are owners of property, or claim to be the mouthpieces of that class, seem to imagine that their case during the last 12 or 15 years is one that deserves some special and exceptional treatment, but the only difference between these and those engaged in commerce and industry is that the latter have had the manliness to bear their losses and sufferings without coming continually before the House, and pleading *in forma pauperis*, while it seems to be the vested right of those who own landed estates—and I know something of the one class as well as the other—to be always bringing to bear what influence they have on the Government in favour of exemption from this or that share of taxation. The Chancellor of the Exchequer has upheld the inequality and justified it on the ground that it would not do to proceed with the equalization of the Death Duties until the special charges on land referring specially to the income tax had been readjusted. As time goes on, nothing will become more manifest to the House and to the country than that the income realized from land ought to bear a higher rate of Income Tax than income derived from precarious sources, such as professions, trades, and industries. Hon. Gentlemen must bear in mind that land is a luxury—not so much as it used to be I grant, but still it is a luxury—and those who own it have privileges connected

with the ownership that should bear proportionate burdens. I am glad of the progress we have made to-night towards a policy of a more just and equal taxation, but I doubt if it will take the form that hon. Gentlemen opposite desire.

*MR. GOSCHEN: With reference to the concluding remarks of the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Gladstone) I think he and the Committee will see that anomalies must arise near the line of limitation, wherever we may draw it. Hon. Members have been pressing these anomalies that only our from the attempt to draw a line that will save smaller estates, anomalies that will arise only in exceptional cases. Nobody knows better than the right hon. Gentleman that wherever you draw a line giving exceptions, anomalies will only occur close to that line. I will consider with my colleagues all that has been urged as to these exceptions, but whatever conclusion we may come to it is certain that the anomalies cannot all be removed.

MR. GLADSTONE: If I may presume to say so, my right hon. Friend entirely mistakes the question. These anomalies which my right hon. Friend admits do not in the slightest degree arise from the drawing of the line. That has no connection with the case. You may draw a line and avoid these anomalies, and the way to avoid these is to deal with realty and personalty on the same principle—the amount of the value passing to the individual—instead of adopting two different principles for realty and personalty. Where it is realty you look to the value of the interest passing to each successor; but where it is personalty you look to the gross value. This is the source of the whole anomaly. I hope some of us on this side of the House may be able to draw some Amendment giving effect to our views and bringing them out distinctly.

*MR. H. H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.): I may point out to the Chancellor of the Exchequer that the form of the resolution deals with successions to property in two different ways, as thus: There shall be levied and paid to Her Majesty in respect of the value of the entire personal property passing upon the death of any person dying on or after the first day of June, one thousand eight hundred

and eighty nine, as a succession or Successions under "The Succession Duty Act, 1853," and in respect of the value of every Succession to real property under the said Act, upon the death of any person so dying, the following duty, that is to say:—and so on, placing 1 per cent or values above £10,000. Now if £10,000 in consols is settled on marriage, and devisable among children, as in the case put by the hon. Member for Leicester, then the additional 1 per cent duty on Succession would be imposed; but if a man leaves the property among his children, then no additional duty is imposed. When we come to the sub-section A, the duty is levied upon the *corpus* of the personality of a man dying worth £10,000; but if a man, having four or five farms, valued at £8,000 to £9,000 each, left a farm to each of his children, no duty would be payable.

Resolution agreed to.

AMENDMENTS OF THE LAW AS TO SUCCESSION DUTY.

3. Resolved, that the allowance under section thirty-eight of "The Succession duty Act, 1853," to a successor upon taking a succession upon the death of any person dying on or after the first day of June, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-nine, shall only be made in respect of the value of property which the successor may have acquired by any title not conferring a succession on him, and which passes from the successor to some other person.

That the duties charged under "The Succession Duty Act, 1853," and section twenty-one of "The Customs and Inland Revenue Act, 1888," shall be payable upon a succession upon the death of any person dying on or after the first day of June, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-nine, although the value thereof shall be less than twenty pounds.

AMENDMENT OF SECTION 38 OF "THE CUSTOMS AND INLAND REVENUE ACT, 1881."

4. Resolved, That it is expedient, with the view of explaining and extending the charge of Stamp Duties on accounts of personal or moveable property under section 38 of "The Customs and Inland Revenue Act, 1881," to amend the section as follows:—

The description of property marked (a) in sub-section two of the section shall be read as if the word "twelve" were substituted for the word "three" therein;

The said description of property shall include property taken under any gift, whenever made, of which bona fide possession and enjoyment shall not have been assumed by the donee immediately upon the gift and thenceforward retained to the entire exclusion of the donor, or of any benefit to him by contract or otherwise;

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The description of property marked (b) in the said sub-section two shall be construed as if the expression "to be transferred to or vested in himself and any other person" included also any purchase or investment effected by the person who was absolutely entitled to the property either by himself alone, or in concert, or by arrangement with any other person;

The description of property marked (c) shall be construed as if the expression "voluntary settlement" included any trust, whether expressed in writing or otherwise, in favour of a volunteer, and, if contained in a deed or other instrument effecting the settlement, whether such deed or other instrument was made for valuable consideration or not as between the settlor or any other person, and as if the expression "such property," wherever the same occurs, included the proceeds of sale thereof;

And that the said charge shall extend to money received under a policy of assurance effected by any person dying on or after the first day of June, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-nine, on his life, where the policy is wholly kept up by him for the benefit of a donee, whether nominee or assignee, or a part of such money in proportion to the premiums paid by him, where the policy is partially kept up by him for such benefit;

And that no return of Stamp Duty shall be made under sub-section three of the section by reason of, or in relation to, any Account charged under that section and delivered on or after the first day of June, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-nine.

DUTY ON CAPITAL OF COMPANIES WITH LIMITED LIABILITY UNDER LETTERS PATENT OR SPECIAL ACTS OF PARLIAMENT.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That the same Duty as is imposed by Section 11 of the 'Customs and Inland Revenue Act, 1883,' shall be charged and paid upon a Statement of the Amount of Nominal Share Capital of any Corporation or Company where the Liability of the Holders of Shares in the Capital of such Corporation or Company is Limited by Letters Patent, to be hereafter granted by Her Majesty, Her Heirs or Successors, or any Act of Parliament to be hereafter passed."

*MR. HALDANE: May I ask for some explanation of this Resolution? Does it mean that the duty is only imposed where the liability is limited, or is it intended to impose the duty in all cases where the company is incorporated otherwise than under the Act of 1862?

*MR. GOSCHEN: It is rather a technical point, but the intention is to reach certain companies which now escape because they get their limited liability from letters patent or from

special Acts. It is intended to put these on the same footing as those under the general law of limited liability.

Question proposed, "That these Resolutions be reported to the House."

*MR. CHILDERS (Edinburgh): We have had a most interesting discussion upon the second Resolution. I presume the Bill must be grounded on the Report of the Resolutions, and I presume it would not be possible to alter materially the clauses of the Bill in Committee, unless alteration is made in the Report of the Resolutions. Under these circumstances it becomes extremely important that the Report should be fully considered. It is not a Party question in any degree, and in order that we may have time to consider very carefully the very important points which have been raised this evening, I would ask that the Report stage should not be taken, say, before Tuesday next.

*MR. GOSCHEN: Certainly, I should not propose to take the Report before Monday, but I will consult with my right hon. Friend the First Lord on the matter.

Resolutions to be reported on Monday next; Committee to sit again to-morrow.

SUPPLY.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES.

CLASS II.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £60,366, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1890, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Department of Her Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs."

DR. CAMERON (Glasgow, College): On a point of Order I now ask whether the Motion of which I have given notice should have precedence of that of the hon. Member for Stockport (Mr. Jennings). My Motion refers to the first item—the salary of the Chief Secretary of State, but the Motion of the hon. Member has, I think, reference to the Vote generally.

THE CHAIRMAN: I understand the hon. Member for Stockport wishes to raise the question of the propriety of certain items in the Vote. His notice

was given long before that of the hon. Member for Glasgow, but if he chooses to waive his right, the hon. Member for Glasgow can proceed.

*MR. JENNINGS (Stockport): My Motion refers to items under sub-head A, but I intend to discuss various salaries. I do not know whether I should be in order.

THE CHAIRMAN: There is no precedence in the details of an item.

*MR. JENNINGS: This Vote shows a general tendency in the direction of a rise in the scale of salaries. The total sum now asked for is £70,366. In the first year of Lord Beaconsfield's administration, 1874-5, it was £61,713, so that there is an increase of £8,600 in the intervening period, and this large increase is one of the grounds on which I ask the Committee to reduce the Vote. There has been a general rise in the scale of almost all the salaries, and a totally new post worth £1,500 a-year has been created for an Under Secretary. The Committee will observe that the sum mentioned in the Vote does not by any means include the total expenditure of the Foreign Office. To arrive at that we must add £15,580 for stationery and printing.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member is not now entering into Item A. He must now confine himself to that item.

*MR. JENNINGS: I shall keep to the sub-head with great accuracy and strictness. It will be observed that out of £48,211 paid for salaries no less than £42,649 goes to 78 persons. I think a glance at the figures will satisfy the Committee that nearly all these receive extravagant sums. The Secretary of State with his £5,000 a-year cannot be said to be overpaid, considering the great responsibility and the heavy work which attach to his office. Then I come to an Under Secretary with £2,000 a-year. That is probably the permanent Under Secretary, though it is not so stated in the Vote. After that there is entered another Under Secretary with a salary of £1,500 a-year. This is an inadequate sum for the ingenuity shown by the hon. Baronet (Sir James Fergusson) in answering questions on Foreign Affairs without imparting the slightest scrap of useful information. Then there are two Assistant Under Secretaries with £1,500 a-year each. So that there are four

Under Secretaries costing £6,500 a-year. We have always understood that the most industrious Foreign Minister this country ever had was Lord Palmerston, and he contrived to do with only one Under Secretary. In the first year of Lord Beaconsfield's administration there was one Under Secretary less than there is now. In point of fact, the work which is now divided amongst four persons used to be done by three. But these Under Secretaries all have assistants, no doubt on the principle referred to in Swift's lines about the big fleas which have little fleas to bite them. So far as we can discover, the work of the Foreign Office is shifted from one pair of shoulders to another until it is really difficult to ascertain who does it, and still more difficult to ascertain what use it is when it is done. Very few of the assistant Under Secretaries are paid less than from £400 to £700 a-year as their regular salaries, yet if they are asked to write out the answers of the oracle transmitted to this House through the Under Secretary, they actually receive additional remuneration, so that they have the great advantage of being paid twice over for their time and trouble. This is the peculiarity of the office. First a clerk is paid a considerable sum for giving his whole time to the State, he is then taken aside to do something else, and he forthwith receives an additional salary for that. No doubt the answer will be the country is rich and can afford it. We are often told that people prefer to have a lavish expenditure of money in the public departments. Well, if that be so, they ought to be satisfied with the constitution of this office. It will also be observed that the persons in the office are accumulating very heavy pensions. There have been cases where clerks of from 30 to 35 years old have received pensions of from £200 to £300 a-year, and where persons after 10 or 12 years' service have gone off with still more substantial pensions. It may be said that this is deferred pay, but the salaries are so large as to leave no room for this, and, in fact, nothing is deferred except sometimes the work. The chief clerk gets a salary of £1,250 a-year, and also a compensation allowance of £794 a-year. This gentleman has never been anything but a clerk in the Foreign Office so far as I can find out, and

why he should have this compensation allowance we can only darkly conjecture. He probably has come to the conclusion that as times go this is not a bad country to live in. Then we have five senior clerks receiving £1,000 a-year each, and seven assistant clerks receiving £800 a-year each, and this in an office where the work is mostly put out. The most substantial commercial house would not dream of paying such salaries. Immense time, of course, is spent in dealing with correspondence which is of no earthly significance to any human being. The work could be done equally efficiently by clerks at £150 or £200 a-year, and would be so done in an ordinary commercial office. I maintain that the apparatus worked by these expensive clerks is of no benefit to the nation; it has seldom done any good, and it has often done irreparable harm. We should have had fewer wars and difficulties with Foreign Powers if half the system had been swept away long ago. There are 20 junior clerks with £200 a-year to start with. In April 1879 there were only 10. These junior clerks are now getting £400 a-year each. I affirm that there is no commercial house in the whole of the kingdom who would pay clerks of this description, required to attend only from 11 to 5, and whose duties are of the lightest description, more than from £100 to £200 a-year. Their work is light; as soon as the streets of London begin to feel a little warm they have a month or six weeks' holiday, they are accumulating large pensions, and their duties are arranged chiefly by themselves. Then there is the Librarian and keeper of the papers at £1,000, besides another of the mysterious compensation allowances of £389 a-year. The librarian of the British Museum only receives £1,200 a-year, and I think it highly probable that he has more important papers and books to take care of than the librarian of the Foreign Office. No doubt there are treaties to look after, but their importance is a matter open to very considerable question. There is, however, a special major-domo to look after these treaties, and he is down on this lucky list for £893 a-year. He has an assistant with a salary of £559, while the other librarian has an assistant at £575, two first class clerks receiving £950, four

second class clerks with £1,439, four third class clerks with £762, and ten temporary clerks with £1,000. I say that such a librarian's department has never been heard of before outside Bedlam. The superintendent of Treaties, most of which are so stone-dead that they require no superintendence of any kind, gets £900 a-year. The keeper of the MSS. at the British Museum only gets £750 a-year, and the keeper of printed books the same amount. What are the duties of this gentleman at the Foreign Office? Part of his duty is to attend to British and Foreign Orders, medals, honorary rewards, questions of ceremony and precedence, and other mouldy trappings of the great sham which the Foreign Office represents. If the whole litter were taken outside this House, and thrown into the river, the country would be all the better off. As no one has the slightest interest in looking after the public money in this Department, it contrives to muddle away over £15,000 a-year in stationery and printing. You might paper the Foreign Office an inch thick with the stationery that is wasted there every year. It spends £8,500 in telegrams, although diplomatic telegrams are specially charged for under another heading. We ought to apologize for mentioning in such company the persons of low birth stationed at the Foreign Office, but unfortunately such persons there must be. I hope the Committee will notice with respectful admiration that the office keeper has £250 a-year and quarters rent free, and, therefore, he is far better off than many clergymen and barristers. I hope there are not many barristers and country parsons who would presume to put themselves on a level with the office keeper at the Foreign Office. He has of course plenty of assistants, in accordance with the sound principle of the office, that no man should do anything if he can get somebody else to do it for him. Accordingly we find him surrounded with seven other office keepers, and three doorkeepers, mostly receiving from £100 to £150 a-year each. People talk about bringing up their sons to the professions, but it would be much better to bring them up as office keepers under Government. They would then be certain of receiving a very good salary, quarters rent free, and a good pension.

No one can entertain a reasonable doubt that if this office fell into the hands of a person who managed it on strictly business principles, there would be a large decrease of cost with no sacrifice of efficiency. We shall be told, I have no doubt, that it is absolutely indispensable to pay good salaries, because persons of a superior class must be employed. I do not see the necessity for it. All the country needs is to have efficient clerks who will do their duty. From what I have observed, the heads of most Departments are underpaid and overworked, but otherwise the scale of salaries is absurdly out of proportion to the work done. I daresay it will be intimated by the Under Secretary, that if this Amendment be adopted, the British Empire will be placed in a position of considerable jeopardy. One peculiarity of the British Empire is that it seems to be always in a position of jeopardy, and, if we cut down the bloated salaries of the Foreign Office, it will be no worse off than it is already. Another objection to these criticisms was put to me the other day in something like this form—"If we get rid of all these snug berths under Government, what are we to do with our younger sons?" That is a problem which we shall have to face before very long, but England has been making provision for younger sons for a very long time, and there are many signs that the people are getting weary of doing so, and intend in the future to exact honest service for the salaries paid. It will probably be said that the office generally is in a state of automatic increase. Automatic is a very delightful word to the official ear, but it will not satisfy, I hope, the feeling of the country, which demands a thorough reform of these Departments. I would earnestly express a hope that the Committee will not be deterred from adopting the Amendment I propose to move, by the suggestion that no good will come of it. I maintain that very considerable good has come from these discussions in Supply. Only last year a reduction of a Vote was moved and not accepted at the time, but a much greater reduction has been carried out this year. My proposal may not be accepted to-night, but if the general rule is followed, the effect will be shown in succeeding years. I beg to move the reduction of the Vote by £1,000.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That item A, of £48,211, for salaries, be reduced by £1,000."—(*Mr. Jennings.*)

*THE UNDER SECRETARY FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir J. FERGUSON, Manchester, N.E.): I venture to think there has seldom been an attack made on a Department, and a reduction moved in the Estimates on weaker grounds. The hon. Member might have been expected to adduce something to support his sweeping assertions that the office was overmanned with men who were overpaid, and that no work was done, but the unfounded assertion appears to be evolved out of his own imagination. He has given no proof of it, and I can tell him that it is as unfounded as it is absurd. The hon. Member has not had the courtesy or consideration, which I have experienced from Members sitting in all parts of the House, who having regard to the many affairs for which I have to answer, have given some notice of the subjects to which they propose to draw attention. I have received several letters from hon. Members, mentioning points to which they desire to call attention; the hon. Member, however, has not been so courteous or considerate; but that is his way. It is the course he chose to adopt, and the tone that ran through his speech was consistent with it. There has been no addition made to our establishment that has not been asked for, and the reasons for which have not been required by the Treasurer with great particularity; and Committees have been appointed to inquire into the strength of establishments and the reasons for every appointment. No addition has been made to this office for which there has not been absolute necessity in the opinion of responsible Members of successive Administrations. He has referred particularly to the addition of an Assistant Under Secretary. Well, Sir, that addition was made 15 years ago in order to afford assistance to the growing amount of legal business brought before the Foreign Office. The amount of ordinary work in the office has more than doubled during the last 30 years. An actual saving was effected on the appointment of a legal assistant, because the salary is only half of what it was necessary to pay previously to a

member of the Bar. The work of the office is necessarily distributed among Departments with a responsible head for each, and without such responsibility and division the office would be inefficient and ill-arranged. We have relations and correspondence with many countries, and our business with these countries, singly or in groups, must be divided among the responsible chiefs of divisions. There is, for instance, an American, an Eastern, a Western, an African, and a Consular Department, each embracing a great variety of interests and a large amount of responsible business. The Under Secretaries divide between them the Superintendence of the Departments. Our constantly increasing commercial relations also entail a large amount of labour on those employed in the Foreign Office, and I do not think that office is overmanned, the fact being that the gentleman engaged there never spare themselves and never think of limiting their duties to the statutory number of hours. If you were to go to the Foreign Office at seven or eight o'clock at night you would find many gentlemen engaged there in the transaction of important business.

MR. MOLLOY (Birr): For which they receive extra pay.

*SIR J. FERGUSON: They do not, indeed. Nor is the work shifted about from one person to another, as each person has his own work and must manage to do it. With respect to Private Secretaryships, the Foreign Office is not peculiar, and the Under Secretaries would find it impossible without such help to get through the work of the Department. Reference has been made to the Chief Clerk and to the Librarian, and I may say that the Chief Clerk is a most responsible officer and a valuable public servant. He has worked his way in the service and performs important duties. As to the Librarian, complaint has been made of his having a salary of £1,000 a year. In answer to that I would point out that his duties are of the most important character; and hon. Members will probably be able to appreciate how necessary it is to the Secretary of State and other Members of the Government to be able to have at their immediate command precise information with regard to previous transactions relating

to every country in the world, and that all papers in connection with commercial treaties and historical matters of the highest importance shall be thoroughly accessible. It is therefore very desirable that we should have all our records in the most perfect order, so that there should be no mistake in regard to any of them. In my opinion there is no salary better earned than that of the Librarian, Sir Edward Hertslet, who enjoys a world-wide reputation. In regard to the matter of stationery, I may say that I am unaware of any waste going on in the Department. There is necessarily a large amount of stationery used, but I believe that, generally speaking, there has been a steady and continuous effort to promote economy. In regard to the item of telegrams, the estimate has this year been reduced by the sum of £1,500. No doubt the salaries of the office keepers are high, but it is worth while to pay well not only where we get good work done, but when we must rely with absolute confidence on those whom we employ. The hon. Gentleman (Mr. Jennings) thinks we might have as good clerks as we require for £350 a year; and there I join issue with him. The competition for appointments in the Foreign Office, it is true, is limited, and it is necessary in such a service not only to have efficiency, but to have men whom we can implicitly trust. Since I have been at the Foreign Office the gentlemen who have been admitted to that service have all been men whose abilities would have done credit to any employment. There are necessarily secrets in the department for the divulgence of which large sums would gladly be paid—of which there cannot be a doubt. Just imagine for a moment what some of the secrets of the Foreign Office would be worth for Stock Exchange purposes; and yet there is the most absolute confidence in all the officials there employed, and no gentleman in that office can be charged with breach of confidence, or even with indiscretion. These are reasons why we should pay good salaries, and at the same time I may state that we have no idle men. I think it will require something more than the general allegations of the hon. Member opposite to deprive those gentlemen of the confidence of the country, or to establish a charge of

extravagance against the office which I have the honour to represent.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton): I do not think the right hon. Baronet has shown his usual kindness or fairness in the reply he has just given to the hon. Member for Stockport (Mr. Jennings), to whom I think the right hon. Gentleman might have given credit for aiding in the economies of which he has spoken. I do not intend to follow the right hon. Gentleman in the general remarks he has addressed to the Committee, but I will call attention to the fact that it is admitted that the expense of the Foreign Office is very high. I think that when we have obtained from the Under Secretary for the Foreign Office the admission that the cost of that Department is very high, hon. Members who are not connected with that office may agree that it is too high. I will only add that if the hon. Gentleman the Member for Stockport goes to a division, I shall vote with him so as to record my protest against the manner in which that service is conducted.

MR. E. ROBERTSON (Dundee): Sir, we on this side of the House think the hon. Member for Stockport has thrown a great deal of light on this subject. For myself, I have some reluctance in attacking these salaries without the necessary information. I do not know whether this particular office is now under the consideration of the Royal Commission, which, I believe, is concerning itself with the civil establishments as a whole, but there are some things on the surface of the Vote to which I would like to call the attention of the Committee. An immense deal of this work must be merely clerical. It is all very well to tell us that there are most distinguished men in the Department, and I am quite willing to believe that these people work very hard; but there is an immense number of people employed in merely clerical work. I think the right hon. Baronet has not attempted to answer the hon. Member for Stockport. He has limited his answer entirely to superior persons, and he has told us how able and distinguished they are. And in one portion of his answer it came out that the Foreign Office does not limit itself to materially benefiting those distinguished servants, but that they receive titular dignities.

In addition to their salaries. As to the Librarian's Department, I think we see the full force of everything said by the hon. Member for Stockport. It is undoubtedly true that the Foreign Minister should have an ample library relating to foreign places and treaties, but you have, I suppose, the Treaty Department which supplies the information wanted as to treaty relations. There is something radically wrong in this Librarian's Department. I see there are 12 permanent officials engaged in the library, and 10 temporary clerks. That appears to be an enormous staff, even to do the most important work of the character described by the right hon. Gentleman. Again, their salaries amount to about £6,175. I am not sure whether I have made the calculation correctly, but it is above £6,000, which is an enormous expenditure. Instead of receiving with indignation, as I am afraid he did, the speech of the hon. Member for Stockport, the right hon. Baronet ought in the interests of economy to have welcomed the criticism. For my own part, the only objection I have to the excellent and enlightening speech of the hon. Member for Stockport, is that he did not move a larger reduction than that which he proposed.

MR. HANBURY (Blackburn): I do not wish to say anything about the Foreign Office, which will come before the Royal Commission on Civil Establishments, but I would like to say, from the experience of that Commission, that unless the Foreign Office is a great deal different from the other Civil Service Establishments it will require a good deal of altering. I certainly do not think the right hon. Baronet has answered any portion of the speech of the hon. Member for Stockport. We who are interested in the discussion of the Civil Service Estimates and in bringing about economy do lay great stress on the manner in which the right hon. Baronet has answered my hon. Friend. He must not suppose that hurling charges of discourtesy against hon. Members will in any way answer his purpose. As far as I am concerned, I am not going to be deterred by answers of that kind, and I am quite sure that, now these discussions are originated from both sides of the House, we will expect a little fuller and

more courteous answers when we bring forward Motions of this kind.

MR. MUNRO FERGUSON (Leith, &c.): The hon. Gentleman the Member for Stockport has spoken of the character of the work at the Foreign Office, and I think there can be no doubt that while some money might be saved, and the hours in some cases made longer, yet so far as the duties are concerned, there is no public office where the work is better done than in the Foreign Office. Comparison has been made between the salaries in commercial houses and the Foreign Office; but I am perfectly certain there are no clerks in commercial houses who are entrusted with secrets of the importance which must come under the notice of clerks in the Foreign Office. I believe that if the clerks in the Foreign Office served for honours and without salary, they would not betray their trust; still I think on the ground of expedience, it is well to remove all cause of temptation, and on that ground there is some recompense for paying a higher rate of salary. I do not in the least mean to say that the Foreign Office may not be capable of reform, but certainly from my short experience of it I am clearly of opinion that the character of the work done deserves praise.

MR. MOLLOY: My hon. Friend would appear to have very little experience indeed, especially judging from his last observations, in which he compared commercial establishments with the Foreign Office, and remarked that they were not subject to the same conditions as those which obtain at the Foreign Office. His support of the Foreign Office amounted to this—that there you have such important work that you must have men upon whom you can depend; that is to imply, that if you employed clerks at a lower salary you would have men upon whom you could not depend. My hon. Friend, in his anxiety to support this Vote, has really done much more harm than good. Now, I wish to draw attention to this fact, that upon every occasion of a debate about any public department, we are given the stereotyped answer which we have received to-night. The Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs commenced by saying he had never heard of an attack made upon weaker grounds; he had never heard such sweeping as-

sections; and he complained that the hon. Member who moved the reduction knew perfectly well that the whole of the accusations were unfounded. Unfounded! I thought the hon. Member went through every one of these details. He pointed out the large salary of the Librarian. Was that unfounded? He pointed out the details with regard to these Under Secretaries. Was that unfounded? In Lord Palmerston's time, when there was more to do at the Foreign Office than now, there were not so many Under Secretaries. Within the last 15 years we have added another Under Secretary at a salary of £1,500 a year, and we have largely increased the staff. When the Under Secretary said that these accusations were unfounded, I certainly thought he was going to give us some explanation. What explanation did he give us? He said that no increase was made without the consent of the Treasury. Those of us who have examined for some years past into these matters know exactly what that means. It is not of the slightest importance, and is no check upon extravagances. On the first day of this Session, when we had the Estimates before us, I made an attack on the Department on the ground of extravagance and the large number of clerks employed. Identically the same answer was given on that occasion as has been given on this. But the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs on that occasion did condescend to something like details. He said the Head Clerk had also to do legal work.

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: The hon. Member must be under a mistake. I did not say that.

MR. MOLLOY: The whole excuse amounts to this. The Assistant Under Secretary must have some legal knowledge. I am not saying he has not such knowledge, or that he is not a good man. Then the right hon. Gentleman pleaded another excuse, and that was that each of these gentlemen had his own department and his own share of the work to look after. One man attended to the correspondence with Consuls. Of course he does. Nobody supposed you would give a man £1,500 a year for doing nothing. Then he said that another man attended to commercial matters. Of course he does. And so he went on, from one class to another, and pleaded this excuse as a justifi-

cation for the large salaries which are being paid. But I ask the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs, is such an excuse any explanation of the accusation that extravagance prevails in this office? Next, dealing with the necessity for having reliable men in the Foreign Office, the right hon. Gentleman suggested that there were very valuable secrets, and that unless the officials were highly paid they would accept the bribes which were offered to them to disclose these secrets. I ventured to dissent from that view, and the right hon. Gentleman at once said, "Oh, yes; look at the Stock Exchange, and what they would pay for those secrets." I hope he did not mean to make any accusation against the Stock Exchange, and I trust he will take this opportunity of saying he did not, for his remarks will be reported in the papers, and if he does not take this opportunity they will have a very ugly bearing. I hope he will say that he did mean to cast any imputation upon the gentlemen of the Stock Exchange, or to suggest that they would bribe anyone in order to get hold of the secrets of the Foreign Office. If it is necessary to have reliable officers in this department, is it not equally necessary to have them in other departments? You can, for £150 a year, get men of position and education and family as it is called, for employment as clerks, and if you can do that in other departments, why cannot you do it in the Foreign Office? The whole history of the Foreign Office is this. It has been used in times past to provide positions for the younger sons of certain families. Men of position who have desired to find appointments for their sons have pestered Ministers, and I can quite understand the vast amount of pestering which Ministers have undergone. In times not long ago these positions were made and these large salaries were given in order to satisfy the demands of political friends, who asked for provision for the younger members of their families. Of course you cannot blame the present Government for that, but you can ask them to examine into this matter and see whether the salaries cannot be reduced and the work done with fewer people. The taxation arising from these public offices is enormous, and I am glad to find that it is not only on one

side of the House that a desire is growing up to reduce these heavy burdens. I am glad to know that there is a growing determination to have no more queen bees in the public service, and to employ no man unless he does honest work for honest wages.

*SIR JAMES FERGUSSON: I am most anxious to give all the information in my power when proper questions are asked. The hon. Member for Dundee has asked, for instance, why it is necessary there should have been additional clerks employed in the library. I will give him an answer. The amount of correspondence has so enormously increased that, whereas four years ago under twenty-four thousand papers had to be registered and indexed every year, now the number is eighty thousand, and the consequence has been that for some time the staff has not been sufficiently strong to cope with this work. Hence there has been an accumulation of papers, amounting to nearly a million, and in order to work off these arrears ten temporary clerks have been engaged, and it is calculated that they will complete their task in five years; while, by a permanent addition of four lower division clerks, it is hoped that the work of registration and indexing will not again fall into arrear. I exceedingly regret that hon. Members do not think I have replied adequately to the remarks of the hon. Member for Stockport. I think he rather spoilt the justice of his case by assuming that these posts were light and genteel, and enormously overpaid, and that the salaries were bloated. In my early days in this House, it was not thought that public servants who were doing their duty were proper objects for ridicule and comment of this sort. Let me remind the Committee that the Royal Commission on Public Offices has not yet dealt with the Foreign Office. It will shortly do so, and hon. Members may feel assured that the office will receive a searching examination, and if the care which, I believe, has been given by Ministers and by the Treasury, as guardians of the public purse, is found not to have effected such economies as are necessary—if it is found that the office is overmanned and under-worked, it will all come out; you may depend upon that. The hon. Member for King's County declares that the office was as much em-

ployed in Lord Palmerston's time as it is now. I can assure him that there is no comparison whatever between the two periods in respect of the necessary correspondence entailed by inquiries of all kinds which have been conducted.

MR. MOLLOY: I referred to foreign complications.

*SIR JAMES FERGUSSON: Well, Sir, if there were more foreign complications than now I think the country is doing very well by paying a little more money in order to keep out of these complications. Probably the best of the Foreign Office work is never heard of, and that work is the avoidance of these complications. In conclusion, I venture to submit to the Committee that no case has been made out for the reduction of any part of this Vote.

*MR. JENNINGS: It appears to me that the case I presented to the House remains entirely untouched. I followed the Estimates closely, and if my statements with regard to them are unfounded, it is because the Estimates themselves are erroneous. As to the curious charge that I gave no notice of my intention to take this course, let me remind the hon. Baronet that notice of my intention to reduce the Vote has been on the paper nearly two months, and surely it is not expected that in addition to giving that notice I am to supply further details. I presumed it would be taken for granted that any Member moving to reduce a Vote would necessarily refer to the Estimates. However, the next time I give notice of such an Amendment, I will send in a copy of the Estimates. One is always very glad to take a lesson in courtesy from the hon. Baronet. I am sure we could not go to a better person for it, but I never knew before that a Minister expected to be supplied with a full *précis* of a Member's criticism beforehand. Let me now point out that he has left every fact which I brought forward unchallenged. I am glad to have this opportunity of ascertaining how many Conservatives there are on these Benches who are ready to fulfil the pledges which I constantly hear them make to their constituents that they will endeavour to secure economy, retrenchment and reform. They have now an opportunity of acting on their pledges, and I therefore ask the Committee to take a division on this Vote.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 63; Noes, 84.—(Div. List No. 91.)

Original Question again proposed.

*SIR G. CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.): I desire, Sir, to move the reduction of the salary of the Secretary for Foreign Affairs (the Marquess of Salisbury) by the small sum of £100. I do so not by way of finding fault with the individual policy of the Secretary of State, but rather because it seems to me that he does not sufficiently adhere to that policy and I hope to elicit some declaration respecting it, and that the Committee may strengthen his hands. For my own part, I believe that, comparatively speaking, the foreign affairs of this country have been better managed than they usually are, and, individually, I am inclined very much to adhere to the views of the present Foreign Secretary as enunciated by himself. What I complain of is that he does not seem sufficiently to adhere to those views, and I think he is apt to be driven out of them by company mongers, adventurers, and soon. I wish especially to call attention to the present scramble for the great Continent of Africa, and to obtain some indications of the policy of the Government on the subject. It is a matter of continual regret to me that that dreadful Irish Question, like Aaron's Rod, so much swallows up other questions. So much attention is devoted to Irish subjects, from the clothes of one hon. Member to the incarceration of another, that foreign affairs are not now discussed by the body of Radical Members who used to pay so much attention to them. I was reading the other day an article written a few years ago by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. Gladstone) in which he alluded to the risk that we might be carried on from the Nile right through the interior of Africa to our colonial possessions in South Africa. Though I am not in favour of annexation or the subjugation of native races, I am free to confess that the circumstances of Africa are such, the anarchy prevailing there is such, the system of slavery is such, that I believe it would be a benefit that much of the Continent should be dominated and taken charge of by

European Powers. The question is, what part are we to take in the scramble which is going on? I am very much against trying to turn out the civilized Mahomedan Powers, who exercise great civilizing influence over a large part of Africa. I would suggest to the Government that we ought to have a decided policy. We ought not to drift or to have our policy decided by the aims and ambitions of company-mongers and adventurers. I believe that if the Foreign Secretary would let us know what his policy is in this matter the House of Commons would probably support him, and he would be much stronger and more able to withstand the pressure to which I have alluded. The present policy of the Foreign Office so far as it regards the generous and handsome manner in which they meet Germany and other powers in these matters is a good policy. It is not right that we should seek to monopolize the whole world; we ought to share it with other Powers, and therefore in that respect I have no fault to find with the foreign policy of the Government. I do, however, somewhat regret the Zanzibar country, full as it has been for many years of British Indian subjects and of enterprising traders, that it should be handed over to German dominion; but still, what is done is done, and it is of no use now complaining. I fear, however generous and reasonable may be the spirit evinced by the Government, there is great danger likely to arise in the scramble now going on in the great Continent of Africa, and therefore it behoves the Government to be wary, and to ensure that they have the support of the House of Commons at their back in order that they may be able to maintain their own rights in the interests of this country. When I look around Africa it seems to me that although the principles enunciated by the Government are good, they have no fixed practice. Let me say a few words on the Soudan question. Looking at the last Blue Book published respecting affairs in the Soudan and at Suakin, I become more and more puzzled as to what is the real policy of the Government in regard to this country. I have already congratulated them on the successful way in which the expedition to Suakin was carried out, and its operations limited under the

pressure of Radical Members, but what I wish to point out is that since our expedition has returned the Egyptian troops have again become the aggressors, have advanced miles into the interior of the Soudan and have plundered peaceful traders. This is very much to be regretted. Now I have not been able to find out what is the policy of the Government in regard to this matter, and I must say that the last Blue Book published has a most extraordinary termination. In the month of January last Sir E. Baring sent a long dispatch in which he gives the views of different people in connection with this matter, and he asks the Government what course is to be followed. I find that the new Governor General at Suakin is under the direction of the General commanding at Cairo, who in turn is controlled by Reaz Pasha, the Egyptian Prime Minister. In his dispatch Sir E. Baring encloses a paper showing that the Egyptian Prime Minister's policy has not changed in the least degree, and that he still desires the re-occupation of portions of the Soudan. Now these views having been communicated to Her Majesty's Government, I naturally looked to the end of the despatch to see what the views of Her Majesty's Government are. And here is the only result:—

“Foreign Office, February 12, 1889.

“I have received and laid before the Queen and the Cabinet your despatch and enclosures relative to the policy to be pursued in the Suakin, and the situation at Suakin. I have read with great interest the papers furnished by Sir Francis Grenfell, Col. Kitchener, and your own observations upon it, and I have to offer you my best thanks for the lucid exposition which you have offered on the past and present condition of the question.”

That is all we have of the views of the Foreign Secretary, and of the Government. Now Sir, this is an important question. The Egyptian Prime Minister is practically pledged to try to re-occupy the Soudan, and I think we have a right to ask the Government to give us some indication of their view, in regard to the occupation of the Soudan, and they ought to let us know whether they are now as firm as they were two or three months ago in their intention to abandon it, or whether they intend to allow Reaz Pasha, General Grenfell, and Colonel Kitchener to carry on a little aggressive war on their own account. Do the Government still adhere to the views

which they held two or three months ago? If so they must prohibit these aggressive proceedings. But after this question of the Soudan comes that of the Equatorial provinces, which are held by that gallant man Emin Pasha. There has been great anxiety in many quarters to go to Emin's relief, but probably there is behind this an anxiety to relieve him of the provinces of which he is possessed, and to hand them over to one or other of the nations interested. The Imperial East African Company is one of the organizations which, while professing great and lofty ambitions, are apparently aiming at the Equatorial Provinces and that not, by a system of conciliation alone, but by the help of rougher methods, and I fear that in pursuing their object they will bring us into antagonism with the Germans. I know that this African Company claims to be very virtuous, and is inclined to cry out “Thank God we are not as these Germans,” but from a letter from the manager of the Company which I have seen I am inclined to think that their method is not altogether that of conciliation. I want to know, do the Government intend to encourage this company and other British subjects, in their attempt to acquire a large share of Central Africa. And now I come to the Nyassa Region, where there is apparently a war being carried on by subscription. Again I want to know what is the attitude of the Government in this matter. To all appearance a private company is carrying on war in the region of Lake Nyassa, and we use diplomatic influence to get arms passed to them through Portuguese territory, while an officer on the active list of Her Majesty's Army, is in command of the aggressive forces: It is said to be a war directed against slave-trading Arabs; to be a war of Christianity against slave dealers; but I believe there is another view to be taken of this matter. The other day I went to Exeter Hall—A place I do not very often go to. There there were Archbishops and Bishops, and even these are sometimes reasonable men. I heard a great deal of declamation about putting down slavery and promoting Christianity, and after that we had on the platform another gentleman, a converted captain. I naturally ex-

pected to hear something still more fiery, but to my astonishment he turned out to be an extraordinarily fair, reasonable, moderate man. He told us that the Arabs are not so bad as they are painted, and the responsibility for the fighting does not altogether rest upon them. A confirmation of this news is given in a letter which has been published in Scotland from a responsible resident in Zanzibar, who states that the Sultan sent an agent to negotiate terms, that this agent requested that operations might be suspended for a certain time, but that the company refused to wait more than ten days, and on the eleventh day proceeded to extremities. In the first day's fighting, however, the agent of the company was wounded. If the advice which was offered had been followed, a settlement would have been more easily obtained. The situation illustrates the extreme inconvenience of the Government allowing a private war to be carried on by those over whom they have no control. I hope we shall now have some explanation of the policy of the Government. It ought to be stated whether the Government will now take the responsibility of controlling this aggressive trading company or whether the Government will announce that they will absolutely withdraw from all responsibility in the matter. And now I come to the question of South Africa—a matter which I believe rather belongs to the Colonial Office. Still, after what we heard the other day from the Prime Minister, I think we ought to have a clear and distinct statement of the policy of the Government. In regard to Bechuanaland—

THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order.

*SIR GEO. CAMPBELL: I only intend to refer to it in general terms, but it must be remembered that the late speech of Sir Hercules Robinson was to the effect that the Imperial Government had no longer any place in South Africa. I will not argue the policy.

THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order.

*SIR GEO. CAMPBELL: I only wish to impress upon the Government that they should declare in general terms what their policy is. I can only say in conclusion that we had better concentrate our energies in South Africa

and leave the rest of the Continent to other European Powers.

DR. CAMERON (Glasgow, College): The Amendment which I have placed on the Paper refers to some of the subjects which have already been discussed, and I desire to call especial attention to the attitude of the Government in connection with the Nyassa war, but before doing so I wish to say a word or two about Samoa. Some time ago I asked a question about a British subject at Samoa being taken prisoner by a German man-of-war, and released only after strong remonstrance from the commander of a British man-of-war, and in the answer given papers were promised; but, although papers have been produced, they do not contain anything about the case. Papers of a later date than those produced in this country have been issued by the Governments of Germany and the United States. I know that the Samoan business is to be dealt with by a Congress; but still, an outrage has been committed upon a British subject, and the House and the country ought to be made aware of the precise circumstances, not for the sake of censuring Germany for a wrong which has been disowned, but in order that pressure may be brought to bear for the individual who has been wronged. With regard to the events in the Nyassa region, the attitude of the Government is one involving very great danger; at the best it is a bad precedent, and it is altogether unfair to individuals. The district has been opened up by British exploration, which has been followed by missionary settlements and the advent of a trading company, with the protection and almost with the patronage of Her Majesty's Government. When hostilities broke out there were two of our Consuls on the spot, and one of them, I believe, beat up auxiliaries for the company among the friendly tribes. The company offered, if it received a charter, to maintain a gunboat on the lake and to preserve peace and order. But the Government would not consent to operations involving the landing of troops, as a march into the interior was impracticable. It is said that the Government has intervened to get munitions of war passed through the Portuguese Customs, and yet Lord Salisbury told a deputation

that persons out there, missionaries and traders, must rely upon themselves, and must arm for their own protection. I venture to say that this trading company has been encouraged to carry on warlike operations in Africa by the Government, and that they have consequently embarked on this filibustering warfare on their own account. Is it not a fact that the Prime Minister himself told the deputation that waited on him that the persons out there, these traders and missionaries must rely upon themselves and protect themselves by force of arms? As I look upon the matter, in the light of the law laid down in a case brought before the House by Sir Charles Dilke, any British subject who commits in any country not under a recognized Government any act of war, who shoots or kills, or does anything of that sort, is liable according to our law to the same penalty as if he committed the act on British territory. Now, I hold that the reply of the Prime Minister to the deputation was an incitement to break the law quite as much as incitements we have heard so much of in this House. Munitions of war have been sent out to carry on war, and I believe that small cannons were sent and passed through the Portuguese Customs by the intervention of our Government. But the most humiliating feature of the case, if it is true, is this. Some war rockets were required, and I believe application was made to the Foreign Office for a permit from the Portuguese Government, but the applicants were told that the Portuguese Government made so much fuss about other munitions of war sent out that they had better be sent out on the quiet. They were so sent, and they were detected by the Portuguese authorities, and the British Consul at Quilimané has absolutely been put in prison for assisting in the attempt to smuggle these rockets into the country without declaring them to the Portuguese Government. Is it true that the British Consul was imprisoned for assisting in this attempt, and that at the instance of the Home Government? If so, it is a most disgraceful thing, especially after the answer we have heard to-day that the Government have not abandoned and will not abandon their contention that the Zambesi is a navigable river. Why, if that be so, we have a right to

send these war rockets into the interior, and we should at once have called upon the Portuguese Government to release our Consul. In any case, to allow a British Consul to go to prison for complicity in smuggling, acting as he believed according to the desire of his own Foreign Office, is a state of humiliation and degradation that I did not think the present Administration would sink to. But recently the Portuguese have gone further. They have marched into the interior and hoisted their flag in the Nyassa district, and practically have annexed it. That statement appeared in the press the other day, and I asked a question upon it, and certainly it was not denied. Now I believe there is some dispute as to the true boundary of the Portuguese sphere of influence in Central Africa, but there is no contention, I believe, that they have any right to extend their sphere of influence so high as our settlements in the Nyassa district. If there is any place in Central Africa where we have interests to guard, and where it is desirable our influence should be exercised, it is the district to which what I am saying relates. If the Portuguese had been there in sufficient force to compel the observance of law and order, to put down disturbances and outrages that have taken place there, well and good. I will not say who is to blame. I do not agree with my hon. Friends that the missionaries and trading companies are to blame; but if any civilized Government had sufficient force there to put down this irregular filibustering warfare I should welcome the annexation with pleasure. But the Portuguese annexation is purely nominal. Some years ago they took Quilimané, and they were only able to hold it against the natives by the assistance of these very trading companies whom they are now attempting to kill by closing the Zambesi river. If the Zambesi is according to International Law a navigable river it is not liable to be closed at all by any Government. Why not enforce the right of navigation? There was a hint of a gunboat being sent for. Why was it not sent for when our Consul was put in prison? I have been always a consistent advocate of a peaceful policy, but while I advocate a peaceful policy I also advocate the protection of British

subjects abroad. The Portuguese Government cannot require much pressure. At all events my complaint is that the Government do not pursue one policy or the other. I should not object if they said to these missionaries and traders "You have no right to be there; you must clear out; you can only be allowed to defend your lives by force of arms, but you must not go beyond that, and we will not allow our Consuls and officers to take part in these warlike operations." That is an intelligent policy that might be defended. On the other hand, the Government might say we have interests to defend, and then intimate to Portugal that we must have access for means of defence to this district of Nyassa. They might insist on acting on the contention that the Zambesi is a navigable river which it is not lawful for any single nation to close against the commerce of the world. But the Government have done neither; they have refused to take any responsibility for the state of matters in the Nyassa district, and, on the other hand, they have sent their Consul and military officers there to mix themselves up in warlike operations; they have interceded with the Portuguese Government to allow offensive weapons of war to be carried inland to carry on an aggressive war—I do not mean an aggressive war for purposes of annexation, but an aggressive war carried on for strategic reasons. They have done this; they have encouraged a breach of British laws and given encouragement to filibustering, and with what result? The British subjects who, with the sanction and approval of the British Government and at the incitement of the Prime Minister, are conducting these filibustering expeditions, are, in the eyes of international law, nothing but filibusters and pirates, and any civilized country exercising influence over the district would be justified in treating them as such and hanging them, and we should have no right to interfere. This is the position in which the Government have put themselves by their vacillation, by their neglect to declare the rights and wrongs of the matter by international law. Men are taking part in these filibustering expeditions without the slightest idea that they are offending

against International Law; for when they find their actions sanctioned, as they suppose, by the Government and encouraged by the words of the Prime Minister, they naturally consider they are in the right, though from the point of view of International Law their action is wholly unjustifiable. Another course quite in accord with International Law was open to the Government. They might have given the charter asked for by the Trading Company, following the precedent set with the Niger Company, the North Borneo Company, and other companies. If they had done that we should then at least have had a recognized company recognizing their responsibility, and the Government conducting their warlike operations. But the Government refused to adopt either of these plans and their conduct has been fraught with the most serious danger. They have set a dangerous precedent, giving Government sanction to what is nothing more nor less than filibustering that may lead us into very great trouble indeed. The missions there are Presbyterian, and the people of Scotland are watching what takes place with the greatest interest. They cannot understand that there is anything wrong in conduct sanctioned by the Government, or why the Government are not taking steps to open up that navigable river so that supplies may be obtained. If anything happens to those men the Government will be held responsible. The Government have set a precedent which may land us in trouble in any part of the globe. We may be brought into conflict with interests vastly more formidable than those of Portugal. The extension of German interests has been referred to; if we get into a mess like this where German interests are concerned we shall have to eat as much humble pie as Prince Bismarck has had to at Samoa. On account of the dangerous, imbecile, almost criminal course the Foreign Office has pursued in this Lake Nyassa business, I move the reduction of £100 under the sub-head in regard to the salary of the Secretary of State.

Motion made, and Question put, "That Item A, of £48,211 for Salaries, be reduced by £100, part of the Salary of the Secretary of State." — (*Dr. Cameron.*)

*MR. BUCHANAN (Edinburgh, W.): This is a subject upon which my constituents take considerable interest. First I may say as regards the more general question this much. The Prime Minister in conducting affairs in Africa has not so much looked at British and Imperial interests in Africa as he has looked at what he considers will be the effect of a certain policy in Africa on our relations to certain Powers in Europe, particularly Germany. We can show this without much difficulty by a reference to the events that have taken place at Zanzibar, or the Zambesi and at Lake Nyassa. The value of discussions such as this is that they inform the Government of the opinions held in the country on this and similar subjects and it strengthens the hands of the Government in their negotiations with Foreign Powers. It is matter of regret that during the Session we have not had the opportunity of a direct and specific debate on the events that have been proceeding on the south-east coast of Africa, and are forced to take such opportunities as this to elicit such information as we can as to the present condition of affairs and the precise policy of the Government in that part of the world. The last opportunity we had was in the Debate on the Address, and then we were promised papers that should give us full information, but up to this time we are not in possession of the promised information, though much valuable information has been published by the Governments of Germany and the United States. Undoubtedly events have occurred upon which we should very much like to have information. From Zanzibar Colonel Euan Smith has been summoned home, and Mr. Portal has been sent to take his place. Colonel Euan Smith's return was ostensibly to consult with the Foreign Office as to the condition of affairs of Zanzibar and the line to be taken by the British Government there. Colonel Euan Smith, of course, has not been long back, but still we have absolutely no information as to whether there

is necessity in the view of the Government for altering our policy at Zanzibar. Further, we desire to have some information as to the course the Government intend to pursue in regard to the interests of British Indian subjects, who have settled on the South East Coast of Africa, and who suffered severely, firstly from the Portuguese at the attack on Tungi, and subsequently from the bombardment with which the German squadron visited several settlements there. I believe they claimed redress, but obtained none. It is no matter of surprise that the British Indian merchants presented a memorial to Colonel Euan Smith, which was published more than six months ago, expressing deep regret and surprise that the interests of Indian subjects who had hitherto been encouraged to settle on the coast and sink their capital in mercantile adventures there, were so little regarded at Zanzibar. We should like to hear that some steps are being taken to urge consideration of these claims. Then I should like to have some information as to the blockade of the coast which, so far as I can gather from the newspapers, seems to be almost at an end, nor should I regret if that should be the case. It has had little effect upon the Slave Trade, and it has always exposed us to the risk of serious misunderstanding with other Powers. The question of the Zambesi and Nyassa land has come more into prominence since last we discussed it. First of all there is the Portuguese expedition which has been alluded to under Lieutenant Carodoso, who has marched into the interior from Mozambique nominally on an exploring expedition, though in Lisbon and elsewhere it was quite understood it was really a filibustering and annexing expedition. We have heard, and it has not been authoritatively denied, that Lieutenant Carodoso has hoisted the Portuguese flag in the territory at the southern end of Lake Nyassa. This territory, which Lieutenant Carodoso pretends to have annexed to Portugal, is close to the access by river to the Nyassa settlements, and I would strongly urge on Her Majesty's Government to maintain the principle and the line of action enunciated by Lord Salisbury as to the

freedom of the Zambesi. We cannot deny the Sovereignty of Portugal over the south-east coast and the littoral at the mouth of the Zambesi, but it has always been matter of dispute as to how far inland the rights of Sovereignty on the part of Portugal extend. I have always understood, however, that we would never recognize any Portuguese or other Sovereignty over the important access to Nyassa district afforded by the Zambesi further inland than the Ruo River. Lord Salisbury took up this attitude six months ago, and I would most strongly urge upon Her Majesty's Government not to depart from that position. The navigation of the Zambesi is now the more important in that there has just come to hand the information that Mr. Rankin has discovered an excellent navigable channel in the Chindé which will give direct access, with much greater depth, to communicate not only with Nyassa but the North-West territories. More and more does it become incumbent on Her Majesty's Government to maintain the Zambesi and its tributaries as a free and open means of access into the interior of Africa for the flags of all nations. It is of unspeakable importance for the development of civilization and commerce. Portugal has the power of imposing certain duties on the Zambesi which I will not now argue, but the power should be strictly defined and limited and the Zambesi should be under some kind of international control such as is exercised on the Danube and elsewhere. I would urge these points on Her Majesty's Government—to keep open the Zambesi as access to the interior of Africa and to let the Portuguese know that we recognize no Sovereignty of theirs further inland than the Ruo River. In this way we shall go far to encourage, and to protect in a practical way, the British settlements in that part of the world.

MR. MUNRO FERGUSON: On a previous occasion I pointed out that, unless some more definite policy be adopted by Her Majesty's Government in South-East Africa, there is little use in our maintaining consular relations with that part of the world.

The question has been raised very clearly by the two speeches to which we have listened, and in fact it is a question that carries with it intense interest in Scotland. I stated on a previous occasion that the recent visit of Count Herbert Bismarck to this country, together with the circumstance of Colonel Euan Smith's recall, pointed to the fact that the position on that part of the African coast has become well nigh intolerable. As to the Anglo-German blockade, there has been an entire absence of information of late. We wish to know what has been done; how long the blockade is likely to continue; and what measure of success has up the present attended it. We are absolutely without official information on the point, and the ordinary news that comes to us does not point to any satisfactory state of matters. The action of the Germans has certainly not led to our position being any more comfortable in that part of the world. We also desire to know what is to be done when the blockade is raised—whether any useful result will come from it, and especially whether slavery will be abolished. As to the interior, some assurance is necessary that the extravagant pretensions of the Portuguese will receive at least some supervision on the part of Her Majesty's Government. Whatever civilization has penetrated into the interior of Nyassaland is due to the Scotch and English missionary societies and trading operations, and I do not recognize that the Portuguese have any claims whatever. It will require much stronger arguments than any that have yet been used to shake the faith of the people of Scotland in the fact that British interests in this quarter of the world predominate over those of any other country. The subject of the communications with South-East Africa also deserves attention, the German and French lines of steamers having been subsidized in a way which may damage our trade. What we ask for now is information, and I trust we shall have some from Her Majesty's

Government before the discussion concludes.

*SIR J. SWINBURNE (Staffordshire, Lichfield): I should like to ask the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs what steps are being taken to open up the Zambesi to British trade and commerce. The Portuguese, who have occupied territories on the Zambesi for the last 250 years, have never developed the country but have introduced every kind of vice and disease amongst the natives under their influence in the neighbourhood. I should like to know what steps are being taken for the purpose of making the Zambesi a useful thoroughfare for our commerce.

*MR. W. LAWRENCE (Liverpool, Abercromby): I desire to ask whether any communication has been received from the German Government with regard to the German Expedition to East Africa under Dr. Peters. It seems to me that we have already suffered not a little from the Germans on this coast, and that our interests are likely to suffer more if this expedition gets behind our settlements. Is there any arrangement between the Germans and ourselves as to this Expedition?

COMMANDER BETHELL (York, E.R., Holderness): I am not surprised at the interest which is taken in this matter, and I would join my voice in the appeal to the Government that they would assist the Scottish Association to which is due almost all the good which has been done in the region of Lake Nyassa. With regard to the waterway of the Zambesi, so far as I know the statement of Lord Salisbury has not been shaken in any way. I believe the waterway is to be maintained as a common waterway, and that under no circumstances will this country permit Portugal or any other country to place its hand upon the Zambesi. I apprehend that the same argument applies to the country north of the Zambesi, for it is absolutely essential to our interests

that that part of the country should be placed either under our power or under some mutual arrangement by which we at any rate cannot be shut out from all those parts of Africa in which our interest is daily increasing. I think we have ground for complaint, too, as to the action of Her Majesty's Government in regard to the Indian traders on the coast. I have never been a strong advocate of the blockade of the coast, which I think has done no good either in respect of the slave trade or of those other matters which have been its more ostensible object. I profoundly regret that the Government has thought proper to permit the bombardment of places on the coast which has necessarily done much injury to our subjects, and for which I understand no reparation is to be made.

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: I have to reply to a range of observations somewhat wide. At the very commencement, I have to deal with a survey by the hon. Member for Kirkcaldy, extending if not from China to Peru, at least from the Suez Canal right round the Continent of Africa. The hon. Gentleman the member for Kirkcaldy, has taken a deep and intelligent interest in affairs connected with the Continent, and yet, although we have not for the first time to-night entered into the discussion of the subject, I am afraid that he and I are no nearer agreement. The hon. Member does not approve of the action of Her Majesty's Government, and the policy which they have pursued in relation to the affairs of the Continent of Africa, but I am able to disabuse his mind of some suspicion with regard to our policy in the Soudan. I can assure him that the declarations which Her Majesty's Government have many times made with regard to the Soudan are unchanged, and that there was no intention of encouraging, nor, so far as our influence goes, of permitting, any alteration in the policy we have supported of standing on the defensive and patiently developing the resources of Egypt. That policy has been abundantly suc-

Mr. Munro Ferguson

cessful. This country, which three years ago gave anxiety to the world because it could not fail to excite international jealousy, is now out of danger, and its financial condition, as well as that of the people, has been immensely improved. This has been the result of a policy of defence as distinguished from a policy of aggression. We have defended the frontier from attack successfully, and each time we have done so the longer interval has there been between the attacks. It is not intended on the part of Egypt to extend, or on the part of England to encourage the extension of Egyptian influence in the Soudan. The hon. Member has referred again to the policy of Her Majesty's Government in encouraging trading companies. It appears that the operations of these companies are not without success, and they seem to be the best means of spreading civilization inwards from the coast and combating and undermining the devastating effects of the slave trade. I think the policy of the Government in this matter will meet with the approval of the House, but it is only by slow and tentative measures that this influence can be extended. But when the hon. Member for Kirkcaldy speaks slightly of the East African Company and refers to its members as Pharisees I think he does injustice to a body of men well organized and presided over by those who in other spheres of life have risen to the rank of statesmen. They have inaugurated their proceedings most prudently, and they have signalized themselves by acts of the greatest liberality. I doubt whether in the history of the world there have been acts more judicious and liberal than those the East African company have recently performed, especially that of the liberation of slaves. Reference has been made to the warlike operations at Lake Nyassa, and the hon. Member says he wonders why the policy of the Government can be to tolerate the carrying on of the operations without the sanction of the Government. Undoubtedly the state of affairs in the region of Lake Nyassa presents unprecedented difficulties, and British subjects, either influenced by enterprize in commerce or devotion to Christian missions, have penetrated into the interior of the Continent and have been carrying

on peaceful relations of trade with the natives and exercising a civilizing influence. These men went there without the sanction or any promise on the part of the Government. Their proceedings though they began in a small way, now have become considerable, and British interests have assumed an importance which we cannot disregard and to which we are by no means insensible. The hon. Member opposite was mistaken in saying that the establishment of these interests have been due solely to Scotchmen. He has forgotten the English Universities Mission which has penetrated to the eastern shore of Lake Nyassa. When questions have been asked with regard to the position of these commercial and missionary undertakings, and what Her Majesty's Government propose to do in view of the dangers to which these English subjects are exposed from the slave trading Arabs on the one hand and the Portuguese on the other, I have been obliged to point out that Her Majesty's Government are unable to accept what are commonly called military responsibilities in respect of a position from which they would not communicate from any settled base. Again, it was pointed out that we had sent an English Consul to represent English law and to act as a Magistrate at the Lakes, and that we should at least furnish him with an armed steam launch, I was compelled to say that even the smallest amount the British Force once placed in any district would involve great difficulty, because wherever the British flag flies it cannot be allowed to suffer defeat. It is a serious thing to undertake responsibilities which may involve an expedition of great magnitude, and perhaps the loss of more lives than were originally threatened. If we have learnt one lesson from past events in Abyssinia and the Soudan, it is that we should not undertake any responsibility without being prepared to follow it up to the fullest extent to which events may lead us, and above all to look at the possible results before we undertake anything. It is in that view that I, whilst feeling the deepest interest in this question as a Scotchman and from other points of view, am obliged to declare that Her Majesty's Government cannot assume responsibility for any

military operations. It has been said that the Prime Minister encouraged a deputation which waited on him to undertake unauthorized warlike operations, but I am sure the Prime Minister did no such thing. He pointed out that these people must defend themselves, and that they must all have read with pride how a handful of English, supported by some natives, have held their own in the midst of warlike Arabs. The Prime Minister did not tell them to turn tail and abandon all they had undertaken, and I do not think those who waited on the noble Lord would have expected him to give any such advice.

DR. CAMERON: What I have advanced is that if you give them a Royal charter they will undertake to do the whole thing.

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: It would be a serious thing to give a Royal charter—to give the sanction of the British flag to this undertaking. In those places in Africa where a charter has been given the country is accessible to the sea where Her Majesty's cruisers are seen and whence support, if necessary, can be given to Her Majesty's subjects; but to give a charter to what has been called a filibustering expedition into the heart of Africa would be a rash and hazardous undertaking which could hardly be defended in this House. As to the Portuguese who have marched to Lake Nyassa, we have said to them, "We cannot view with indifference any act which would endanger our settlements in the interior," and we have denied to them shadowy rights in a territory in which they have previously exercised no authority. We have said that we cannot view with indifference injury to the prosperity of our people in regions where the Portuguese have not exercised sovereignty, do not possess a protectorate and do not now undertake it. But I do not take it that any hon. Member objects to the Portuguese going into the interior of Africa so far as they can legitimately extend their colonization. Several hon. Members have referred to the Zambesi, as a

navigable river over which we have the right of transit. That declaration has been made over and over again. I am glad to know that the existence of a navigable mouth of the Zambesi has been affirmed, as it will considerably alter our position in regard to that river by largely extending our facilities for utilizing it. Reference has been made to the difficulty which has hitherto been experienced in ascending the Zambesi, and to the unreasonable obstacles created by the Portuguese. Up to the present time sea-borne cargoes could not be carried up that river in the vessels arriving there; there has always been a land portage over a considerable number of miles in the Portuguese territory. If, therefore, a navigable mouth of the river has been discovered, that circumstance will prove to be of the utmost importance, because, having asserted for ourselves the right to navigate that river—

DR. CLARK (Caithness): Free from tax?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: That is a question which I cannot answer off-hand. Merchants have made no complaint of the transit duty of 3 per cent, and reasonable Customs duties may be necessary. The hon. Member for the College Division of Glasgow has made some reference to circumstance with which I am not acquainted, with respect to smuggling by the African Lake Company.

DR. CAMERON: I must correct the right hon. Baronet. The African Lake Company sent a deputation to the Foreign Office to ask them to obtain permission from the Portuguese Government to send war rockets to our countrymen up the country; but the Foreign Office said they had had trouble with that Government, and recommended that the rockets should be smuggled in.

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: I am sure the Foreign Office never recommended smuggling.

DR. CAMERON: I will ask a question on the subject.

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: And I shall be very glad to answer it; but I deny that the Government have been a party

to any filibustering expedition. The Government have always strongly discouraged any aggressive warfare; but in 1887, when honest Englishmen, with their wives and families, were doing nothing but good, were attacked and in danger of massacre, no one could say that our Consul, Mr. O'Neill, did any more than his duty in giving them all the help he could. What would any man have said of him if he had not done so? It was a position of great difficulty for which, perhaps, there is no precedent, but there was no other course which, in the circumstances, he could have pursued. While we warned these people that we could not give them material assistance, we did not deny them the means of defending themselves. As for their making attacks, it should be borne in mind that sometimes the best defence was for people to attack their enemies before they were themselves beleaguered. These men have done nothing unworthy of British subjects. On the contrary, they have displayed great heroism, and Her Majesty's Government would have been insensible to their duty if they had not assisted them as far as they legitimately could. With regard to the operations on the East Coast of Africa, the Member for West Edinburgh declared that the Government had neglected the interests of British subjects on that coast. That is far from being the case. Undoubtedly it is a matter of the deepest regret that there should have been any disturbances and collisions on that coast to endanger the peaceful operations of commerce. It is, unhappily, true that great numbers of British subjects who were carrying on a prosperous trade have been seriously injured or even ruined by the disturbances. For those disturbances Her Majesty's Government are in no way responsible. We did all we could by warning them of the intended danger, and by removing them in order to prevent their suffering more loss. The Member for West Edinburgh has asked what the results of the blockade are, and what there is to show for all this expenditure and suffering. The blockade was undertaken on the invitation of the German Government, and I ask now, as I have asked before, "How

could we decline to take part in a blockade which was intended to further objects in which we have long been interested?" The joint action of the two Governments has put down the seaboard slave trade to a much greater extent than hitherto. Had we abstained from joining the Germans, I do not think it would have been better for the people of that coast, while undoubtedly there would have been a want of that harmony of action which is more than ever desirable. It is most desirable that this semi-warlike state of things should cease. It is most desirable that we should have a police on the coast, whereby the sources of the trade may be dried up, and that we may no longer have to apply the poor remedy of catching a few stray traders on the sea, and so that we may no longer see these poor people dragged from their homes and sold into slavery. What I desire to say to the House, without going through all the speculations, is that it must not be supposed that such operations, conducted by two such powers as the Empires of Germany and England, can cease without some permanent measures being taken of a stronger character, both to check this trade and to put us in a better position to prevent it in future. It is manifest that it would have been futile to have kept so many ships of war occupying this part of the coast, catching a few slave-traders, if we were to abandon the blockade without having taken some permanent measures to render much more unlikely the recurrence both of slave trading and the barbarous circumstances attending it. We have to act not alone, but in harmony with our allies, and I can only ask the Committee to extend to us the same confidence which has hitherto been enjoyed by the Government of all hands, knowing that there must be occasion to exercise the patience, indulgence, and sympathies of the country.

MR. BUCHANAN (W. Edinburgh): I wish to call the attention of the right hon. Baronet to the papers that were promised.

*SIR LEWIS PELLY (N. Hackney): I was not in the House when the hon. Member opposite characterized the British East African Company as Pharisees.

SIR G. CAMPBELL: No, I did not.

*SIR L. PELLY: I understood the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs to say so. Well, Sir, I think the nature of the enterprize itself, and the names of the gentlemen engaged in that enterprize, are sufficient answer. I pass by the imputation in silence. I desire to endorse every word that has fallen from the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs in respect of the East African Company, and I am glad to say that, owing to the tact and ability of Her Majesty's Consul General (Colonel Euan Smith), and the great administrative ability shown by Mr. Geo. Mackenzie, matters on the coast have gone on far better than we could have expected. No doubt we may possibly have a difficulty or two, for even under the best Governments difficulties must arise. But as matters are we are content, and we have to thank Her Majesty's Government and to acknowledge that they have given us all impartial support, having regard to the claims and international duties which devolve upon them. If I might add one word at this late hour, I would say that the company would very urgently ask the attention of Her Majesty's Government to the necessity of keeping up a good steam communication between the East Coast and England. We believe such communication to be most essential in the interests of the trade and of the general political condition along that coast.

DR. CLARK: I regretted very much to hear the speech of the right hon. Baronet the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs. I thought that the Government were really prepared to do something to solve this Nyassa-Zambesi problem. But we have a policy of blowing hot and cold, and the great policy of drift and do nothing, which has done very much harm, and, possibly, when blood has been shed, the Government will move. On the South-East African problem a great deal depends. I am now speaking of that lake which was discovered by a Scotchman, and was opened up and settled by Scotchmen, who formed a Scotch Trading Company. These men went there doing good on every hand and no

harm to anyone. They have been developing trade and widening the civilization of the native African tribes. But certain of the tribes come from the East, and they take the natives from under the care of the missionaries; they burn down villages, and they take away men and women and carry them down to the coast. The missionaries and the Company defend the people round about them, and there is an unauthorized war going on between British subjects, who may be captured when they come south by the Portuguese. Because it is simply piracy, this work that is being carried on. This Company have their trade upon the Shury river and the Zambesi river, and the Portuguese Government have prevented them carrying on their trade on these two rivers. Now, what the Company has done has been to open up a new way into the interior of Africa. They have opened up the Stevenson route by Lake Nyassa to Tanganyika; and the Government may give them protection, not by landing an army, but by having a gunboat on the lake. That is all that is required. If you want to stop the Slave trade, if you have steamers on the coast and on the Red Sea, well then you ought to have a gunboat on Lake Nyassa, because that would stop the traffic across the lake, and more slaves pass that way than over the Red Sea or any other route. You can legalize the position of the Company by giving them a Charter. You are giving Charters to some other companies who are doing nothing at all. Here is a company developing the resources of the country, and who want a legalized position, and you refuse them a Charter. If they are doing good on every hand, and no harm to anyone, give them a Charter, and then they will not run the risk of being hanged when they come to Portuguese territory. But you are not prepared to take any one of these courses. You are simply letting things drift. As regards the free navigation of the Zambesi, I suppose it is now a British river, and you ought to open up the country. The Zambesi ought not to be Portuguese. I think the Government should do something in this matter and should adopt some definite policy. They might either protect this Scottish Association,

by having a gunboat on Lake Nyassa, or they might compel them to retire, or they might legalize their position by granting them a Charter.

DR. CAMERON: My complaint against the Government is that they have allowed this unauthorized warfare by private subscription to be carried on and to drag its weary length along without any prospect of bringing it to a termination. I do not complain that they have adopted this or that policy, but I do complain that they have encouraged a breach of British law and that they have allowed to go on an irregular warfare, and I want to know what steps they now intend to take in regard to it. There are three courses which may be taken in regard to the Zambesi operations. Either the Government should order British subjects to confine themselves to defensive operations, or warn them that if they do not do so they must expect no support from the British Government, or they should give the company the Charter which they have applied for and in reference to the grant of which they said they would be willing in the event of obtaining it to maintain a gunboat on Lake Nyassa, and would thus be able to restore law and order and put down the slave trade in the district. I do not find fault with the conduct of the missionaries and traders, for I contend that they have acted with the encouragement of the Prime Minister, on whom the responsibility will rest.

MR. MUNRO FERGUSON: I want to have a clear understanding on the question of the navigation of the Zambesi. Are we to understand that the Portuguese Government will be allowed to fix what transit rates they please on this river?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: I have referred to the position of trade up the Zambesi river when it has to be carried by land, and I have stated that when it has to pass through Portuguese territory there will be no ground of complaint if the Portuguese Government confine their customs dues to moderate Transit Duties. If the Zambesi is found to be navigable from the sea up to the rapids

and shallows, that will be a novel state of things which will have to be governed by circumstances. I may say that Her Majesty's Government have claimed the right to free navigation of the Zambesi by vessels flying their national flag. I therefore hope that that is a sufficient answer to the question. With regard to Dr. Peters's Expedition, it is not recognized by the Government of Germany, and the East African Company has declined to allow it to pass through its territory. The Expedition seems to have been a rather ill-considered project; and certainly it is undesirable that Expeditions which are not duly authorized, and which have an undetermined object, should pass through their territory. The desire of the Government is, as far as they can consistently with the rights of other nations, to defend and protect the rights of this country.

*SIR J. SWINBURNE: I wish to ask what steps are to be taken to open the Zambesi to British trade and commerce?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: Inquiries are being made with regard to the discovery of a navigable mouth. If a practicable mouth is found, a vessel will be sent up the river, and will, I hope, be the precursor of many others.

*SIR J. SWINBURNE: I should also like to ask whether, if only a small mouth is discovered, the Government will undertake to open the river to British commerce?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: I can make no such promise if only a small mouth is found. If, on the contrary, a navigable mouth exists, the Government will certainly claim that the river shall be open to British commerce.

The Committee divided:—Ayes 84; Noes 198.—(Div. List, No. 92.)

Original Question put, and agreed to.

Resolution to be reported to-morrow, at Two of the clock; Committee to sit again to-morrow at Two of the clock.

OFFICIAL SECRETS BILL (No. 97.)

Order read for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [16th April], "That the Bill be now read the third time."?

Question again proposed.

Debate resumed.

DR. CAMERON: I rise to move the re-committal of the Bill. I wish to point out that the Bill is drawn in such a way as to catch in the net of criminal legislation a great number of persons whom it is not intended should be included. The Bill provides that if any man in a Government office disclose an official secret contrary to the rules of the office—which by the way may be modified and altered at any time without the cognizance of the House—he shall be liable to certain penalties. But if any official should give information on certain subjects to Members of this House he would bring himself under the Act, because the very giving of the information would be against the rules of the office. I understand the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite is willing to modify the Bill in that respect. But there is another part of the Bill which is equally objectionable. The hon. Member for Crewe has pointed out how inventions may be pirated, and in fact we know how in the Post Office certain telegraphic inventions are pirated.

*THE SPEAKER: Order, order!

It being midnight, the debate stood adjourned. Debate to be resumed upon Monday next.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES ACT (1855) AMENDMENT BILL. (No. 82.)

THIRD READING.

MR. MAC INNES (Northumberland, Hexham): I understand that my hon. Friend in charge of the Bill has no objection to the Amendment that stands on the Paper in my name if the Government do not object to it.

Amendment proposed,

Clause 1, page 1, line 21, after "nursery grounds," insert "or the occupier of any land covered with water or used only as a canal or towing-path for the same, or as a railway constructed under the powers of any Act of Parliament for public conveyance."—(*Mr. Mac Innes.*)

*MR. RITCHIE: No, Sir; it is quite impossible for the Government to accept this Amendment, because it would alter the existing state of the law, which renders property now exempt liable for these particular rates. No doubt there is considerable difference as to the way in which property of this kind is assessed

for various purposes, and it may very possibly be that there is some ground for reviewing the whole circumstances of the case. But this is not a Bill for that purpose, and the Government could not consent to any alterations of the general law in reference to the question of rating in this Bill.

MR. MAC INNES: I beg to withdraw the Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

MR. H. GARDNER (Essex, Saffron Walden): I wish to move, as an Amendment, in line 7 to omit the words from "and" to "parishes."

Amendment proposed, line 7, to omit the words from "and" to "parishes."

Amendment put, and agreed to.

MR. H. GARDNER (Essex, Saffron Walden): I beg to move that the Bill be read a third time.

Motion made, "That the Bill be now read a third time."—(*Mr. H. Gardner.*)

MR. BRUNNER (Cheshire, Northwich): I am glad to hear from the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Ritchie) that he is aware that the law with regard to public libraries still requires amendment, in spite of the efforts of my hon. Friend. The question of rating deserves his attention. The rating of agricultural land is in a very anomalous condition under the Public Libraries Act. In some cases it is rated to the full value, in some to a third of the value, and in others to a fourth. The fear of preventing the passage of the Bill has prevented me moving an Amendment in that direction, but I trust the matter will receive the right hon. Gentleman's attention.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read third time, and passed.

SMALL HOLDINGS COMMITTEE.

Ordered, That Mr. Cobb be discharged from the Select Committee on Small Holdings.

Ordered, That Mr. Seale-Hayne be added to the Committee.—(*Mr. Arnold Morley.*)

House adjourned at ten minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HANSARD'S PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES.

No. 11.] THIRD VOLUME OF SESSION 1889. [MAY 11.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Friday, 3rd May, 1889.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES ACT (1855.) AMENDMENT BILL (No. 50.)

Brought from the Commons, and
read 1^a.

PUBLIC HEALTH (SCOTLAND) PROVISIONAL ORDER (MOTHERWELL WATER) BILL (No. 51.)

A Bill to confirm a Provisional Order under the Public Health (Scotland) Act, 1867, and Acts amending the same, relating to Motherwell Water—Was presented by the Lord Ker (*Marquess of Lothian*); read 1^a; to be printed and referred to the Examiners.

SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND BILL (No. 52.)

A Bill to explain the Secretary for Scotland Act, 1887—Was presented by the Lord Ker (*Marquess of Lothian*); read 1^a; to be printed and to be read 2^a on Tuesday next.

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION PROVI- SIONAL ORDER CONFIRMATION (ACTON, &c.) BILL (No. 19.)

Read 3^a (according to order), and
passed, and sent to the Commons.

ARBITRATION BILL (No. 5.)

ARBITRATION (No. 2) BILL (No. 31.)

Committed to a Committee of the
whole House on Monday next.

House adjourned at a quarter before
Five o'clock to Monday next, a
quarter before Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Friday, 3rd May, 1889.

NORTH BRITISH RAILWAY BILL (*by Order*).

Order for Consideration read.

Mr. W. M'LAREN (Cheshire, Crewe): I wish to say one word on behalf of my hon. Friend the Member for Invernessshire (Mr. F. Mackintosh), who has a notice on the Paper in reference to this Bill. It is that the opponents of the Bill do not intend to trouble the House further in the matter, but they desire me to say that they intend to carry their opposition elsewhere.

Bill considered, and ordered to be
read a third time.

WESTMINSTER ABBEY (MONUMENTAL CHAPEL) BILL (*by Order*).

Order for Second Reading read.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE (Bradford, Central): For the reason which I mentioned to the House yesterday I now beg to move that the order for the Second Reading of this Bill be discharged and that the Bill be withdrawn.

Order for Second Reading dis-
charged: Bill withdrawn.

QUESTIONS.

CEYLON—THE NEW COMMUTATION ACT.

MR. BARBOUR (Paisley) asked the
Under Secretary of State for the

Colonies if it is true that in Ceylon, by the new Commutation Act, the tax on the food of the people has been raised 50 per cent; that by the method of assessment in blocks, irrespective of ownership, the land of one or more owners in the block may be confiscated, although such owners were ready to pay, and had tendered payment; and that, as stated in the *Ceylon Independent* of the 22nd of February last, in one district alone over 2,000 acres had been sold for default, and thrown out of cultivation?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Baron H. DE WORMS, Liverpool, East Toxteth): No information has reached the Colonial Office which would enable me to answer the hon. Member's question in detail; nor has the Secretary of State heard of any hardship being caused by the working of the Commutation Act of 1878, which was introduced solely in the interest of the native cultivator. The Governor will, however, be called upon for a Report.

TRADE MARKS.

MR. W. F. LAWRENCE (Liverpool, Abercromby) asked the President of the Board of Trade whether his attention has been called to the action of the Patents Office in persistently refusing to register (Reference No. 79,032) the trade mark "Mignon," as applied to tin and terne plates, which the applicants deny can have any reference to the quality or character of the goods; and, whether he will direct the said authorities to comply with the wish of the applicants in this respect?

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Sir M. HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): If the applicant is dissatisfied with the Comptroller's decision, he can appeal to the Board of Trade, or, if he particularly wishes it, can have his case referred to the Court.

IRELAND—CASE OF JOHN HEANEY.

MR. BLANE, (Armagh, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if Mr. John Heaney, a tenant on the estate of Lord Lurgan, signed an agreement with his landlord for the purchase of his holding under Lord Ashbourne's Act: if, afterwards, Mr. Heaney was sued for arrears of rent at Lurgan Quarter Sessions, and a

decree granted by County Judge Kisbey; if Mr. Heaney appealed to a Superior Court against the judgment, and got the amount reduced by the learned Baron on re-hearing; if the Sub-Sheriff of county Armagh proceeded to his house and executed the decree of Judge Kisbey, which was set aside on appeal; if Mr. Heaney was sentenced to a term of imprisonment for resisting the decree so set aside; and, if the Government will consider the case?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): I understand that on no occasion did Heaney sign an agreement under the provisions of Lord Ashbourne's Act. He did, a considerable time after the appeal was decided affirming the decree, signify in writing his desire to purchase. The learned Baron who heard the appeal stated in his judgment that the decree was affirmed in every particular except that he varied the amount by a few pounds. The decree appears to have been duly executed. Heaney was, with three others, sentenced to imprisonment for violent resistance with pitchforks, stones, and hot water at the execution of the decree, one of the Sheriff's bailiffs being stabbed with a pitchfork under the eye.

MR. BLANE: The gravamen of the question is whether the decree was set aside. The right hon. Gentleman says that it was resisted, and I want to know which version is correct.

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I understand that it was not set aside.

MR. BLANE: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that there was a re-hearing of the case, and that the former decree was held to be valid.

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Quite so. I say that it was valid, and that it was not set aside.

THE POLICE AT GWEEDORE.

MR. BLANE asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he could state the amount of rent paid to Mr. Wybrant Olphert for accommodating the Royal Irish Constabulary and Military at Falcarragh, county Donegal, and what rent was paid for police at Mr. Wybrant Olpherts' own house; what rent was paid Captain Hill, Inspector of Prisons, for the temporary barracks at Bunbeg, Gwee-

dore. What amount was charged for the Military at Gweedore Hotel, of which Captain Hill was proprietor; and, whether the rents received from Government exceeded in amount the total rent-roll from the other tenants?

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The constabulary authorities report that the rent of the permanent barracks at Falcarragh is £17 a year. There are three temporary barracks taken at the rent of 1s. a week from Mr. Olphert, who likewise receives for accommodating the military the usual billeting rate of 4d. a day per man. No rent is paid for the police at his house for his protection. No rent is paid to Captain Hill for the temporary barracks at Bunbeg. Whilst at Gweedore Hotel 4d. a day per man was paid for infantry and 4s. 9d. for each horse, the latter rate being due to the exceptional difficulty of obtaining forage in the district. The rents received from the Government bear no comparison to the rent-roll of the estate in question.

MR. BLANE: What was the charge to the officers?

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I presume that the particulars supplied to me only relate to the men and not to the officers. If the hon. Gentleman wants further particulars about the officers I shall be glad to make inquiry if he will give me notice of the question.

THE SOUTH AFRICAN REPUBLIC.

MR. LYELL (Orkney and Shetland) asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether Article XIV. of the Convention of 1884, made between Her Majesty and the South African Republic, is contravened by Law No. 3, 1885, of the South African Republic; whether certain Indian traders, subjects of Her Majesty resident in the Republic, who, relying upon the terms of the Convention, have embarked large sums of capital there, are now unable to obtain trade licences or to acquire real property or leases in the Republic, and are consequently suffering great loss; and, whether he will inform the House what steps are being taken to effect the carrying out of the terms of the Convention?

BARON H. DE WORMS: In answer to the hon. Member, I have to say that the Law of 1885, as amended in 1886, at the instance of Her Majesty's Government does not prohibit the

acquisition of real property or leases by natives of Asia, but merely restricts them in such acquisition to the "streets, wards, and districts, which the Government shall for sanitary purposes point out for habitation" (cl. 2 B.). The law has been enacted on grounds of public health, and makes no discrimination against British subjects, or any particular Asiatics. Representations have at various times been made to the Government of the South African Republic at the instance of persons who felt aggrieved by the law; and in response to these the President has agreed to renew licenses to all Asiatic traders actually possessing leases, wherever situated. The High Commissioner has been directed to make certain further representations which will no doubt receive the same attention.

IRELAND—THE ATHY UNION.

MR. LEAHY (Kildare, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, whether the Local Government Board of Ireland have yet decided on ordering an election of guardians for the Athy Union; and when the rate-payers may expect the notices to be issued for that purpose?

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: It is proposed to reinstate the Board of Guardians for the Athy Union, the vice-guardians having ceased their labour. The election will take place under the General Supplemental Election Order of the Local Government Board which is usually issued at the end of May or early in June.

THE MASSERENE ESTATE.

MR. JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if his attention has been called to the following extract from *United Ireland* of the 27th April, referring to the occupation of farms on Lord Masserene's estate in the county Louth: "The proposed plantation of little gangs of Northern Orange land-grabbers in the houses and holdings of Catholic evicted tenants, and in the heart of Catholic and National districts, if for one moment we could suppose it possible, must of necessity beget stern resistance and retaliation. . . . The evicted tenants would be more or less than human if they patiently permitted their homes and holdings to be held by

these greedy and unconscionable intruders;" and what steps will be taken to secure the lives and liberties of the new tenants thus threatened? Perhaps I may be allowed to supplement the question by asking if there is any law in Ireland to punish incitement to assassination by the organ of the National League?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not know how I can answer that question without notice, seeing that it involves a legal point. As to the question on the Paper, I have not seen the paragraph referred to by my hon. Friend. Every precaution will be taken to secure the safety of these persons.

THE SUGAR CONVENTION BILL.

SIR WILFRID LAWSON asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, why, considering that molasses were now largely used for the feeding of cattle, it was included as sugar in the definition clause of the Sugar Convention Bill?

*BARON H. DE WORMS: In answer to the hon. Baronet, I have to say that as bounties are given on molasses as well as upon raw and refined sugar and glucose, it was necessarily included in the Convention, the object of which is the total abolition of such bounties.

THE ZALINSKI AIR AND DYNAMITE GUN.

MR. HERBERT KNATCHBULL-HUGESSEN (Kent, Faversham) asked the Secretary of State for War whether it is a fact that any representative of the British Government was present at the trial of the Zalinski air and dynamite gun in the United States; whether it is a fact that the British Government have ordered guns of this type; and, if so, how many; and, whether it is a fact, as reported in the *Globe* of 30th April, that one of the guns of the United States dynamite cruiser *Vesuvius* was "badly wrecked," and that "the hollow cast shell immediately went to pieces in the gun-breach?"

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (MR. E. STANHOPE, Lincolnshire, Horncastle): Experiments with the Zalinski dynamite gun were witnessed by British officers in 1886, 1887, and 1888. Guns of this type have not been ordered by the British Government. I have no

information as to the alleged accident referred to in the third question.

POLICE SUPERANNUATION.

MR. HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department if there is any possibility now of the fulfilment of the promises made by successive Governments for 22 years to Constabulary Forces, that the question of their superannuation shall be brought before Parliament for legislation?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (MR. MATTHEWS, Birmingham, E.): The question of police superannuation was delayed by the Local Government legislation of last year, which made it expedient to wait till the County Councils were in working order before saddling them with a new burden. Moreover, the principles of superannuation for the Civil Service, which must have an influence on police superannuation, and which has recently been reported on by the Royal Commission, is still under the consideration of the Treasury, and I am not at present in a position to introduce legislation on this subject, the interest and importance of which are fully present to the mind of the Government.

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT (Sussex, N.W.): May I ask if it will not be possible to send to the County Councils some tentative scheme approved by the Government, although not to be regarded as a definite scheme, so that the same principle might be more or less acted upon throughout the whole of the Country. As matters stand at the present, every County Council may give what retiring allowance they please.

MR. MATTHEWS: The suggestion thrown out by my hon. and gallant Friend appears to me to be worthy of careful and serious consideration. At this moment I am having an actuarial calculation made, but it is a calculation which is extremely intricate and difficult to settle. It may, however, be an assistance in forming an ultimate decision on the subject.

THE CRUELTY TO ANIMALS ACT.

MR. JOHN ELLIS (Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when the Report of the Inspector under "The

Cruelty to Animals Act, 1876," for the year 1888, which was laid upon the Table on the 15th of April, will be distributed; and whether the Report of the Vote in Supply relating to this Inspector will be postponed until Members have his Report in their hands?

THE UNDER SECRETARY FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. STUART WORTLEY, Sheffield, Hallam): The English and Scotch portions are ready and in type. The Irish portion is outstanding. Last year this Paper was distributed on June 5th, and in 1887 on June 25th.

MR. J. ELLIS: Does the delay in the Irish Department arise from the proof having been sent across the Channel to Dublin?

MR. STUART WORTLEY: No; I understand that the Irish Report is not in type at all. I have the other reports in proof, and if the hon. Gentleman wishes I shall be glad to show them to him privately.

MR. J. ELLIS: Can we have a copy of them by Monday?

MR. STUART WORTLEY: I shall have to inquire whether it is the practice of the Department to present these Reports separately.

TONNAGE MEASUREMENT.

SIR EDWARD BATES (Plymouth) asked the President of the Board of Trade whether the steamers *Miranda*, *Helvetia* and *Dresden*, of respectively 1,584, 2,765, and 2,850 tons net register, recently built in this country and now owned by foreigners, had the full advantage of present reading of Tonnage Measurement Acts as regards deductions for crew space, and inclusive of light and air spaces, in calculations for arriving at net tonnage; what would be the net register tonnage of these steamers if measured under the proposed new Bill; and whether, if the Bill passes and is made retrospective, these steamers will pay light and other dues here and abroad on their present registers; and, if so, whether they will have an advantage on similar British steamers to which the new Act being retrospective would apply?

SIR M. HICKS BEACH: I have not been able to obtain the particulars which would enable me to reply to the second paragraph of this question; but I understand that the three ships to

which the hon. Member refers are registered as German ships, and therefore it would be in ordinary cases assumed that they had been measured before register under the German law. The German law is the international law, which is not the law of measurement in accordance with the *Isabella* decision. But if, as I understand from the first paragraph of the question, these ships, or any of them, before becoming registered as German ships were measured according to the *Isabella* decision, then no doubt if the Bill now before the House passed in its present shape, and those ships were again to come within the ports of this country, they would be subject to re-measurement.

In reply to a further question from Sir E. Bates,

SIR M. HICKS BEACH said: I mean ports in this country at which there are officers of the Board of Trade who could perform the duty of re-measurement.

VIOLATION OF THE TRUCK ACT.

MR. BROADHURST (Nottingham) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he is aware that some building firms in Nottingham are exacting compulsory weekly contributions from their workmen's wages for the purpose of forming sick and accident funds; and, if so, whether stoppages of this kind constitute a violation of the Truck Act?

MR. MATTHEWS: My attention has not been called to any specific breach of the Truck Act in Nottingham, but I have directed the Inspector to make inquiries. With regard to the legality of the practice referred to, I must refer the hon. Member to the statute, upon the proper construction of which I must decline to give opinions in this House, especially on a question couched in such general terms as that upon the paper?

INDIA—UNCOVENANTED OFFICERS' PENSIONS—PAYMENT IN RUPEES.

SIR ROPER LETHBRIDGE (Kensington, N.) asked the Under Secretary of State for India whether there is any record at the India Office of the pension of an Indian Uncovenanted Officer being paid at a rate higher than 2s. to the rupee during those years when the ex-

change value of the rupee was above par.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Sir J. GORST, Chatham): No; for since such pensions have been payable in England, the rupee has never been above par.

SIR R. LETHBRIDGE: In consequence of the reply of the hon. Gentleman, which is contrary to the information at my disposal, I beg to give notice that I shall draw attention to this question on an early day.

SOUTH EAST AFRICA.

MR. BUCHANAN (Edinburgh, W.) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs when the Papers relating to Zanzibar and South East Africa, promised by the First Lord of the Treasury on 21st February, will be issued?

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir J. FERGUSON, Manchester, N.E.): It is possible that the First Lord of the Treasury was referring to the Papers up to the institution of the blockade, which were distributed at about the time of the re-assembling of Parliament. I cannot, after this lapse of time be sure if I am responsible for the statement, but at present there are no further Papers which could be conveniently presented.

MR. BUCHANAN: May I remind the right hon. Gentleman that the First Lord of the Treasury has stated that the Papers were in the course of preparation.

*SIR J. FERGUSON: It is possible that I may have misled my right hon. Friend. All I can say at the present moment is that no other Papers can be conveniently presented.

SCHOOL FEES IN SCOTLAND.

MR. BUCHANAN asked the Lord Advocate when the Minute of the Scotch Education Department stating the mode by which the portion of the Probate Duty set apart for the payment of school fees under section 19 of the Local Government (Scotland) Bill will be issued?

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. P. B. ROBERTSON, Bute-shire): The manner in which the portion of the Probate Duty Grant which it is proposed to apply in relief from the payment of school fees may be distributed is now

under consideration by the Scotch Education Department. In the debate on the Second Reading of the Scotch Local Government Bill we hope to be able to indicate the chief features of the scheme which we propose to submit; but until the general proposal has received confirmation by Parliament, it would be premature for the Department to lay upon the Table the Minute referred to in the Clause. We are anxious that the scheme should be in accordance with local requirements and should meet as fully as possible the reasonable claims of all those interested, and in order that the plan adopted may be one which best fulfils these conditions any suggestions which those interested may wish to offer should be forwarded to the Scotch Education Department without delay and will receive their Lordships' most careful attention.

MR. BUCHANAN: Will the right hon. and learned Gentleman state on the Second Reading of the Bill the general lines on which he proposes to allot this money?

*MR. J. P. B. ROBERTSON: Yes, that will be done in accordance with the intimation I have already given.

THE VACCINATION COMMISSION.

MR. BRADLAUGH asked the President of the Local Government Board whether it is intended that it shall be open, under the terms of the proposed Royal Commission on Vaccination, to investigate the history and scientific foundation of vaccination, and to question whether compulsion by law to vaccination is justifiable?

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. RITCHIE, Tower Hamlets, St. George's): I suspect that the question is not so much one of what was the intention of the Government, as what are the terms of the reference to the Royal Commission, and what the reference includes. The Government have always been desirous that the terms of the reference should be wide enough to include all aspects of this case. I have read the terms of the reference to the House, and I understand that those who are interested are satisfied that they are sufficiently wide. As to whether they include the particular point of the hon. Gentleman, he is as well able to judge as I am.

MR. PICTON (Leicester): Will the right hon. Gentleman confirm what I understood him to say yesterday that there will be a full inquiry into the whole question of compulsion?

*MR. RITCHIE: My view is that the Commission will be able to consider the whole question, but there are other matters of a technical character which have been referred to by the hon. Member for Northampton, about which there may be some doubt.

MR. BRADLAUGH: I will only remind the right hon. Gentlemen that an opinion expressed by him must have more authority than any assumption of mine.

*MR. RITCHIE: I expect that upon questions of opinion the Commission will have more authority than I can possess.

PERPETUAL PENSIONS.

MR. BRADLAUGH asked the First Lord of the Treasury whether he can now name the date for the discussion of the Resolution disagreeing with the Treasury Minute on Perpetual Pensions?

*THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (MR. W. H. SMITH, Strand): The discussion will be taken on Thursday, the 16th, at an early part of the evening.

THE EDUCATION CODE, 1889.

MR. ARTHUR ACLAND (Yorkshire W.R., Rotherham) asked the First Lord of the Treasury whether he was able at present to name a day for the discussion of the New Code?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I think it will be to the convenience of the House that this question should be considered in connection with the Education Vote and I hope to take the Education Vote, and the discussion of the New Code together.

MR. ACLAND: Will the discussion be taken as the first business of the day?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: The Education Vote is always taken on a day specially named in order to meet the convenience of Members. I will undertake that ample notice shall be given to Members who take an interest in the question, and that a day shall be fixed on which a full discussion may take place.

*MR. PICTON: The New Code will, I presume, not be enforced until the

House has had an opportunity of discussing it?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: Certainly not. That is the understanding.

THE EXETER POST OFFICE.

SIR JOHN KENNAWAY (Devon, Honiton) asked the Postmaster General if it is true that the Sunday labour in the Exeter Post Office has been increased by the despatch of a new mail to the North in the middle of the afternoon of Sundays; whether this is a part of a general system to be extended through England; and if he will state what is the necessity for the step, seeing that all letters posted for Saturday's night mail are delivered in Scotland on Monday mornings?

*THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (MR. RAIKES, University of Cambridge): An inappreciable increase of Sunday labour in the Post Office at Exeter has been caused by the establishment of the mail to which the hon. Member refers. The arrangement was not part of a general system, but was sanctioned on a special application from the Exeter Chamber of Commerce, and on an assurance from the Mayor of Exeter that the inhabitants generally desired it. The effect of the arrangement has been to admit of letters posted after the despatch of Saturday night's mail being delivered in the North of England and Scotland on Monday morning, which otherwise could not be delivered until late on Monday night, or on Tuesday morning.

IRISH LACE-MAKING.

MR. JUSTIN H. MC CARTHY (Newry) asked the Vice-President of the Committee of Council on Education whether any report has been made by Mr. Cole as to his visits to lace-making schools in Ireland during April of this year; and whether, if he has, the report will be circulated; and, whether arrangements have been made by the Department with the Treasury by which such visits may be repeated in October, in accordance with the requests made for them?

*THE VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL (SIR W. HART DYKE, Kent, Dartford): A report has been made, and, if desired, extracts could be printed for circulation, or it might be shown to the hon. Member

or anyone interested in the matter who called at the Department; but there are certain points in it which are not intended for general publication. Whether Mr. Cole's visits can be repeated in October is a question at present under consideration with the Treasury.

INDIA—CHARGES AGAINST THE GOVERNOR OF THE ALLAHABAD PRISON.

MR. BRADLAUGH asked the Under Secretary of State for India whether any inquiry had been instituted by Sir Auckland Colvin, Lieutenant Governor of the North West Provinces, into certain charges brought by Captain Hearsey (some time a prisoner in Allahabad Prison for assault) against Dr. Hill, Governor of the Allahabad Prison; whether any report had been made on such inquiry; and whether he would lay the papers relating to the matter upon the Table?

SIR J. GORST: The Secretary of State has no information and has received no papers relating to the matter referred to in the question.

DISTRESS IN GANJAM.

MR. BRADLAUGH asked the Under Secretary of State for India whether he is aware that severe distress, amounting to famine and requiring Government relief on an extensive scale, now prevails in the district of Ganjam, in the Madras Presidency; if he would state what steps are being taken by the Government of Madras to relieve such distress; and whether the report made by Mr. J. H. Garstin, C.S.I., of his visit to and inspection of Ganjam in December last has reached this country and can be laid upon the Table of this House?

SIR J. GORST: The Reports received from the Government of Madras do not corroborate the statement that severe distress amounting to famine prevails in Ganjam; and the Governor in Council has telegraphed to-day as follows, in answer to the Secretary of State's inquiries—

"Condition Ganjam unchanged. Private prices stationary. Showers fallen in some places. Private import of food grains sufficient. Number of persons employed on relief works under 13,000. Pecuniary relief to 800 Scarcity, but no deaths from starvation."

Sir W. Hart Dyke

Two large relief works have been opened since December. The number of persons employed on these, on 31st March, was 19,000. Several smaller ones have been sanctioned, and the Local Officers provided with funds to open them if required. Authority has been given to the Local Officers to grant gratuitous relief to prevent starvation, and the necessary means have been provided. Additional Civil Officers including engineers have been sent to Ganjam for the relief works. There is believed to be a sufficient food stock in the district, and no Government importation is as yet requisite. The Reports from Mr. Garstin on the subject were received in January and will be produced, if moved for, as an unopposed Return.

MR. BRADLAUGH: Does the hon. Gentleman say that in the opinion of the Indian Government the necessity for relief works to 13,000 people does not constitute severe distress?

SIR J. GORST: Not distress amounting to famine, which were the hon. Member's words.

IRELAND—MR. CAREW.

MR. GILL (Louth, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the following statement respecting Mr. Carew, M.P., published in the *Freeman's Journal* by the hon. Member for Wexford, who visited Mr. Carew on Tuesday as his legal adviser:—

"He found the hon. Gentleman very pale and apparently ill. Since his return from Belfast Mr. Carew has been a hospital patient. He is suffering from want of sleep and acute headaches. He has no appetite, and is unable to take exercise. He is losing weight steadily, and his hair has become quite thin and is turning grey. On the whole the condition of hon. Gentleman is such as to cause grave anxiety to his friends."

And, whether he has any communication to make to the House on the subject?

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am glad to say that the statement referred to in the question appears to be exaggerated. It is, however, the case that Mr. Carew complains of headache and loss of appetite, nor will he take sufficient open-air exercise. His total loss of weight since his return from Belfast to Dublin is under 2 lb. His hair is unchanged, and in an interview yesterday

with the Chairman of the General Prisons Board he stated that he had no complaint to make as to his prison treatment.

THE CENTRAL TELEGRAPH OFFICE.

BARON FERDINAND DE ROTHSCCHILD (Bucks, Aylesbury) asked the Postmaster General whether it is a fact that the character of the duties performed by officers of the first class at the Central Telegraph Office and the general body of senior-class telegraphists is precisely similar, in many instances the duties performed by the former being of the greater difficulty; how does he propose to admit the clerks at this office to the full benefit of the "Fawcett Scheme" if those at the maximum of the first class are not to be promoted to the senior class except through vacancies by death, which has already kept them waiting for promotion over two years; whether, if the present action of the Department be continued, it will be possible that a vacancy may not occur for years; and, if so, is it his intention to keep the majority of this deserving body of public servants, after 18 years' service, at the salary of £2 13s. 8d. per week for the remainder of their career; and, whether, when the first class becomes full, he intends to apply the same policy to the second class, and so practically limit the highest salary attainable by the clerks to £100 per annum?

*MR. RAIKES: It is not the case that the duties of the telegraphists of the first class are precisely similar to those of the senior class. It will always happen in a very large department like the Central Telegraph Office that some officers of a lower class may be performing superior duties. It was no part of the "Fawcett Scheme" that officers in one class should be promoted to the next higher class regardless of vacancies, and I am not in a position to say how long it may take certain officers to rise out of their present classes; but it will be my duty to examine the matter from time to time and to take such measures as appear to be required in the interests of the public and the officers themselves.

THE TRIAL OF DIEMHOLZ.

MR. CUNINGHAME GRAHAM (Lanarkshire, N.W.) asked the Secre-

tary of State for the Home Department if, at the recent trial of Diemholz and Kozebrodski, Mr. Gill, who appeared for the Home Office, obtained an assent on behalf of the accused to their pleading guilty of a technical assault; and, if during the trial of Diemholz, his wife was refused admittance to the Court on the plea of want of space?

MR. MATTHEWS: The answer to the first paragraph is in the negative. There was no plea of guilty and no consent to a plea. The constable on duty in the Court remembers a woman, who said she was a witness in the case, but did not give her name, asking to be allowed to enter the Court, and he told her, in conformity with a standing order of the Bench as to witnesses, that she could not enter until her name was called. He did not know that she was the wife of the defendant.

REPORT OF SUPPLY.

MR. E. ROBERTSON (Dundee): May I ask the First Lord of the Treasury if he will allow Progress to be reported this evening earlier than usual in order that the Report of yesterday's Supply may be taken, because I wish to call attention to the attitude of the Government in reference to the French Exhibitions? I may say that I remained in the House during the whole of yesterday evening for the purpose of bringing that question on, but owing to the long debate which took place on African affairs, I thought it only right that the Government should take the Vote. I hope the right hon. Gentleman will bear that fact in mind and that he will take the Report of Supply at a more seasonable hour than after midnight.

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I fully acknowledge the fairness and temper which the hon. Gentleman has displayed; but whether progress can be reported at an earlier hour this evening must depend on the progress made with Supply. If the discussion of the Votes which stands for consideration to-day is not unduly prolonged, it will be in my power to meet the views of the hon. Gentleman.

DR. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W.): Can the Report of Supply on Vote 5 be taken before the Report of Supply on Vote 4? I beg to remind the Government that the Debate on the Report of Supply on Vote 4 was ad-

journed upon a very important question raised by the hon. Member for Sheffield (Mr. Coleridge).

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON, Leeds, N.): The Adjourned Debate to which the hon. Member refers is put down for Monday next. The Report of Supply which is down for to-night refers to the Votes taken yesterday.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (SCOTLAND) BILL.

MR. ESSLEMONT (Aberdeen, E.): When do the Government intend to take the Second Reading of the Local Government (Scotland) Bill? At present it is set down for the 13th of May.

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I am not able at this moment to say if it will be possible to take it on the 13th; I am afraid that it will not be, but due notice will be given of the day on which it will be taken.

MERCHANT SHIPPING (TONNAGE).

Ordered:—

"Return showing in detail the calculation by which the net register of the s.s. *Anglesey* was brought down to the figure of only 45 tons, by deductions and allowances from her gross measurement of 827 tons; similar figures for the s.s. *Duchess of Sutherland*, showing how, with an original gross measurement of 908 tons, and net register of 446 tons when she was a paddle steamer, her net register is now brought down to only 111 tons since her conversion into a screw steamer."—(Mr. T. W. Russell)

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

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SUPPLY—CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

CLASS II.

Motion made and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £35,286, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st of March, 1890, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Department of Her Majesty's Secretary of State for the Colonies, including certain Expenses connected with Emigration."

*MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.): I rise for the purpose of moving the formal reduction of the salary of the Colonial Secretary by the sum of £100, in order to challenge the decision which

has been given by Lord Knutsford on an important matter which came within his jurisdiction. My complaint is that Lord Knutsford has not adequately dealt with very serious misconduct on the part of the Chief Justice of the Bahamas. A man named Thomas Taylor, after receiving sentence on the 27th July last, for an offence of which he had been duly found guilty, committed a serious assault on the Chief Justice in open Court. On the 31st of July he was again brought into Court, when the Chief Justice, after reciting that he had been guilty of contempt of Court, sentenced him to receive 30 lashes and to undergo penal servitude for life. I have no hesitation in saying that the outrage committed by the Chief Justice on Taylor, was as lawless as the outrage committed by Taylor on the Chief Justice. The matter seems to have attracted the attention of the right hon. and learned Member for Bury (Sir H. James) who put a question in regard to it to the Under Secretary on the same night upon which a question by myself appeared on the Paper. The Under Secretary admitted the substantial accuracy of the facts, and the Attorney General acknowledged the illegality of the sentence of the Chief Justice. But I think I can carry the matter a good deal further. It is part of my case that the Chief Justice must have known he was acting illegally when he made the order. It is not a case, however oppressive such cases may occasionally be, of the revival of an obsolete Statute or of an obsolete practice or doctrine of the Common Law. I think I may say with some confidence, having looked carefully into the matter, that such conduct as this would have been as lawless as it is to-day at any time since the passing of Magna Charta. There are many cases recorded in the law books of contempt of Court, and of punishment for such contempt, but I will only mention one which occurred in the reign of Charles the First, when Mr. Justice Hutton was accused by a man named Harrison in open Court of high treason, that distinguished Judge having incurred the odium of the Court party, because with splendid courage and integrity he had maintained the illegality of ship-money. It was a gross outrage committed in the face of three Judges, but Mr.

Justice Hutton did not take on himself the punishment of the offender for contempt. The man was indicted, tried, and found guilty, and even then he was punished not with imprisonment, but with a heavy fine. Then, I would ask, how does the Attorney General endeavour to explain or tone down the conduct of the Chief Justice in this case? He says that the offence of Taylor was a very serious offence. I am surprised the hon. and learned Gentleman did not see the danger of the argument he was employing, because the more serious the offence the more imperative was the claim which Taylor had to be tried by his Peers. The hon. and learned Gentleman dropped one very significant statement—namely, that the Attorney General had intended to indict Taylor. Now that was precisely the course that ought to have been taken, and any candid-minded man must come to the conclusion that the Chief Justice interposed because he was afraid that if this man were put upon his trial he would not have been able to punish him with flogging, and he was determined to have him flogged, with law or without it. The Attorney General quoted a local Act of the Bahamas which provides that in case of a man being convicted of felony after a previous conviction he may be punished with flogging. As to that I have only to say that it seems to me very probable that if this man had been put on his trial the jury might have found that the wounding, serious as it was, was, after all, only an unlawful wounding, and therefore the punishment of flogging would not have been applicable. And how has the Colonial Secretary dealt with the case? The Under Secretary has informed the House that a letter has been written to the Chief Justice informing him that very serious consequences may happen to him if this kind of thing should occur again. But the question is not what is to happen to the Chief Justice if the offence is repeated. My complaint is that no punishment has been inflicted upon him for the offence that he has actually committed. Of course this question must be considered on its merits. It would not be right that the conduct of the Chief Justice of the Bahamas should in any way be prejudiced by scandals in connection with other Colonial Judges;

but when, in any particular case, it has been shown that punishment has been justly incurred, it is quite fair, and in many cases it is very necessary, to consider whether the public interest, public policy, and the public honour require that a serious example should be made. Now it happens, and I regret it very much, that during the last few years there have been many very serious indications that Colonial Judges are getting a little out of hand. There was a case brought before this House only last year of Mr. de Souza, a gentleman favourably known to some Members of this House, and I regret very much that Mr. de Souza has died within these last few weeks; and it is said that his death was caused, in part, by the hardships he suffered during his imprisonment. That imprisonment was consequent upon an alleged contempt of Court committed by Mr. de Souza, for which he was sentenced to six months' imprisonment, but the peculiarity of the case was that the contempt was committed in respect to a matter that was not then pending before the Court. The Attorney-General says in this case the action of the Court was legal, and if we are to be guided by the strict letter of the law, I am disposed to think that it was; but, at all events, it was a harsh and oppressive straining of the law that would not for a moment have been tolerated in this country. Then there is one other case I should like to refer to, a case which came before the Privy Council on Appeal from the Supreme Court of British Honduras. In that case a man named Dillet, a barrister, had been convicted of perjury, and consequently an order was obtained to strike him off the roll of the Court; but the point of the case is the tone of the observations which were made on the conduct of the Judge by the Privy Council in this country. Lord Watson, in pronouncing judgment, after some very strong remarks on the conduct of the Judge in the Colony, proceeded:—"The Chief Justice converted himself into a witness and, without being sworn, made statements to the jury regarding a visit of the accused to his house and other matters which are not to be found in the record nor in the evidence;" and then he added, "A conviction obtained by such unworthy means cannot be permitted to stand."

*THE UNDER SECRETARY FOR THE COLONIES (Baron H. de WORMS, Liverpool, East Toxteth): When was this; what is the date?

*MR. PICKERSGILL: The appeal came before the Privy Council in March, 1887. Now, in conclusion, let me say that I believe Thomas Taylor is not, in fact I know he is not, an Englishman. I believe he is not even of our race or of our colour; but I am sure that that will not be permitted by the Committee to prejudice his case for a moment. Moreover, let me say that I do not rest my case upon sympathy with Thomas Taylor. He had undoubtedly committed a very gross offence indeed, for which he ought to have been properly put on his trial. My point is that there has been, in the circumstances I have briefly put before the Committee, a gross outrage committed in the name of law, and in such a case we look to the Colonial Secretary—because I may mention this Judge holds office during pleasure—we look to the Colonial Secretary to vindicate the law. In this case I have submitted we have looked to him in vain, and therefore it is that I appeal from the Colonial Secretary to the Committee of this House and move the reduction of which I have given notice.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item A, of £36,786, for Salaries, be reduced by £100, part of the Salary of the Secretary of State."—(*Mr. Pickersgill*).

*BARON H. DE WORMS: I think it would be well to recall to the Committee, in answering the statement of the hon. Member the facts of this case. On September 3rd last the Secretary of State received a despatch dated July 31st from the administrator at the Bahamas reporting that upon sentence being passed on a prisoner named Thomas Taylor, an old and hardened offender, by the Chief Justice, before whom he was tried for housebreaking and larceny, the prisoner, seizing a policeman's staff, made a desperate attempt to murder the Chief Justice. The first blow was broken by the intervention of a screen and the second blow by the Clerk of the Crown seizing the prisoner's arm, the Chief Justice escaping with an abrasion of the skin of the right arm. It is well to recall these facts to the Committee because the hon.

and learned Member seemed rather to minimize the nature of the assault and to come to the conclusion somewhat prematurely that it was not an assault with intent to murder. Certainly on the face of the evidence it was an assault with that intent, and it probably would have been attended with that result but for the prompt intervention of the Clerk of the Crown.

*MR. PICKERSGILL: The right hon. Gentleman uses the word "evidence." What is the nature of the evidence? So far as I know no evidence was given.

*BARON H. DE WORMS: The official statement to the Secretary of State. The hon. Member does not contradict that?

*MR. PICKERSGILL: It is not evidence.

*BARON H. DE WORMS: Not in the legal sense of the word, but it was evidence that enabled the Secretary of State to form a judgment. The Chief Justice then, acting far beyond the powers vested in him, did alter the sentence he had passed of seven years' penal servitude to a life sentence, and he did order the prisoner to be flogged. In answer to various questions put to me in the House, I have explained that the moment this came to the knowledge of the Secretary of State, and before any question was raised in the House the Secretary of State immediately telegraphed to the Bahamas, reversing the sentence and strongly censuring the action of the Chief Justice. It was not possible to prevent the sentence of flogging being carried out, because it had already been inflicted when the Secretary of State heard of the matter. As the hon. Member has said, the Attorney General himself expressed some doubt as to whether, under an old Statute, it might not have been within the power of the Judge to inflict for such an offence as contempt of court the sentence of flogging, and that may perhaps be pleaded to some extent in extenuation of the action of the Chief Justice in this matter. I do not say that he ought not to have known, but possibly he believed he had the power under an old Statute to pass a sentence of this kind.

*MR. PICKERSGILL: It is rather important to clearly understand what the Attorney General said, which was that if a man was convicted, that is found guilty after trial, of felony after pre-

vious conviction he might be whipped. The Attorney General did not for a moment suggest that the whipping which actually took place was legal.

***BARON H. DE WORMS**: The Attorney General said that under the old statute the punishment might have been inflicted for a gross offence on indictment before a Court of Law. The Secretary of State took a strong and very proper view, and immediately sent a despatch to the Bahamas warning the Chief Justice that on any such gross case occurring again, most serious consequences would follow. Now I must point out that any action in this case against the Chief Justice must originate not from the Secretary of State, but in the Colony itself. If the Governor, acting by the advice of his Legislative Council, were to suspend the Judge, the case would come before the Secretary of State, and be by him submitted to the Privy Council for confirmation. No such action was taken in the Colony although when the Governor returned, and prior to any action of the Secretary of State, a notice appeared in the *Government Gazette* of November 3, that the Governor had annulled the sentence of imprisonment for life; therefore both the Secretary of State and the Governor of the Colony were fully alive to the unfortunate occurrence and the mistake made by the Chief Justice, and immediately set about rectifying it as far as they could. The only other step that could have been taken, would have been for the Governor acting with the Legislative Council to suspend the Chief Justice from his functions, and to report the case to the Secretary of State who would lay it before the Privy Council. Taking all the circumstances into consideration, it was not thought necessary to adopt this step. I may mention that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler), who also put a question on this subject, and asked to see all the papers in relation to it, after I had put the papers before him and he had read them attentively, agreed with me, that justice in the case had been fully met by the action taken by the Secretary of State.

***MR. G. OSBORNE MORGAN** (Denbighshire, E.): After what has been stated by the right hon. Gentleman as to the opinion of my right hon. Friend, I do not wish to press the

subject further. I will only simply say that the very idea that at this time of day a man may be subjected to flogging for a mere contempt of court under the authority of some old statute which the Attorney General does not even venture to quote, does seem to me perfectly monstrous. After the light thrown on the subject, and the sensation created here as well as in the Colony, I hope we shall be saved from a repetition of one of the most high-handed and despotic acts I have ever heard of in these modern times.

***MR. BRADLAUGH** (Northampton): I regret that Lord Knutsford did not think it right to emphasise his condemnation of the conduct of the Chief Justice more than he did. Since about 40 years ago, when there was a discussion in the House of Lords on this subject of contempt of court, the feeling has been growing in favour of minimizing as much as possible consistently with preserving the authority of the court the power of a Judge to pass indefinite sentences for this offence, and this case seems to me to indicate a return to a barbarous fashion of old days, and which should not escape notice by this House.

***MR. PICKERSGILL**: I propose to go to a division, for I think the action of the Colonial Secretary was wholly inadequate, and that the case is made considerably worse by the reply of the right hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary.

The Committee divided:—Ayes 77; Noes 106.—(Division List No. 93).

Original Question again proposed.

***MR. BRADLAUGH**: In moving the reduction of the Vote by £500 my object is—and I trust the answer I may receive will save me from the necessity of putting the Committee to the trouble of division—is to call attention to the exceedingly shocking state of the prisons both in Cape Colony and other portions of our South African dominions under the authority of the High Commissioner. I will not go into matters which are in any fashion disputable —

THE CHAIRMAN: It would be greatly extending the scope of the functions of Committee of Supply to enter upon a discussion of the action of responsible

authorities in a Colony having responsible self-government.

*MR. BRADLAUGH: There is, Sir, a large portion of our South African dominions which is not included in Colonies having self-government, and it is to this portion I intend to confine my remarks, only using the Cape Colony jails as illustrations, and only so using them because we have evidence carefully taken which will save the Committee and myself from having to rely on vague and difficult statements. I will show how vague and difficult by the fact that in cases where the evidence is very conclusive the man who made the complaints was ordered by the prison authorities not to give evidence, and on his giving evidence was put into chains and kept in chains for a period of several days, notwithstanding that the investigating magistrate held the opinion, and it was ultimately so reported that this man had good ground for his complaint. The state of these prisons is simply shocking. In several of the prisons there is not room for the prisoners to lie down at full length at night, and men and women are confined together under circumstances which are perfectly horrible. There are cases in which lunatics and persons suffering from contagious diseases are confined with the other prisoners.

*BARON H. DE WORMS: Will the hon. Member specify the names of the colonies?

*MR. BRADLAUGH: I would be only too glad to do so, but my difficulty is that I am afraid of bringing myself under the censure of the Chair if I specify the particular prisons as to which I have actual evidence. But I can assure the Under Secretary and the Committee that what I am stating is unfortunately still more true of the whole of the prisons outside the jurisdiction of Cape Colony. The way in which the unfortunate Kaffirs are huddled together is perfectly shocking. In one case a child born in the prison contracted a loathsome contagious disease from the prisoners. In another case it has been shown on investigation that cats, having their knots intertwined with wire taken from soda water bottles, had been used as a method of punishment. When I called attention to these things some time ago, the Under Secretary gave two

reasons for not expressing an opinion—first, that Cape Colony had its own responsible Government; and secondly, that an Act of Parliament had been lately passed dealing with this state of things. I quite agree that this is true. So far as Cape Colony is concerned, an Act of Parliament has been passed; I hold a copy of it in my hand; but the latest reports by the last mail show that alike in Cape Colony and in the Colonies under the direct jurisdiction of the Colonial Office, and not under the Cape Parliament at all, the same evils are now existing, and that no attempt, except a paper attempt, within the limits of the Colony has been made to redress them. I trust hon. Members will deem it right to say that in no part of Her Majesty's dominions, whether with intermediate Parliaments existing or not, there shall be—at any rate without their very strong expression of disapproval—a state of things allowed to exist which would be a disgrace to any civilized country in the world. If the right hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary makes a statement of that kind, I shall not think it necessary to take up the time of the Committee further; but if he does not, I shall have to ask for the sense of the Committee upon my Amendment.

*BARON H. DE WORMS: I am sure the hon. Gentlemen will agree with me that I am not in a position to challenge any statement of fact, because no distinct charge has really been made. If the hon. Gentleman will give me details of any case relating to the bad treatment of prisoners, I will inquire into it.

*MR. BRADLAUGH: I am sure the right hon. Gentleman will pardon me if I say that in the colonial papers the state of colonial prisons has been justified on the ground that those under the direct control of British Government were in a much worse state.

*BARON H. DE WORMS: I know there have been charges made, but the hon. Gentleman is far too logical and fair to make a general and sweeping charge without giving any details, and to think that I could deal with such a charge. If the hon. Member will give the Secretary of State any details of prison treatment bearing out the description he has given, the cases will certainly be immediately investigated, and, if possible, immediately remedied.

We have no right to interfere in the case of the self-governing colonies, as they have their own Parliament and their own Ministers, but I think I have a right to say that the principles of humanity, prevail in all our Colonies whether they be self-governing or not.

*MR. BRADLAUGH: I feel I could not give the details of cases this afternoon without committing a breach of your ruling, Mr. Courtney, and I also quite agree with the right hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary that the cases which are proveable are the cases in which, unfortunately, there is a responsible government, over which the Secretary of State has no control, and in regard to which, therefore, I shall not be entitled to ask the opinion of the Committee. But I may put it to the right hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary that, when in the papers circulating in South Africa the conditions of these prisons is justified and excused on the ground that those under the direct control of Her Majesty's Government are in a worse state, it ought hardly to be required of a private man that he should furnish the Committee with details of the cases, and that common humanity would prompt the Secretary to the Colonies to send some letter of inquiry to the Colonies on the subject.

*MR. G. OSBORNE MORGAN: I may point out that, although in the self-governing Colonies it is impossible for the Government to interfere, still, if such cases as my hon. Friend has alluded to can be proved to exist, it would be possible for the Colonial Office to make representations to the Colonial Governments on the subject which would not in all probability be without effect.

*SIR G. BADEN POWELL (Liverpool, Kirkdale): I think that if inquiries are made, it will be found that the Colonial Governments are already taking steps to remedy the evils complained of.

*MR. BRADLAUGH: I think my information up to the receipt of the last mail was that the Government had taken no step except that of the paper Act of Parliament.

SIR G. CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.): I desire to move the reduction of the salary of the Secretary of State by £1,000 in regard to a very important matter relating to the lands of Western Australia. I find fault with the Secre-

tary of State not only for what he has done on this subject, but for refusing to give the House any sufficient detail in regard to what he is doing. He tells us that he proposes to alienate the temperate portion of Western Australia altogether from the authority of the House of Commons, and that, before the measure is finally adopted, a Bill on the subject must receive the sanction of this House. But before it can come before this House, Her Majesty's Government will have given it their *imprimatur* and approved of the scheme in all the stages of the negotiations with the Colonial Authorities. That, I say, is not a proper way in which to deal with a matter of this great and supreme importance. I have not strong views with regard to emigration. I have my doubts whether what is called State emigration is quite required by this country; but I am of opinion that, if any system of emigration is to be aided by the State, it is most unfair to the country that the best people—the cream of the country—should be sent away, whilst the dregs are left to be a drag upon the ratepayers. If it is desirable that emigration should be promoted, it is most objectionable and undesirable that we should be deprived of promoting it in a form that is fair to this country. If we look round the world we find that not only are the United States and other countries very much disinclined to receive people who have no means, but that our own Colonies are taking that line to a very great degree. The other day a very remarkable Paper, which seems completely to prove my case, was circulated. It contains correspondence from the Colonial Governments in answer to the Memorandum of the Parliamentary Colonization Committee of the 1st of May, 1888. The Parliamentary Colonization Committee was composed of Members of both Houses of Parliament who, with the highest and most patriotic motives, formed a plan for State-directed colonization. Her Majesty's Government so far received their overtures with favour as to consent to circulate the plan through the Colonies, and to ask the opinion of the Colonies upon it. It was not a scheme of the character of which the Colonies could reasonably complain. It was one under which, I think, only the cream of our

population would be sent to our Colonies, while the poor would remain behind. Preference was to be given to the colonists who contributed towards the outlay. The money was to be advanced not by the colonists, but by this country, to be recovered in a moderate time; and, altogether, one would have thought it was a plan which was as favourable to the independent colonists as could possibly be conceived. Well, all the Colonies which had anything approaching to responsible Governments rejected the scheme.

THE CHAIRMAN: I do not quite see how this comes under the Vote. The plan was proposed by an irresponsible Committee.

SIR G. CAMPBELL: I merely wish to show the inexpediency of alienating Western Australia, whilst all the other Colonies refuse to receive our emigrants.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member, in entering into this scheme, is going outside the Vote.

SIR G. CAMPBELL: Well, Sir, I have said all I desire to say about the scheme. I may state, in general terms, that every colony rejected the scheme except Western Australia; and it is clear that every other colony but Western Australia will accept those of our emigrants who are not endowed with some means of their own. Western Australia is an enormous country. It contains something like 1,100,000 square miles—that is to say, it is as large as all Europe, without Russia. The present colonists are a mere handful of between 30,000 and 40,000 people. I have reason to believe that there are immense tracts of temperate land there extremely well-fitted for colonization, and I find that this is amply borne out by a Report on the subject, which I hold in my hand. Under these circumstances it would surely be utter madness to give over this enormous territory to the small handful of colonists who now occupy it, and deprive ourselves of all power of dealing with it. The result of adopting a policy of that kind must be that those who have the monopoly of land will turn round on their poor fellow-countrymen and refuse to receive them. This House is entitled to express an opinion before the thing goes too far, and ought not to be put off with the promise that the complete scheme will be laid before the House in

the shape of a Bill brought in at the end of the Session. I therefore wish to move the reduction of the Vote. I may say I have every respect for Lord Knutsford. He is a man of great colonial experience, and I know it is a good thing that such a man should be at the head of the Colonial Office. I am afraid, however, he is too old a colonial official, and too ready to follow the common policy of getting rid of all difficulties by pleasing the colonists and hoodwinking this House. I beg to move the reduction of the Vote by the sum of £1,000.

Motion made, and Question proposed, “That Item A, of £36,786, for Salaries, be reduced by £1,000, part of the Salary of the Secretary of State.”—*(Sir George Campbell.)*

*SIR R. N. FOWLER (London): I have some sympathy with the views of my hon. Friend who has just sat down, and I am rather curious to hear from the Under Secretary how much land is to be given up. I was in New South Wales and South Australia a little more than two years ago. I asked several persons in those Colonies whether the colonists would not raise objection to the scheme of handing over Western Australia to a responsible Government. As far as I could ascertain, no objection was entertained. All those with whom I conversed seemed to think it was a matter in which they could not interfere. They all had plenty of land, and they seemed to think it was no business of theirs. Under those circumstances, although I have some sympathy with the views of my hon. Friend, I cannot support the reduction of the Vote.

MR. MUNRO FERGUSON (Leith, &c.): I have a Motion on the Paper for the reduction of the Vote, and I had the same object as my hon. Friend (Sir G. Campbell) in putting it down. The question of disposing of the waste lands of the Empire is one of very great public importance, and I think it is time that a protest was entered against the policy of handing over vast areas of territory to scanty populations. That has been done in several cases in the past. The question of Western Australia has been dealt with by the hon. Member for Kirkcaldy (Sir G. Campbell), but the case of Bechuanaland might also be considered. The Australians themselves

have spoken against the policy of handing over these vast areas unless they have a sufficient number of colonists to undertake responsible government. Sir Thomas M'Ilwraith, when interviewed by a correspondent of the *Pail Mall Gazette*, said he thought that a vast expanse of land which had been handed over ought never to have been so handed over. In Western Australia there is an area of a million square miles, with a population of something like 48,000. In Bechuanaland it is really impossible at this moment to estimate what is the area of the land that we control. But in neither case is there any sufficient ground for alienating the country from Imperial control. To take an analogy elsewhere, Dakota, which is about to attain to the position of a State, has an area of 100,000 square miles, and a population of from 6,000 to 8,000. There are special reasons why attention should be given to this important subject of waste lands. The world is filling up at a very rapid rate, indeed, in these days, and almost all the great waste areas in the world belong to the British Empire or the United States. All the Colonies except Natal are beginning to object to emigration. The pressure of population is becoming greater within these islands, and both in America and elsewhere restrictions are being placed upon emigration, which will make it very difficult in the future for intending emigrants to find homes beyond the sea. These waste lands of the British Empire represent a vast expenditure both of blood and money, and what we maintain is that until they are occupied by a sufficient number of persons to undertake the duties of responsible Government, they should remain under Imperial control. I should like just to touch on the question of Bechuanaland. A recent article by Sir William Metcalfe in the *Fortnightly Review* shows that that country will form an admirable field for settlement. I wish to know whether the Government approve of the extraordinary speech reported to have been made by Sir Hercules Robinson before he left the Cape Colony. The first extract published reflecting Colonial expansion is one which it is, perhaps, somewhat difficult to understand. There is, however, no difficulty in understanding the second extract, in which he

says that preparation is being made for handing over native territory to the Cape and Natal. The interesting part of the statement of the Under Secretary for the Colonies is that it must be accepted as a declaration of policy, and it is upon those terms, I suppose, that he will accept the re-appointment as Governor of the Cape. This is the more interesting that there is a further report that the Governorship of the Cape has been refused by a very large number of persons, and the Imperial Party will have to take what it can get in South Africa. And if Sir Hercules Robinson goes back to South Africa upon his own terms, it is to be supposed that this policy of handing over those areas to the Government of Cape Colony, and taking them out of the control of the Imperial officers, is the policy that is followed by Her Majesty's Government. It is very unfortunate, no doubt, that the Imperial Parliament can find no one fit to act as Governor in those parts of the Empire. If we are unable to find pro-Consuls to go abroad for us, the sooner we cease to have an Empire the better, and we will probably follow this policy of alienation on which the Government seem to be embarking. Now, the question of Bechuanaland was discussed in a Blue Book issued not long ago, and the expense of British government was there put down at a million sterling. The cost the first year was £100,000, and the amount gradually diminished to £50,000; and that fact is used by Sir Hercules Robinson as an argument for handing over the sooner this land to the Cape Colony Government. I think that is a very peculiar argument. What we really desire on this side of the House to know is whether these vast areas of land are to be maintained for the benefit of the population and not handed over to a few of the residents who are not yet in a fit state to undertake their efficient administration.

*MR. FRANCIS STEVENSON (Eye): Mr. Courtney, I hope the hon. Member for Kirkcaldy will press this matter to a division, in order that we may protest against the attempt on the part of the Government to alienate so large an area to so comparatively few settlers. I pass to Western Australia, by far the largest of the Australian Colonies, and with by far the smallest population, and

if responsible government were granted to that Colony in its naked form, the result would be that some 40,000 would have absolute control over the lands, which comprise an area of over a million miles. The right hon. Gentleman says that a certain portion of the area has been reserved for Imperial purposes, but we are not told exactly what that area is to consist of. The statement has been made that the land which is worth having is to be handed over to the responsible Government, whereas that portion of the area which is not worth having is to be reserved to the Imperial Authority. It is highly desirable that any measure dealing with the subject should not be relegated to the fag end of the Session, when only a small number of Members could possibly deal with it, but that it should be introduced at a time which will admit of thorough discussion. My hon. Friend referred to Bechuanaland. I am far from conceding that these two questions stand entirely on the same footing. Still, there are certain lessons which may be drawn from the analogy of Bechuanaland. The Government intend to reserve a certain portion of the territory of Western Australia. In what way has control to be exercised? The Governor would act in two capacities, as the High Commissioner does in South Africa. We all know there has been a considerable difficulty in South Africa in consequence of two offices being united in one and the same person. The fact of the High Commissioner of Cape Colony uniting in himself two distinct offices has created considerable difficulty. In one respect, the Governor of Cape Colony acts on the advice of the Cape Ministry and is responsible to the Cape Parliament; and it is very difficult for him to dissociate his action in that capacity for his feelings and modes of thought as the Representative of the Imperial Parliament. As Bechuanaland extends to the Zambesi, it is desirable that Imperial control should be retained, at any rate, for the present. Not very long ago the First Lord of the Treasury, speaking at Gloucester, gave a very distinct pledge on the subject. In view of the expression of opinion since by the Cape, and in view of the telegraphic Report of Sir Hercules Robinson's speech, I hope that pledge will be given by the Government in a

more marked manner than has hitherto been the case. I hope the point will be emphasized, so that we may have an opportunity of protesting against this alienation of Crown lands from Imperial control.

*SIR GEORGE BADEN POWELL: Mr. Courtney, hon. Gentlemen who urge a division on this Amendment are really criticizing the Secretary of State for doing something which he has not yet done. It is well known that nothing with regard to the alienation of these areas has yet taken place, and what is the use of taking a division on a point upon which the Secretary for the Colonies has not yet told us he has come to a decision? I hope my right hon. Friend will be able to explain exactly what portions of Western Australia are to be handed over to responsible government. I know as a matter of fact that a large portion of the residents in the South Eastern corner of Western Australia are very anxious that their portion of the Colony should not be placed under responsible government, but should continue under the control of the Imperial Government. The case differs with regard to those districts in which white labour is impossible; and, in my opinion, this country will always do well to retain some control over those portions in which European labour is not possible. I hope the Secretary of State will give due weight to the opinions of those who do not desire responsible government. As regards South Africa, I think we have plenty of lands there admirably suited to European colonization. I venture to think that some of the Governments in South Africa would be quite willing to take over territories on condition that emigrants to that country were admitted freely, and arrangements made for giving them lands. The Colonial Office have not yet told us what they are going to do in Bechuanaland and Western Australia, and those who do not desire to see the alienation of white lands without conditions would stultify themselves by passing judgment on that which has not yet been decided.

SIR G. CAMPBELL: I should have said that, as a matter of fact, a Bill has been brought in to the Western Australian Legislature by the Representative of Her Majesty's Government,

that being a Crown Colony, and, as I understand, it has been passed by the Local Legislature, making over to responsible government the whole of the temperate portions of Western Australia.

***BARON H. DE WORMS**: I cannot admit the accuracy of the hon. Member's statement. A Bill has passed, but we are not aware how its provisions now stand.

SIR G. CAMPBELL: Who introduced it?

***BARON H. DE WORMS**: I am not aware. I am not prepared to accept without reservation the statement of the hon. Member. A Bill has finally passed the the Legislative Council, and it is expected to arrive here in the first week in June. I will lay before the House all the correspondence on the subject, so that it will be in the hands of hon. Members before any Bill to give effect to this measure can be introduced. As my hon. Friend (Sir G. Baden-Powell) remarks, it is extremely difficult to discuss a question with which we are not acquainted, and it would be still more remarkable to pass a Vote of Censure on a scheme without knowing what that scheme is.

SIR G. CAMPBELL: I asked for the Bill, and was refused it.

***BARON H. DE WORMS**: I have not got a copy of the Bill as passed; I have not seen it myself. That shows how impossible it is to discuss questions of detail which are not before the Committee. Numerous representations have been made against the control of the Crown lands of Western Australia by a Parliament elected by the present population, and controlled by those who are said to be anxious that emigration from this country should not be increased. It is really in deference to those views that we stipulate that the Legislature should not have the power of alienating Crown lands north of the 26th parallel of south latitude. That is the stipulation which the Government have made; and the territory so preserved represents the greater part of the colony. That being the case, and those views being known to the Legislative Assembly of Western Australia, the Bill is understood to contain provisions in that sense; but should the contrary be found to be the case, the measure will have to be amended. Power is reserved to erect a

new colony in course of time to the north of that line. The portion so reserved is mainly within the tropics, and, therefore, much of it is not desirable as a field of labour for British emigrants, but it would not be possible to withhold from the future Legislature the control of the southern lands within which most of the present population reside; because if a responsible Government is to be given at all, it must be given to that part of the colony in which the civilized population chiefly resides. If the Bill should arrive at a period of the Session that would not permit of a full discussion of it, Her Majesty's Government will consider whether it should not be postponed to some future time, when it can be adequately considered. There need be no doubt that time will be given for the purpose of raising any objections that may be entertained to the scheme. It is impossible at the present moment to give the full scope of the measure, as I am not yet in a position to state the details. There was one question put to me by the hon. Gentleman opposite, and that was whether, in the event of a responsible government being granted, the Governor of Western Australia would occupy towards the reserved portions of the colony the same position as the High Commissioner at the Cape. I am not at present in a position to give an answer to that question, and can only say that there is not at the present moment any such intention. The hon. Member for Leith (Mr. Munro Ferguson) asked the question whether there was any intention to surrender the Imperial control in Bechuanaland. I have to say that there is no such intention, and I do not understand on what ground the hon. Gentleman could have based his question.

MR. MUNRO FERGUSON: I based my argument on the speech of Sir Hercules Robinson, and I asked whether the speech has met with the approval of Her Majesty's Government.

***BARON H. DE WORMS**: I pointed out yesterday that the only information the Government had received on that subject is exactly the same as that which anyone else possesses, and the hon. Member must be aware that it would be rather dangerous if we were to base our views of an important statement on a telegraphic summary in a

newspaper, which may not be accurate. I must therefore decline to express an opinion on the statement of Sir Hercules Robinson until I have had an opportunity of looking at an authentic report of it. As to South Africa and the general policy of the Government, I would appeal to the Committee not to press questions now, because Sir Hercules Robinson is coming home, and we shall then be able to obtain every information from him that may be desired. When, hereafter, the Estimates come before the Committee, I shall be in a better position to give full information to the House than I possess at the present moment, and I think it will be far better to wait until the Secretary of State has had that opportunity of completing his information.

*MR. G. OSBORNE MORGAN: I have waited to hear what the right hon. Gentleman has had to say, and I find it comes to very little. He has told us that a Bill is to be brought in, presumably by the Government, which is to reserve, or cut and carve out of the whole of this large province of Western Australia everything south of 26 degrees of latitude; that is, to take away from the Imperial Government every portion of the colony of Western Australia in which Europeans can work and live; in other words, he is taking all the plums out of the pudding. Let us look at the position in which this matter stands. In an area of a million square miles, there is a population of between 30,000 and 40,000; that is to say, there are about 40 square miles for every man, woman, and child. Can it be said that a country with so sparse a population as that is fit for self government? Now, I am sure the hon. Gentleman opposite who knows the Australian colonies well, will say that in the older Colonies there is a large Labour Party, who practically control legislation, and who are opposed to emigration from this country because a large influx of labourers necessarily affects the labour market and depresses the price of labour. Now in view of the fact that, every day new countries are being closed against our colonists, this subject is becoming one of great importance, and, When the Bill comes before us, I trust that the right hon. Gentleman will see his way to insist on the insertion of some provision which would prevent

self-governing colonies from objecting to, and placing under restraint, emigrants from this country.

DR. CLARK (Caithness): I am in the position of being able heartily to support the Government proposal in regard to Western Australia, which has made so little progress as a colony because of the way in which it has been controlled by Downing Street. I think the best thing that can be done for Western Australia will be to carry out the plan of Lord Knutsford, because it would enable the people of that part of the world—where there are, fortunately, neither Dutchmen nor Frenchmen, but merely Englishmen and Scotchmen—to bring out emigrants who would spend their money in their own fashion. I believe the limitations laid down by Lord Knutsford to be very wise, and that instead of the northern portion of the territory being cut off as the least valuable, it will be the most valuable, for it is well watered, and contains no poison bush. If this new scheme be successful we shall, I believe, see in that portion of Western Australia as big a population as we now find in other parts of the country. This is an attempt to scientifically divide Australia. What is called South Australia runs the whole extent of the continent for thousands of miles in each direction, and the fact is that the northern portion of Western Australia, together with the northern portion of South Australia, may throw in their lot with Northern Queensland, in which case you will have a grand colony possessed of great local resources, with splendid cattle runs and sheep tracts, in which there is no poison bush, and splendid opportunities for rearing horses for the Indian market. Therefore, the policy of the Government in the Bill they are going to bring in is, in my opinion, a very wise one, and I do not think the criticisms we have had passed on it here will be sustained. As far as I can understand the scheme, I thoroughly approve of it, as I think it will give the colony a fillip and enable it to ensure a due share of emigration while giving it full control of its own destinies. With regard to Bechuana-land I should like the Government to make up their minds as to the policy they intend to pursue. It is one of the best portions of the country, being for the most part well watered and offering

plenty of room for Europeans and other people; but at present nobody will go there except a number of land speculators who are endeavouring to get from the native chiefs concessions of land as well as facilities for gold mining. We have had no enunciation of the policy of the present Governors of Bechuanaland, and have been told of the unfair terms on which land and mining concessions are obtained. I hope the Government will do something to stop this. I do not want to press the matter now, because Sir Hercules Robinson is coming home very soon and we shall then be able to decide the Parliamentary questions that have to be settled, one of which is whether the Governor of the Cape should continue to be the High Commissioner, or what form our Government shall assume. We have splendid interests in South Africa, and if we only take care we may have a magnificent colony out there. After you have spent a million or two will you then hand over the Crown lands and everything else as has been the policy of the past, or will you adopt the wise policy of keeping a High Commissioner at the head of the Government and allowing the country to be ruled at the cost and according to the wishes of the Cape people? What do we find to be the history of the colonies governed from Downing Street? Why, in the case of New Zealand, so long as it was governed from Downing Street, there was nothing but war. We spent the money, and they fought and gained by the wars; but when the colonists have to pay for their own wars, then war generally ceases, and there has, as a fact, been no war in New Zealand since they have had to act on their own responsibility. And so, if you give Natal responsible government, there will be no wars there. I know something of South Africa, and I say that during the three years we held the Transvaal there was more bloodshed than during the 30 years the Boers held it. Under the Boers there were no wars, because they were not strong enough to be aggressive, and they had to temporize. I hope that the result of Sir Hercules Robinson's visit will be to induce the Government to adopt some policy and stick to it, for it will be better than the present condition of things. As to the

telegram from South Africa, my opinion is that nine-tenths of these telegrams are untrue, and I have therefore come to the conclusion that probably Sir Hercules said the very reverse of what is stated in the telegram which has been referred to. I, at any rate, shall refuse to believe the telegram until I see it verified.

*BARON H. DE WORMS: With regard to the views expressed by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Denbighshire, I must say I sympathize with them. The matter of the possible exclusion of emigrants from the colony is a matter worthy of very serious consideration.

MR. MUNRO FERGUSON: If the right hon. Gentleman opposite has not seen the Bill passed by the Legislature of Western Australia, he showed to the Committee that he understood the provisions sufficiently well. My hon. Friend pointed out that the Bill is well within the knowledge of the Colonial Office. The fact is, that the southern part of Australia is going to be given up to the administration of this particular class of people. Of course, where there is a sufficient population, we cannot deny for a moment that it is desirable that those resident in the Colony should manage their own affairs, but I contend that there is not a sufficient population in Western Australia to constitute it a self-governing colony. I should not be prepared, either, to hand over Bechuanaland on the same grounds. The telegram as to Sir Hercules Robinson may be wrong, but surely the correspondence relating to the High Commissionership in South Africa represents his views. If he goes back to South Africa, we know perfectly well what the policy of the Government will be. It is because of the distrust with which we view in some measure the proposals of Sir Hercules Robinson that we protest. I hope we shall be allowed to go to a division against this. Vote.

*SIR G. O. TREVELYAN (Glasgow, Bridgeton): I am sorry that the hon. Member for Caithness has mixed up with Western Australia the question of Bechuanaland, because in my opinion the two cases stand in a different position. Now, the state of things in Western Australia is admitted on all hands to be that a population of some 40,000

people is in some sort of technical and apparent possession of a territory of, roughly, 500,000 square miles, and the feeling both on this side of the water and in Australia is that this small population is to have absolute power over this great territory. Just as in Queensland the Colony is not willing to encourage immigrants because all the valuable lands not in freehold are under lease to pastoral tenants, so will the condition of Western Australia be in the future if it is handed over to a population of some 8,000 families without restriction. I cannot conceive anything more deliberately inexpedient not only in the interests of possible emigrants from Queensland or from our own shores, but in the interests of the Colony itself, than deliberately to set up a community of possessors of large tracts of territory who, under the somewhat ignoble and unaristocratic title of squatters, have made the great difficulties of our Australasian fellow-countrymen. The right hon. Gentleman has promised that full information shall be laid before Parliament, and that conditions shall be laid down under which Colonists shall be able to pass into the country; but that is not nearly enough. What we want is that, if those 8,000 families are put in possession of 500,000 square miles, a definite limit shall be put to the power of dividing the lands among themselves, which those who then will have the full authority will possess. If the right hon. Gentleman opposite will not give the Committee a guarantee that Government will introduce this Bill to the House, give it their sanction, and press it forward, unless it contains conditions that land-grabbing and land-jobbing on a big scale shall be impossible, and that the land shall be divided only in limited portions to those who are fortunate enough to be citizens of the new community. I would recommend the Committee to divide with my hon. Friend.

SIR G. CAMPBELL: I beg to say I believe that the Government are wholly and absolutely responsible for this Bill. I would rather discuss the question with the full knowledge that the Bill will be brought in at a proper time, and full opportunity afforded for discussing it; but we know that late in the Session the closure is applied, and Bills are rushed through the House. Unless, therefore, I have

some assurance from the Government that opportunity will be given for discussion, I shall take the sense of the Committee as a protest against the course which has been followed by the Colonial Office in this matter. This is not a case in which we are likely to find ourselves embroiled in war with a native population, but I wish to point out that in regard to self government in the United States, the Central Government always retains a full and ample control over unoccupied land; whereas in all British Colonies, without exception, land jobbing has prevailed. In South Africa millions of acres have been jobbed away, and money made out of the transaction. That is a system which I wish to see done away with.

*BARON H. DE WORMS: Of course it will be necessary to introduce a Bill into this House to give effect to the Bill which has been passed by the Legislature of Western Australia. Full power will be retained by the Imperial Parliament to lay down in the Bill what conditions they may think fit both as to immigration and as to the principles on which unoccupied land in the colony shall be dealt with.

*SIR G. O. TREVELYAN: After the very definite pledge which has been given by the right hon. Gentleman that the condition on which unoccupied land is to be taken shall be laid down in the Bill, I do not think my hon. Friend would be justified in pressing the Motion to a division.

*SIR J. SWINBURNE (Staffordshire, Lichfield): I should like to know, in reference to Bechuanaland, whether the Government intend to hold their hands until the arrival of Sir Hercules Robinson, before deciding whether that country is to be left under the Imperial Government or handed over to the Cape Colony. So far as the native races are concerned, it is important that we should know, once for all, what is the policy to be pursued in regard to the government of that part of Africa.

*MR. JAMES ELLIS (Leicestershire, Bosworth): I am afraid that the Committee are locking the door after the steed is stolen. I believe that the demand for self-government in Western Australia is more in consequence of the way in which land has hitherto been dealt with than anything else. The people of Western Australia, when they have had

self-government, have managed their affairs much better than the Colonial Office would have managed them, and we are wrong in stopping them now. It is for the purpose of putting a stop to land-grabbing that the people of Western Australia demand self-government, and I believe that almost the whole of the land that is sufficiently watered and fit for settlement has already been let on long leases to persons who intend to speculate in land. I imagine that the best thing we can do is to allow the people to manage the land in their own way.

SIR G. GAMPBELL: I do not think that the assurance which has been given by the right hon. Gentleman is quite satisfactory, but I am willing to withdraw the Motion on the understanding that a full opportunity will be afforded for discussing the Bill.

*BARON H. DE WORMS: I can give the hon. Member an assurance that the Bill will be brought in in time for a full discussion to take place upon it.

SIR G. GAMPBELL: Under those circumstances I will not press the Motion.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Original question again proposed.

*MR. PICTON (Leicester): In moving to reduce the salary of the Colonial Secretary by the sum of £50, said: The matter which I desire to bring before the Committee is one which, in my opinion, justifies me in asking for the earnest and serious attention of the Committee. To put it briefly, the case is this: On the 18th of June last year, a day generally supposed to be bright in the military annals of this country, a terrible massacre was perpetrated in a district of the Gold Coast by a force of native soldiers employed in the interests of the British Empire. In that massacre 700 poor people were slaughtered or otherwise done to death, 200 of them being women and children. I am sorry to say that this massacre has received the approval of the Colonial Secretary, I hope with an insufficient understanding at the time of what the facts were. More information has come to light since. But on the 3rd of August Lord Knutsford wrote these words, "I have to express my entire approval of your action"—that is the action of the Governor—"under the circumstances,

and my satisfaction at the good work which has been done by the Colonial Secretary and the other officers concerned." It may be thought that at that time full information had not reached this country as to the extent of the slaughter, and, indeed, that was the case, but those facts were fully known in September. And yet on the 29th of that month Lord Knutsford wrote a despatch deploring the great loss of life, but again expressing his approval of the action of the Governor. It is this letter of which I ask the Committee to express its disapproval in the manner my Motion indicates. In order to justify the Motion I must ask the permission of the Committee to lay the facts of the case before them in a little detail. The district in which the massacre occurred is very remote and has very little communication with anybody but officials. The newspapers of this country know nothing whatever about it. It lies inland from the sea and is upon the border of the notorious kingdom of Dahomey. This Crepi country is divided into a number of little communities which appear to have been organized more or less on the feudal system—or a savage imitation of the feudal system. There is a Chief named Quadjoe Deh supreme over that district. Under him there are subordinate chiefs, one of whom is placed over the settlement of Tavieve, and then there is another district and settlement called Shave. Between Tavieve and Shave there have been for 15 years' past many unpleasantnesses and much disturbance. It is well known that when once a quarrel breaks out in these districts, it is only by a wise and most careful exercise of diplomacy and the moral weight of superior civilization that peace can be preserved. But in this district we have adopted a very different method, as I shall presently show. On the 3rd of April, Quadjoe Deh, the Chief or King, reported to the District Commissioner, who is, of course, an official of the Government of the Colony, that an attack had been made by the people of Tavieve, under their Chieftain, upon the district of Shave. Accordingly, as reported in the Blue Book, Mr. Frederick Evans, the Colonial Secretary, directed the Assistant Inspector, Dalrymple, to proceed with an armed force to Akuse, and thence operate upon the disturbed district, and endeavour to

restore peace. I suppose that this officer, whose lamentable death followed, was zealous in the service to which he had given himself, and was anxious to take the shortest road to distinction. His ardour must have forewarned his superiors that some kind of caution was necessary, for I find in one of the papers a letter from the Colonial Secretary to this, I presume, young man, in which he is urged to be very careful how he proceeds. He is told that—

“The Tavie people are reported to be the most virulent and quarrelsome in the whole of Crepi, and are given to blocking the trade roads from the interior to the sea coast.”

Then a recitation is given of the previous disturbances they have had with the neighbouring King, and he is told that they have recently made peace, and the Government hopes that this peace will be confirmed. Then the letter goes on:—

“You will remember that the policy of this Government is not to irritate or engender a spirit of disaffection, but by peaceful and conciliatory measures to establish harmony among the peoples under its protection and teach them to look to the Government for advice and guidance. It is in this case especially important that no measures which may embarrass the Government, or bring it into discord with any part of Crepi should be allowed to take place. In this connection I must point out to you that the force placed at your disposal must not be used as a menace to the people with whom you have to deal, and it is required that you will not take offensive measures under any circumstances, or resort at all to the use of arms unless absolutely compelled to do so in the interests of the safety of yourself and Party. As already stated, a peaceful solution of the difficulty is what is required—conciliation, not aggression.”

That is admirable advice, and no doubt if the proceedings had been carried on in that spirit, I am convinced that this frightful massacre to which I refer never could have occurred. But when Assistant Inspector Dalrymple came to the borders of the district from which the raid had been made upon Shave, he seems to have arrived at the conclusion that the people there ought to be severely punished. Let me say here that he had great difficulty in inducing the Superior King Quadjo Deh to submit to his persuasion, and to refrain from attacking his rebellious feudatories. They might have been made to submit in a peaceable manner, but in a letter that he addressed on the 24th of April to the Colonial Secretary, he says:—

“I am of the opinion that unless the Tavieves be severely punished in a practical manner before the eyes of all Crepe, my mission must be a failure. I look to the Government for instructions as to the mode of chastisement to be dealt out to them, I may mention that I have rockets to burn villages.”

This last illustration of the weapons of civilization is akin to the battering-ram used in Ireland. It is a great pity we cannot carry out the Christian principles we profess by our Established Church a little more consistently than we do. This letter was not cordially received by the authorities of the Colony, and Assistant Inspector Dalrymple was warned that this was not quite the thing for which he had been sent out. On the 2nd of May a letter signed by the Colonial Secretary was dispatched to him in which these words occur:—

“In reference to the proposed punishment of the Tavieves, I am to recall your attention to the instructions given to you on leaving Accra, and to say that the relations which the Governor desires to see established between this Government and the Tavieves are not likely to be advanced by the means you suggest for adoption.”

In conclusion the Colonial Secretary says:—

“Should you find that it is not possible to bring about a satisfactory understanding between the Tavieves and their enemies, or to procure the arrest of the parties most concerned in the attack and firing upon the Chaves, without resorting to force, you are to report at once to me by special messenger, giving me full information as to the general disposition of the offending parties, their strength, &c., &c., &c., but his Excellency the Governor anxiously hopes that you will be able to bring your mission to a successful issue at an early date by the use of conciliatory measures only. You are not, however, on any pretext to resort to forcible measures without receiving the Governor's permission in that regard.”

Could any officer sent out on a responsible duty receive stricter orders than this young man received? But he was not content to obey his orders. He was determined, apparently, to act on his own responsibility. Accordingly, when he came to Tavie he met the subordinate Chief there, who is called Bello Kwabla. He told this Chief—what? That he must submit to the superior Government of Great Britain? No. That he must go to Peki, the seat of his superior lord. There was a blood feud between the two peoples. Bello Kwabla was afraid to go to Peki because, some fifteen years ago, a subor-

dinate King of Tavieve had been, as he alleged, treacherously murdered by the Chieftain of Peki, and he naturally feared that if he was put in the power of his savage superior he would suffer the same fate. Accordingly, he and his colleagues pleaded earnestly with the young Assistant Inspector that he might, instead of being sent to Peki, be taken down to Accra, and then the case between Tavieve and Shave might be tried by the English authorities, in whom they stated they had confidence. This young man would not yield to this appeal. He was staying in the house of the Chief, but he would not listen to the voice of sympathy and of justice. District Inspector Burnett, who ought to know the district very well, wrote a letter after the death of this unfortunate and misguided young man, in which he said that no other result but his death could have been expected by the course Assistant Inspector Dalrymple took. Unfortunately, the words of Mr. Burnett were not written until after the death of young Dalrymple. When Bello Kwabla refused to go to Peki, Dalrymple put his hand upon him—with no violence, I am bound to confess, but apparently in a friendly manner—and stated, "I arrest you in the name of the Queen"; and he called upon his men to arrest the subordinate Chiefs, with the result that eleven of them were taken into custody. Bello Kwabla, however, asked permission to go into his house to obtain some cloth; he availed himself of the permission granted to him to escape, and he was not for some hours afterwards seen. In a few moments Mr. Dalrymple, wisely thinking he ought not to wait under these circumstances, put his soldiers on the march, placed his ten remaining prisoners amongst them, and proceeded, it is believed, towards Crepi. After going some miles—I cannot ascertain the exact distance—it was observed that the bush on either side of the road was thronged with natives belonging to Tavieve. There was no concealment on the point. The jury before whom the trial subsequently took place declared that it was the custom to escort a Chief in this way, when he was going from one place to another, that the openness of the action of these people was a proof that it was not an ambush, and that they only intended to do

homage to the subordinate chieftains. However, when they had marched some miles, one of the Chiefs positively refused to go any further. The evidence then becomes conflicting, but the balance of evidence certainly seems in favour of what appears very likely in itself—namely, that Assistant Inspector Dalrymple, like a brave man, determined to have his orders carried out, and that he drew his pistol and shot the Chief. At any rate the man was shot and was killed.

*BARON H. DE WORMS: I beg the hon. Gentleman's pardon. Can he point to any despatch in which such a statement is made?

*MR. PICTON: I can only point to the memorial of the jury, signed with their names, in which they summarize the evidence given at the trial, and give their reasons for believing the evidence that Dalrymple shot the prisoner. I do not say this is proof positive; I am saying that it is a case for inquiry. Well, then, of course, there was more shooting, and poor Dalrymple was shot from the bush. Some of the witnesses have it that he was shot without any previous shot being fired. Instantly there was a general skirmish in the road and in the bush, and a considerable amount of murder was effected, the Tavieve people suffering more than the Houssas. I do not deny that this occurrence was an outrage upon British authority, and that it had to be dealt with. None of us would permit murder to be perpetrated in any part of the British dominions if it could be prevented. But there are different modes of preventing such an occurrence, and of dealing with it after it has taken place. What I wish to refer to is the mode of vengeance adopted, a mode of vengeance which has since been approved by the Secretary for the Colonies. As soon as this lamentable and terrible event was known orders were given at Accra to Assistant Inspector Akers to take a force of 50 Houssas—afterwards increased to 63—to obtain allies from Chief Quadjoe Deh of Peki and to march upon Tavieve. That place was taken without resistance on May 29th. Then Assistant Inspector Akers went down to Accra, leaving 50 Houssas and 50 Crepi allies to watch the town. Then arose another disturbance. The Peki people were

driven off and the Houssas were withdrawn. Subsequently Mr. Akers came back and recaptured the town of Tavieue. For a week afterwards the Houssas and their allies were pursuing the unfortunate people all about the bush, and the number slain, at first reported at 167, was afterwards ascertained to be between five and six hundred. Here I must read what Mr. Akers says:—

"I also enclose a correct list of all casualties that have occurred in Tavieue since the 11th of May last. So far as I have been able to ascertain, about 500 to 600 of the Tavieue men have been killed, and about 200 women and children have died of exposure and starvation, or been accidentally shot during the fighting. The population of Tavieue was some 2,000 souls before any fighting took place, and so I shall leave here about 1,200 men, women, and children."

It is easy to reconcile ourselves to events of this kind when they take place in a remote and savage land, the conditions of existence of whose people we can hardly understand. But suppose that a skirmish took place, say in Ireland, and between 500 and 600 of our fellow-countrymen were shot down by the police and military, and 200 women and children were injured or exposed to such privations that they died. Why everyone knows that a revolution would take place in popular opinion, that the whole population from south to north would rise and insist that this diabolical wickedness should come to an end at once, and Home Rule would undoubtedly be carried in the course of three months. But of course when things take place at such a distance from home we do not take them so much to heart. We shall be told of course that a murder had been committed. No doubt that was so, but we are obliged to look at the events that preceded it as well as the events which succeeded it. The Secretary of the Colony in one letter acknowledges that Mr. Dalrymple had somewhat exceeded his discretion. He was told to act in a conciliatory manner and to refer back to his superiors if further arrests were to take place. He acted, however, on his own authority, and therefore, although I cannot but profoundly regret his fate, I cannot help thinking that he was himself largely responsible. No doubt it was necessary to avenge the murder that was perpetrated, but it should have been avenged in a legal way. Surely

Mr. Pictou

there was no need for a campaign among a weak people, so badly armed as they were and so ready to submit to the exercise of the British jury system. What do the jury say in their memorial to the Secretary of State for the Colonies? They ask why neither a Judge nor a District Commissioner was sent to the Crepi country for the purpose of dealing with the alleged murder. Two prisoners, Bello Kwabla and Napael Seheh, were taken down to Accra and put on their trial before a jury. We glory in the institution of the British jury and offer it as a precious boon to backward races. Well, a jury was called together. Whether the jury was packed or not we have no proof. But certainly it was not packed in the interest of the prisoners. At any rate, the case was tried before the Acting Chief Justice of the Colony, Mr. Smith, and the charge was for conspiracy to murder Mr. Dalrymple. The evidence was exceedingly discordant, and it would puzzle a good lawyer to make out the truth from the contradictory statements. According to the report which I have seen the judge in his charge told the jury in effect that they could not possibly convict this man for the offence alleged. For it should be particularly noted that he was not in the first instance charged with murder, but with conspiracy to murder. The acting Chief Justice informed the jury that there was not sufficient evidence to substantiate the accusation that was made. Accordingly this man and his fellows in misfortune were acquitted. They were then brought forward upon a new accusation for murder and being accessory before the fact, whereupon the Attorney General entered at once a *nolle prosequi*, and the case was presumed to be at an end. But it did not end there. The Governor called together his Council and informed them, the Chief Justice being present, that the acquittal in the first trial was entirely against the evidence. He then persuaded the Legislative Council to pass a most extraordinary ordinance giving power to him to imprison these poor people without any trial at all simply at his discretion. I do not know what the law may be in the Colonies, but I cannot conceive that such a thing could take place here. What would be thought of a Bill of Attainder being introduced in Parliament

to punish a man who had been acquitted of murder? Yet this is what took place in the Gold Coast Colony under the ægis of the British Empire. The matter cannot be allowed to rest where it is; but there must be some further inquiry. I have no wish to divide the Committee unnecessarily if we have a distinct and frank assurance that an effort will be made to secure an impartial inquiry into what has actually taken place. That would be a strong reason for not dividing; but certainly things cannot remain where they are. In dealing with these unfortunate people it is not for a great Power like this, trained as it is in arts and civilization for centuries, to point to deeds of violence and say that these are a sufficient justification for indiscriminate vengeance. We are bound to treat the races which are subject to us sympathetically, and to show them a better example than that of their own savage life. Yet, upon the borders of this awful kingdom of Dahomey, we, a Christian nation, in order to punish fanatics for a casual act of murder, actually massacred 700 people, including 200 women and children. We are told that it is better that two guilty persons should escape than that one innocent man should suffer. In this case we have pursued a contrary principle. We have assumed that it is better to massacre hundreds of innocent people than to allow one guilty man to escape. I ask the House to realize its responsibility; and unless we have some satisfactory assurance that a searching and impartial inquiry will be made, I trust the Committee will mark its sense of the wrong done by reducing the salary of the Secretary of State and insisting that we shall be set right before the nations of the world. I beg to move the reduction of the Vote by the sum of £50.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item A, of £36,786 for Salaries, be reduced by £50, part of the Salary of the Secretary of State." — (*Mr. Picton*).

***BARON H. DE WORMS:** The hon. Member for Leicester (*Mr. Picton*) concluded his remarks by saying that he hoped an impartial inquiry will be made into the unfortunate occurrence to which he has drawn attention. I hope that if such inquiry be made, that it will be in a more impartial spirit than

has been shown by the hon. Member himself. The hon. Member said that a jury was empanelled to try the case, but that we were not told whether it was packed or not. That is a specimen of the impartial spirit in which the hon. Member considers that an inquiry of this sort should be conducted. The hon. Member has been only too anxious to agree with the finding of the jury, whether it was correct or not.

***MR. PICTON:** I said there was a strong case for inquiry, but I did not undertake to say whether the finding of the jury was correct or not.

***BARON H. DE WORMS:** The hon. Gentleman said the jury indicated that there was a possibility of one of the natives having been shot by Mr. Dalrymple, and he satisfied his own mind that such a possibility existed. But when he turned to the other jury who had to try the alleged murder of Mr. Dalrymple, he was not so satisfied. He did not come to the conclusion that the finding was incorrect, nor did he talk of the jury being packed. That is an example of the spirit of fairness displayed by the hon. Member. He began his observations by saying that the late Mr. Dalrymple had rockets with him, and he went on to insinuate that Mr. Dalrymple had used those rockets. Nothing of the sort. Mr. Dalrymple used no more force than was necessary. But having opened his case by saying that Mr. Dalrymple had rockets with him, the hon. Member said nothing further in regard to them. He simply drew conclusions as to what might have occurred if Mr. Dalrymple had used the rockets. Now what really occurred? There was a dispute between the King of Krepi and the people of Tavieue. The Colonial Governor sent Mr. Dalrymple with a small force to compose the quarrel. Mr. Dalrymple succeeded in allaying the quarrel, and after some trouble he induced the King of Krepi to dismiss his force. He then continued his march to Tavieue. But on his return, according to a letter from Mr. Burnett, a District Commissioner, the chief of the Tavieues laid an ambush for him, and a native Tavieue shot Mr. Dalrymple and killed him, and then pursued Mr. Burnett, and overtook some of his carriers, who dropped their loads and ran away to save their lives. Mr.

Dalrymple was shot before the Houssas who accompanied him fired. Two Houssas were killed and five missing. In the despatch which was written some time after Mr. Dalrymple's death. Mr. Bennett seems to have attributed Mr. Dalrymple's death, in part, to his own conduct. But there is no evidence in support of this view, and Mr. Bennett himself escaped death by discreetly running away. After the news of Mr. Dalrymple's death measures were taken for the arrest of the murderers. It is easy to arouse sympathy by calling attention to the great number of natives killed; but in order to vindicate the principles of justice it was necessary that Mr. Dalrymple's murderers should be punished. The spurious humanitarian views of hon. Members opposite would lead to more bloodshed than what may appear to be a sterner policy. Mercy and humanity are excellent things, and they ought to be carried out, but we owe something to those who are under our flag, and whose lives we are bound to protect. Surely we are bound to punish severely those who resort to murder?

*MR. PICTON: In this case, 200 of the victims were women and children.

*BARON H. DE WORMS: They perished from hunger and exposure. They were following the army—for it was an army—which attacked our small force. I protest against the word "massacre" being used. There can be no excuse for murder, and in this case there was no provocation whatever given by Mr. Dalrymple.

*MR. PICTON: Yes there was.

*BARON H. DE WORMS: I defy the hon. Member to show that there was any real provocation given by Mr. Dalrymple.

*MR. PICTON: I am sure the right hon. Gentleman has no desire to misrepresent me. It was not a case of wanting these people to go down to Tavieve. They would have gone gladly, but Mr. Dalrymple wanted them to go to Peki, the residence of their incensed enemy.

*BARON H. DE WORMS: What was Mr. Dalrymple sent there for? He was sent to prevent two hostile tribes from fighting, and how could he do it? One tribe had already separated peacefully, but the other was contemplating a raid

which would have resulted in great bloodshed. What could he do but arrest the ringleaders and try to prevent bloodshed? It was in the execution of that duty that Mr. Dalrymple was wantonly and treacherously murdered. The following two telegrams from the Colonial Secretary to the Governor confirm this:—

"Accra, May 19, 1888.

"A man brought to me by Riby Williams says that a man who was present when Dalrymple was shot told him that when Dalrymple arrested the Chiefs, he marched alongside Chief of Tavieve, that an ambush was made. Houssas saw and gave warning, but warning was disregarded, a man sprang out of bush and pointed his gun at Dalrymple a few paces off. Dalrymple waived him off, man fired and hit him in the stomach, a running fire ensued, Houssas bearing the body."

"Accra, May 22, 1888.

"Letter from Bennett, dated Ho, 14th May, received. It would appear that Mr. Dalrymple unfolded his plans to Chief of Tavieve, who was enabled to lay an ambush for him; that Tavieve, having shot Mr. Dalrymple, pursued Mr. Bennett, overtook some of his carriers, who dropped their loads and ran to save their lives. Mr. Dalrymple was shot before Houssas commenced firing; two Houssas killed and five missing."

I regret that the hon. Gentleman did not express any sympathy with this unfortunate man who was murdered in the execution of his duty, but tried rather to show that he was to blame.

*MR. PICTON: No.

*BARON H. DE WORMS: All the sympathy expressed by the hon. Member has been for the savages, and he tried all in his power to show that Mr. Dalrymple's murder was through his own fault. Why did the hon. Gentleman say that Mr. Dalrymple had rockets with him, unless he meant to imply that Mr. Dalrymple used them? As a matter of fact he never did use them. Does the hon. Member mean to say that Mr. Dalrymple was not entitled to take with him the ordinary means of defence? If the hon. Gentleman meant nothing, why did he say anything about rockets? If he meant something, he ought to have said what it was. The hon. Gentleman would have the Committee believe that a large force under Mr. Akers suddenly came upon a number of unfortunate men and shot them down. Surely he cannot have taken the trouble to investigate the facts of the case. Does not the hon. Member know that this is a most warlike and treacherous tribe,

and when Mr. Akers went to arrest the murderers he was met by the savages, who were very well armed, and who engaged in a pitched battle with the force under his command. The result was that the more civilized and better armed force had the advantage. It is very much to be regretted that in this unequal strife a great number of these people, as I admit, were killed. But the object was a necessary and a legitimate one—that of arresting and punishing the murderers of Mr. Dalrymple. These are the plain facts of the case. I regret, and the Secretary of State regrets, that so many of these people were killed, but when we have said that we have said all we can say, because it was necessary for those under the protection of our flag that every effort should be made to bring the murderers of Mr. Dalrymple to justice. It is impossible to put the case more fairly than the Secretary of State has done, when he says that, while he regrets very much this unfortunate loss of life, he acquits Mr. Akers of doing anything beyond that which he was entitled to do under the circumstances. I hope the Committee will not be misled by what has fallen from the hon. Member for Leicester, who has overstated one part of the case and understated another.

*MR. G. O. MORGAN: There can be no doubt that this was a most unfortunate affair, and, as usual in such cases, there is a good deal of difficulty about it. As I understand it, putting the statements of the hon. Member for Leicester and the Under Secretary together, it comes to this that Mr. Dalrymple was sent on a conciliatory mission at the head of a small number of persons. Well, Mr. Dalrymple is dead, and I do not want to say a word against him. He is not here to defend himself. It is only fair to him to say that he did nothing with which I can find fault with, except that he acted somewhat injudiciously. He has been shot, perhaps treacherously. But assuming that he was treacherously shot, without having given any provocation to his murderers, can it be said that it was necessary, in order to avenge his death, to kill 800 people. To say that would be perfectly monstrous.

*BARON DE WORMS: What I stated was that it was necessary to arrest his

murderers, and that the endeavour to arrest them led to resistance and to this unfortunate bloodshed.

*MR. G. O. MORGAN: Was it necessary, in order to arrest the murderers, that out of a population of 2,000 some 800 should be killed, including 200 women and children? It is a most unprecedented thing, and in my opinion this unfortunate matter calls for inquiry. At present we have had none. Unless some sort of impartial inquiry is conceded to my hon. Friend, I shall support his Motion.

DR. CLARK: I was astonished to hear the reply of the right hon. Gentleman. I am not often astonished, because it is rarely that right hon. Gentlemen opposite attempt to reply to the arguments adduced on this side of the House, or to give reasons for their action. The right hon. Gentleman sat down without having said a single word in defence of Mr. Akers' action, nor has he given a single reason why this chief, after having been tried by a jury and acquitted, should be tried again and kept a prisoner for life, a Bill having been brought in and carried in a single morning for that purpose. Not a single word has been said in defence of that policy. We are always fighting with these savage tribes on the Gold Coast, and we are fighting now as we used to fight in the Highlands 200 years ago. A mission appears to have been sent out for the purpose of trying to conciliate two native tribes. Mr. Dalrymple said the object of the mission was to endeavour to effect a peaceful reconciliation. But what did Mr. Dalrymple do? He disregarded and disobeyed the instructions of his superior, the Governor of the Gold Coast and his own Commissioner Mr. Burnett, and he wrote that he was of opinion that the natives of Tavieue ought to be punished. He added these words "I may mention that I have rockets with me to burn the village." You have Mr. Dalrymple going on a peaceful mission to reconcile two hostile tribes, but Mr. Dalrymple like many others in such a position being ambitious of distinction, and wanting promotion, having his Houssas around him, thought he would try warlike operations on his own account and wipe out the Tavieue chief. Despite the warning of his superior officer, he resolved to carry on a war

on his own account. In the sixth paragraph of Mr. Burnett's Report, the Commissioner said it was his deliberate opinion that the troubles arising with the Taviees after his departure arose in a great measure from the fact that Mr. Dalrymple very unwisely expressed his intention of making the chief a prisoner, and he (Mr. Burnett) strongly advised Mr. Dalrymple not to attempt it, but Dalrymple laughed at his fears. So here was a young man in authority who laughed at the advice of his superior officer the Chief Commissioner, disregarded the orders of the Governor as to the object of his mission, and there is the result that as one of the consequences he is killed. You have had the evidence from both sides. The Chief was being taken a prisoner into the camp of his hereditary enemy—why, it is similar to taking a Home Rule leader to Belfast to be tried by Orangemen. There was a blood feud between the tribes of the bitterest character, and it had existed for years, but instead of sending the Chief of Accra to be brought to trial before judges in whom he would have had some confidence, he was being taken among his hereditary enemies, and some of the more active members of his tribe seeing their Chief about to be taken away, as they would think to death, planned a rescue. The result was that Mr. Dalrymple met his death through his own folly and disobedience to orders, having laughed at and scorned the objections of his superior officer. A force was then sent to avenge his death, and some 800 of these Taviees were murdered while only five Houssas were killed and wounded. Naturally this was the result when a force armed with breech-loading guns fought with natives armed with old guns and spears. Mr. Dalrymple's murder was avenged by the death of 800 Taviees, some killed at once, others dying from wounds and starvation. The Chief and head man were tried and found not guilty, Judge and jury both being against conviction. More vengeance, however, was wanted, and so a Bill was rushed through the Legislative Council, a Council principally composed of members subservient to the will of the Governor, and the Taviee Chief, though acquitted by Judge and jury of the crime imputed to him, is detained a prisoner. Even the

Attorney General refused to go on with another indictment. And yet the Colonial Office is satisfied with the perversion of justice by which this unfortunate Chief is detained in prison.

***BARON H. DE WORMS:** The men are detained in the interest of the public peace, and because a renewal of disturbance is apprehended were they to be sent back at the present time. There is another matter I did not wish to allude to, but as I am challenged with it I must. Great stress has been laid upon the observations of Mr. Burnett, and the hon. Member for Leicester attached great importance to the blame imputed by Mr. Burnett to the unfortunate Mr. Dalrymple. Mr. Burnett has been compelled to resign his appointment in consequence of his cowardice on the occasion, and the evidence given to the Committee by the hon. Members opposite is that which Mr. Burnett gave against the man whom he did not support. Mr. Burnett is no longer a Member of the Civil Service of the Colony, because of his conduct on the occasion, and I think hon. Members would have done well to have omitted these references.

MR. W. JAMES (Gateshead): I should like to say a few words upon this matter if only to bear testimony to the terms of studied moderation in which the hon. Member for Leicester referred to the action through which Mr. Dalrymple forfeited his life, and to contrast the language with that employed by the Under Secretary for the Colonies. The matter and form of the latter speech are not calculated, I think, to improve future trade relations, British credit, British prestige, or the honourable name of this country, in this dark corner of the earth or in other parts of the world. The right hon. Gentleman in defending the course taken, sustained a part, played a rôle we have heard and seen again and again. The proceedings complained of, he says, were not a massacre—well, as a matter of fact, every battle is more or less a massacre—but the whole tone and spirit of the remarks of my hon. Friend, he said, were likely to engender more difficulties and bloodshed, and then the Under Secretary gave expression to what I may call the "British Lion" view, calculated to precipitate party feelings and

to prevent impartial discussions of this matter. For my part I think these transactions on distant coasts are as distasteful to our political opponents as they are to us. The attitude of the right hon. Gentleman is not for the credit of this country, and is calculated to repeat the difficulties into which we have been brought by "prancing Pro-Consuls" in different parts of the world. In the growth of our Colonial Empire we have found that before the conquering spirit of British enterprise aboriginal races disappear, and our humbler fellow creatures, such as the Indians in Canada, the Maories in New Zealand, and the natives of Australia cease to exist; but that is not so in Africa, where the black tide of humanity is ever before us. We only occupy a small fringe of the coast line, and are ever liable to troubles, which the spirit of the right hon. Gentleman is not likely to mitigate. The right hon. Gentleman thought he produced an effect by stating that Mr. Burnett was dismissed for cowardice, but it is quite conceivable that the officials who take an exaggerated view of what should be our policy towards the natives, are likely to condemn for cowardice those who do not entirely approve of their conduct. On all these points a full and impartial inquiry is necessary; the reply of the Under Secretary is eminently unsatisfactory, and thanks are due to the hon. Member for Leicester for bringing this matter forward.

*SIR R. N. FOWLER (London): It is, I think, the feeling of the Committee that everybody must deplore the very sad events that have taken place, but the question is, what is to be done? The hon. Gentleman opposite, who has rendered a service in bringing the question before the House, recommends that a Commission of Inquiry should be sent out, and I should be very glad to see that done if it were possible to get a good Commission to go out. I do not think the hon. Member for Leicester would be disposed to leave his duties here, or even in the Recess would care to go out on such a mission to the Gold Coast. There would be great difficulty, I fear, in finding impartial men to go out. Now, I do not like the new principle, the new practice which is springing up of making Votes on Supply an opportunity for moving Votes of Censure

upon the Government. Such a practice did not exist when I came into the House, and I do not like it now. If the hon. Member for Leicester had made these events the foundation of a substantive Motion for censuring the local administration in this part of the world, I should have been glad to support him, but the form the Motion now takes is a Vote of Censure on Lord Knutsford. Now, I would appeal to hon. Gentlemen on either side, do they know a more humane man than Lord Knutsford? I do not see how we can have a better tribunal to investigate the case. Lord Knutsford may have erred in his decision, but I am not prepared to censure him for that in the manner proposed.

*SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL: I agree with my hon. Friend the Member for Gateshead (Mr. James), the saddest, most dangerous point in reference to this matter is the answer we have had from the Under Secretary, though I cannot agree with him as to the necessity of an inquiry. I do not see that much good would be done by that, for the facts are patent. We have two tribes engaged in a quarrel in the neighbourhood of a small British settlement; a British officer is sent out to interfere, and he is killed in a scuffle; the term murder is not well applied, practically it was a scuffle in which the officer was killed. This unfortunate occurrence arose out of some indiscretion on the part of the officer, but not out of any great breach of duty. Then we sent out a force which took a merciless revenge in the slaughter of some 800 human beings, and this part of the transaction is to be regretted, to be deeply deplored, to be spoken of with bated breath, and in such a tone as will not encourage other officers in other Colonies to adopt such a course without the direst, most absolute necessity. I would speak with strong feeling on this subject, for I am inclined to think that this is not the worst case, among many such cases we have from time to time heard of from the coast of Africa, or distant isles in the Pacific. Disputes arise between traders and natives, the British Consul is appealed to, and takes the part of the traders, a man-of-war and an armed force sent for, and a merciless massacre helpless natives follows. Scarcely

year passes without such incidents. It is to be deplored that the Under Secretary for the Colonies should have attempted not to excuse or mitigate what has happened, but to justify it out and out in the manner he has.

SIR W. HARCOURT (Derby): I think the observations of the hon. Baronet the Member for the City of London (Sir R. Fowler) throw a very important light on this discussion. I quite agree with him that this is not an occasion for passing a Vote of Censure upon Lord Knutsford, but we ought to take note of this, that throughout the debate the opinion which has been expressed on both sides and well presented by the hon. Baronet is that of these very deplorable events serious notice ought to be taken, and measures should be adopted to prevent the recurrence of such circumstances. Now I have long had the means of knowing the humane part which the hon. Baronet has always taken in discussions affecting natives of far distant lands, and it is worthy of him to express the opinion that if there had been an opportunity for moving a Vote of Censure upon the authorities on the spot who are responsible for these transactions, he would have voted in support of it.

*SIR R. N. FOWLER: Hear, hear.

SIR W. HARCOURT: That is a very different thing to what has been urged by the Under Secretary for the Colonies. With the exception of that right hon. Gentleman, there is no man who has not spoken in a tone of condemnation of the manner in which the unfortunate death of Mr. Dalrymple was followed up. This is really the point of this discussion, and in regard to what the hon. Baronet has said as to making this a substantive Motion, it must be remembered that Tuesdays and Fridays have been practically appropriated to Supply, and the manner in which the subject is now brought forward is the only manner open to the House to express an opinion which as the hon. Baronet says he would himself desire to express. I do not think that if it had been Lord Knutsford who had to answer for the Colonial Office in this discussion, he would have answered as the right hon. Gentleman has. What I imagine is desired on this side of the House is to convey an opinion to Lord Knutsford, who is the Minister respon-

sible for the government of the Colonies, the desire that measures should be taken to prevent a recurrence of such transactions as these. I do not know whether it is possible to send out a Commissioner or not, but if it is not it shows that we are unable to fulfil the duties we have undertaken. We have great responsibilities, and we have a great power which we have to guard against abusing. I believe that with the single exception of the Under Secretary for the Colonies, there is hardly a man in the House who thinks that in this case the giant's power has not been abused. The object of the debate will be accomplished by making known to the Government the opinion of the Committee that these transactions ought not to have taken place, and that some measures ought to be taken to prevent a repetition of them. The case is not satisfactorily met by the hoity-toity tone of the Under Secretary, conceived not so much in the tone of the British Lion as in the vindictive spirit of the British Tiger. The object of the debate will have been accomplished if it is known that the House of Commons condemns the manner in which this matter was dealt with, and conveys to the Government its view that measures ought to be taken to prevent a recurrence of such transactions.

*BARON H. DE WORMS: I must protest against the observations of the right hon. Gentleman, who seemed to imply—and the hon. Member for Kirkcaldy (Sir G. Campbell) took the same line—that I was in no way struck with the terrible result of these unfortunate transactions. I repeated over and over again in relation to this matter that I deplored the terrible result as much as anybody could, though I expressed my belief that under the circumstances it was unavoidable. There is a great difference between regretting what has taken place and blaming those who took part in these transactions, though the right hon. Gentleman (Sir W. Harcourt) does not appear to appreciate or understand the distinction. There was no massacre in the sense that hon. Members would have us understand it. All that Mr. Akers had to do was to arrest ten men guilty of a most barbarous murder, a murder of the most treacherous kind, by savages in ambush. The Governor of the English

Colony on the Gold Coast rightly thought it was his duty to bring the murderers of Mr. Dalrymple to justice, and it was through resistance to the process of law that the unfortunate result happened which I as well as everybody in the House deplore.

*MR. PICTON: After the observations of the right hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary, I feel bound to take a Division, however few may be those who intend to vote in the cause of humanity. After what the right hon. Gentleman has said, and after what I cannot but take to be the intentionally unfair manner in which he has treated the motive and manner of my address to the Committee, I may be permitted a word or two of explanation. The right hon. Gentleman evidently does not include me or the natives of West Africa in his very cosmopolitan sympathies, and thinks it necessary to impute to me motives and a lack of sympathy with the victims of crime which I hope most of my friends know are far from my disposition. The right hon. Gentleman reminds me of the hackneyed story of the solicitor who gave advice as to the mode of conducting a bad case, but in his endeavour to affix some stigma upon me he has betrayed ignorance of affairs in which he is supposed to have some subordinate authority. He said that Mr. Dalrymple was about to take the murderers to Accra, but this was just what he would not do, and what the so-called murderers wanted him to do. If hon. Members will refer to the Blue Book they will see that these chiefs and head-men wanted to be taken to Accra, and were willing to stand their trial at Accra; but Mr. Dalrymple decided they should not go there, but that they should be taken into the power of their ancient bloodthirsty enemies the Crepis. I think the right hon. Gentleman was a little unjust in his forgetfulness of this most important item in the facts. Then the right hon. Gentleman says I displayed no sympathy for the fate of Mr. Dalrymple. Well, I need not reply to that, for I am sure my hon. Friends interpreted my observations in a very different sense. As to what the right hon. Gentleman considered the very conclusive fact that Mr. Commissioner Burnett was dismissed for

cowardice, of course I am not in a position to defend Mr. Burnett, but my argument does not depend upon this gentleman's valour or cowardice, but simply on this, that the authorities at the Colony and the Colonial Secretary warned Mr. Dalrymple in emphatic words that he was not going on a war-like errand, and that he was not to exercise coercion, and that if violence appeared necessary, he was again to apply to headquarters before taking any such measures. The officer thought violence was necessary; he did not refer to headquarters; he made a violent arrest, and hence the result we deplore. Why, does the right hon. Gentleman expect that any savage would be content to be taken like a lamb and delivered to his hereditary enemy? He did not come under British dominion for that; he claimed to be tried by impartial Judges and an impartial tribunal. Something has been said by the hon. Baronet (Sir R. Fowler) about the undesirability of passing a Vote of Censure on Lord Knutsford. I propose nothing of the sort; it is a Vote of Censure on the system pursued towards the native races. I do not want specially and personally to make Lord Knutsford responsible for this series of blunders and crimes. It is not to be expected that any man, however humane and enlightened, can suddenly desert the current of your bad policy. Do not be misled; it is not a Vote of Censure on Lord Knutsford. I ask for support to a protest in a well-known form, expressing a reprobation of what has been done, and on our part I desire that this policy shall be amended in the future. Therefore it is that I move this reduction.

DR. CLARK: In addition to our own forces—of whom only two were killed and three wounded—we were assisted by 3,000 natives belonging to a tribe between whom and those we were attacking existed a blood feud. For these natives we could not be responsible, and I protest against the horrible system of employing the services of such people on an occasion of this kind as I protested last year in regard to the Zulus.

The Committee divided:—Ayes 106; Noes 191.—(Div. List, No. 94.)

Original Question put, and agreed to,

MR. J. NOLAN (Louth, N.): I desire to direct the attention of the hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary for the Colonies to a rather unfortunate condition of affairs existing in the Falkland Islands. I believe some friction has arisen between the Governor of the colony and the Colonial Surgeon in regard to some quarantine regulations, and I am informed that an application has been made by the Governor to the Government to have the Colonial Surgeon dismissed. I desire to know whether the Government will inquire into this matter. The residents on the Falkland Islands are well pleased with the surgeon, and seeing that there is only one medical man there, it is desirable that he should always be a gentleman acceptable to the families. I mention this matter now as I do not think another opportunity will arise before the mail leaves.

*BARON H. DE WORMS: I will inquire into the matter.

Resolution to be reported upon Monday next; Committee to sit again this day.

SUPPLY.

Order for Committee read.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

THE OPIUM TRADE WITH CHINA.

*MR. SAMUEL SMITH said, I rise in pursuance of the Notice I have placed on the Paper,

"To call attention to the Opium Trade with China; and to move, that this House views with deep regret the history of our Opium policy towards China, and regards the traffic in that drug as repugnant to the true interests of that country; that it calls upon the Government of India to take steps looking to the final extinction of the trade, and urges upon Her Majesty's Government to intimate to the Chinese Government that in the next revision of the Treaty of Tientsin full power will be given to extinguish the trade in Opium if it thinks fit."

I am conscious that I am raising a question of extraordinary difficulty; but I am so impressed with the gigantic evil of this opium trade that I cannot remain silent with regard to it. Our nation has woven for itself a network of difficulty in connection with the opium trade from which extrication seems to be almost impossible; yet we cannot sit still and idly fold our

hands. I therefore ask the House once more to register a protest against England's greatest national sin. We have had no debate on the Opium Question in this House since the year 1886. There are no doubt many hon. Members to whom this subject may be somewhat strange, and who have not heard the old debates that used to take place upon it; consequently it will be necessary for me to-night to go to some extent over ground that has been trodden before, in order that all Members of this House may be able to judge of the morality of the position we occupy. We cannot form such a judgment except in connection with the history of the past. We find ourselves the heirs of what has gone before, and it is only by getting some competent knowledge of the past history of the subject that the House will be able to form a judgment as to the responsibilities that rest upon it. I will therefore attempt to prove the two following propositions—first, that we forced the opium trade upon China against its determined opposition and; secondly, that it has done incalculable harm to that country. To prove the first of these two propositions, I must take a rapid survey of our relations to China. The Chinese opium trade is one of comparatively modern growth. As far as I can gather from the early history of that country, there was no common use of opium there in the sense in which it now exists until towards the close of the last century. There is no allusion to it in the literature of the country as a national vice in the sense in which it is spoken of to-day. Indeed, there is no evidence that opium smoking was a common practice in China until towards the end of the last century and the beginning of this. Up to the year 1767 the export of opium from India to China seldom exceeded 200 chests a year; in 1767 that amount was increased, and it grew during that century to about 4,000 chests, while now it has gone up to the terrible figure of 100,000 chests a year. As soon as the habit began to spread, the Chinese Government passed stringent regulations against the use, manufacture, and sale of opium in their dominions. These regulations became more and more severe until at last the Chinese Government went so far as to decree capital punishment against those who either smoked or

sold opium. When the trade was forbidden it was carried on between India and China by smugglers, the opium being sold by the East India Company to the smugglers for the avowed purpose of being run into China, the profit derived from the trade being divided between the Company and the smugglers. To show what the East India Company thought of the effects of this drug I will quote a few lines from a despatch dated 1817, in which they say—

“Were it possible to prevent the use of the drug altogether we would gladly do it in compassion to mankind.”

But, notwithstanding this fine sentiment, the East India Company were not ashamed to make a profit out of the degradation of the Chinese. The trade thus went on until in 1836 the Chinese Government made a determined effort to stop it, and resolved once for all to stamp it out. The result of that action on their part was the first Chinese War. The act which immediately led to that war was the destruction of 20,000 chests of opium, which were seized by the Chinese Authorities at Canton and thrown into the river, in doing which the Chinese Government were acting entirely within their own rights. What would have any European country have done under similar circumstances? We had no right to go to war on such a ground, but unhappily we did go to war and bombarded Canton and many other defenceless towns, and in the end compelled the Chinese to pay to the smuggling traders an indemnity for the opium destroyed. Still, we could not get them to legalize the trade. Our Ambassador, Sir H. Pottinger, tried it, and what was the noble reply made to him by the Chinese Emperor? He said—

“It is true, I cannot prevent the introduction of the flowing poison. . . Gain-seeking and corrupt men will, for profit and sensuality, defeat my wishes, but nothing will induce me to derive a revenue from the vice and misery of my people.”

Then a letter was written by the Chinese Government to Sir H. Pottinger, in which they said—

“Our nations have been united by a friendly commercial intercourse for 200 years. How then, at this time, are our old relations so suddenly changed, so as to be the cause of national quarrel? It arises most assuredly from the spreading opium poison. Opium is neither pulse nor grain, and yet multitudes of our

Chinese subjects consume it, wasting their property and destroying their lives, and the calamities arising therefrom are unutterable. How is it possible for us to refrain from forbidding our people to use it?”

That was what a heathen Government wrote to Christian England. And now I will read a few words from one whose authority, I am sure, will be recognized by this House. I refer to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. Gladstone). Speaking in the year 1840, about the Chinese War, the right hon. Gentleman said—

“They gave you notice to abandon your contraband trade. When they found that you would not, they had a right to drive you from their coasts, on account of your obstinacy in persisting in this infamous and atrocious traffic. You allowed your agent to aid and abet those who were concerned in carrying on that trade; and I do not know how it can be urged as a crime against the Chinese that they refused provisions to those who refused obedience to their laws whilst residing within their territories. A war more unjust in its origin, a war more calculated to cover this country with permanent disgrace, I do not know, and I have not read of. The right hon. Gentleman opposite spoke of the British flag waving in glory at Canton. That flag is hoisted to protect an infamous contraband traffic; and if it never were hoisted, except as it is now hoisted on the coast of China, we should recoil from its sight with horror.”

The right hon. Gentleman has spoken many noble words, but he certainly never spoke any that were nobler or truer than these. Nevertheless, the smuggling of opium into China still went on until, in 1858, it had the effect of producing the second Chinese War, which sprang out of the case of the *lorcha Arrow*, which was seized by the Chinese. This was during the Government of Lord Palmerston. In this war the Chinese were again defeated, the capital of China was taken, and the Chinese compelled at the point of the bayonet to legalize the trade in opium under the Treaty of Tientsin. Therefore, it was not till we had fought two successful wars that we were enabled to bring about that result. The trade then went on; but what the Chinese thought about the matter may be gathered from what was said by Sir Thomas Wade, our Ambassador at Peking, who wrote the following despatch to the British Government in 1868:—

“We are generally prone to forget that the footing we have in China has been obtained by force, and by force alone, and that, unwarlike

and unenergetic as we hold the Chinese to be, it is in reality to the fear of force alone that we are indebted for the safety we enjoy at certain points accessible to our force. . . . Yet nothing that has been gained, it must be remembered, was received from the free-will of the Chinese; more, the concessions made to us from time to time have been, from first to last, extorted against the conscience of the nation; in defiance, that is to say, of the moral convictions of its educated men; not merely of the office-holders, whom we call mandarins, and who are numerically but a small proportion of the educated class, but of the millions who are saturated with a knowledge of the history and philosophy of their country. To these, as a rule, the very extension of our trade must appear politically, or what is in China the same thing, morally wrong; and the story of foreign intercourse during the last 30 years can have had no effect but to confirm them in their opinion."

These were the deliberate words of our own Ambassador at Pekin—the one who extorted the Treaty of Tientsin. There is one more quotation on this point of the subject which I should like to read. I do not know anything more touching, and I am sure there is not one here but will feel the force of it. Here is our Ambassador's despatch of 1869, in which he reports that the Chinese Minister used the following notable words in reply to the charge that the Chinese Government were hostile to foreigners. The Chinese Ministers at first disputed the fact, but—

"In the end Wen-Seang shifted his ground, and asked how could it be otherwise? They had often seen foreigners making war on the country; and then, again, how irreparable and continuous was the injury which they saw inflicted upon the whole Empire by the foreign importation of opium! If England would consent to interdict this—cease either to grow it in India, or to allow their ships to bring it to China—there might be some hope of more friendly feelings. No doubt there was a very strong feeling entertained by all the literati and gentry as to the frightful evils attending the smoking of opium, its thoroughly demoralizing effects, and the utter ruin brought upon all who once gave way to the vice. They believed the extension of this pernicious habit was mainly due to the alacrity with which foreigners supplied the poison for their own profit, perfectly regardless of the irreparable injury inflicted, and naturally they felt hostile to all concerned in such a traffic. . . . If England ceased to protect the trade, it could then be effectually prohibited by the Emperor; and it would eventually cease to trouble them, while a great cause of hostility and distrust in the minds of the people would be removed."

I confess it is very difficult to read these words without feeling ashamed. I do not believe that, if the British

people had fully understood the nature of these operations and the policy we were pursuing towards China, that they would ever have tolerated what we were doing. The great mass of the nation knew nothing about the question. Parliament was not at that time as fully representative of the views of the people as it is now. I do not believe that any educated democracy would tolerate such cruel and unjust conduct towards a helpless nation as we at that time practised towards China. Well, I have only one more step to allude to, and that will bring to an end this brief review of the history of our relations with China. I said that the Treaty of Tientsin legalized the trade in opium. But, after a few years, the opium merchants began to complain that local dues were placed upon opium in the interior, so high as to somewhat restrict the trade. The Treaty of Tientsin, it appears, only provided for an Import Duty payable at the Customs. And so they began, backed up by the Indian Government, to agitate that we should urge upon China to abolish these inland imposts so as to make it easier for opium to get up the country. And so we had the Chefoo Convention in 1876, providing that there should be no "likin" imposts in the interior, but that a certain fixed duty should be paid at the port in addition to the Foreign Import Duty. This Chefoo Convention was not considered to be sufficiently favourable to British trade by the Home Government, and it remained unratified for no less than nine years. All that time our Government continued to urge upon China more favourable terms. At last the ratification was completed in the year 1885. And, if I am not mistaken, the total amount of duty now chargeable is 110 "taels" per chest. But that Convention was liable to be cancelled by twelve months' notice from either Power from the year 1890. And I wish to call the attention of the House to this important fact, that we are approaching a time when either England or China can give notice to end this Convention; and it is partly in view of this that I venture to bring this question before the House. Now, what I have said I think will lead those who are present to accept the first part of the Resolution—namely—

Mr. S. Smith

"That this House views with deep regret the history of our opium policy towards China, and regards the traffic in that drug as repugnant to the true interests of that country."

I think I may challenge the unanimous assent of this House to this proposition. Now, I am quite aware that within the last few years a feeble and a futile effort has been made to persuade the British public that the use of opium is not noxious, that opium is a comparatively healthy drug, and that it may be used by the great mass of the Chinese without any greater harm than results from the use of beer by our population, or even with any greater harm than from tobacco smoking. There is one gentleman, Sir George Birdwood, who has signalized himself by propounding what I must call preposterous views in posing as an apologist of the opium trade. Now, in order to induce the House to believe that the evils resulting from the use of opium are no less than the Chinese Government have always alleged, I shall be required to cite some competent witnesses. I may state to the House that for some 20 years at least I have been in the habit of discussing this question with persons long resident in China. I have gathered the opinions of many missionaries and medical men—men in charge of the hospitals, and who have gained an intimate knowledge of the evils arising from the use of opium. I have collected a large amount of information on the subject during those 20 years, and I make this statement to the House that I have never come across a single disinterested witness who did not regard the common use of opium as one of the most terrible curses that could befall humanity. [Sir G. CAMPBELL: Worse than whisky?] I say much worse than whisky. A man may give up the use of whisky and recover, but the opium eater, after a certain stage, cannot give it up, because to do so means speedy death. In any case, the recovery from the use of opium causes such torments, such exquisite suffering, that not one man in a thousand can undergo the ordeal. I will call two witnesses, both of them competent—two of our own Ambassadors to China, the two men who negotiated our Treaties with China, the one Sir R. Alcock, and the other Sir Thomas Wade. Sir R. Alcock examined before a Com-

mittee of this House in 1871, answered the following question:—

"Can the evils, physical, moral, commercial, and political, as respects individuals, families, and the nation at large, of indulgence in this vice be exaggerated? (Sir R. Alcock.) "I have no doubt that, where there is a great amount of evil, there is always a certain danger of exaggeration; but looking to the universality of the belief among the Chinese, that whenever a man takes to smoking opium, it will probably be the impoverishment and ruin of his family—a popular feeling which is universal both among those who are addicted to it, who always consider themselves as moral criminals and amongst those who abstain from it, and are merely endeavouring to prevent its consumption—it is difficult not to conclude that what we hear of it is essentially true, and that it is a source of impoverishment and ruin to families."

That was the unwilling evidence given by our own Ambassador. Now I will give you the evidence of Sir Thomas Wade, who was intimately acquainted with the Chinese people and knew their language, who lived long in the country, and who, I believe, is even a more competent witness than Sir R. Alcock, and he says that it does greater mischief than drink, because it works insidiously and does not show external evidence of the effects which expose the victim of habitual drunkenness. His words are:—

"It is to me vain to think otherwise of the drug in China than as of a habit many times more pernicious, nationally speaking, than the gin and whisky drinking which we deplore at home. It takes possession more insidiously, and keeps its hold to the full as tenaciously. It has insured, in every case within my knowledge, the steady descent, moral and physical, of the smoker; and it is so far a greater mischief than drink, that it does not, by external evidence of its effect, expose its victim to the loss of repute which is the penalty of habitual drunkenness."

I think I could rest my case on the testimony of our two Ambassadors, competent witnesses, who were not likely to weigh unduly the charge against their own country, and whose natural bias would be the other way. But I will add to that testimony one or two statements made by missionaries of long experience in China. I believe there is no class of men who are so capable of giving an honest and true opinion upon such a question as the men who spend the greater part of their lives labouring among the poor Chinese, and, in many cases, attending in the hospitals, where they become acquainted

with the evils of opium in a way that the merchants do not know of. Now here is the evidence of Archdeacon Wolfe, written only last September:—

“In consequence of the removal of the local tax on the sale of opium, the drug is very much cheaper than before; consequently its use is rapidly spreading among all classes, and is fast destroying the vitality of this people. The devil could not have invented a more pernicious vice for the destruction of soul and body than this of opium smoking, and woe to the man who by word or deed gives any support or encouragement to the hell-born traffic! It is necessary for every friend of the Chinese to speak out in the plainest and most decisive manner on the evils of opium smoking. The people are being ruined by it, and it is indeed a lamentable spectacle to see professing Christian men speaking and writing in defence of the horrible crime. The pernicious results of this soul and body-destroying vice are apparent all round. Cadaverous looking faces meet one on every side, and the slovenly habits and the filthy appearance of the people generally testify too plainly to the evil it is working on this once industrious and energetic population. The rapid progress which opium smoking has made during the last twenty years among all classes of this population is a very serious matter for us missionaries. Almost the entire population in some places is abandoned to the use of this poisonous drug. The effects are witnessed in the extreme poverty of the people, in the broken down and dilapidated dwellings all through the village, and in the gross immorality which prevails amongst the inhabitants. Men openly and without shame prostitute their wives, in order to procure for themselves the means of indulging in opium smoking. Little children are sold as slaves and turned away from the embrace of their helpless mothers in order that their degraded fathers may have money to buy opium. Often and often has the missionary to endure the humiliation which no other nationality has to bear in this country. Often has he wished in his heart that the flag of some other nation which is not stained with the poisonous, polluted opium drug, was the one under which he lived in this country rather than the English, which to the Chinese is the emblem of the moral ruin of their nation.

Just let me give one more description of the physical effects of opium smoking, that by the testimony of the Rev. S. Whitehead, long resident in China—

“Hollow eyes, sunken cheeks, high shoulder-bones, emaciated frame, discoloured teeth, sallow complexion, are the signs which announce the opium smoker everywhere. And the evils thus set forth have their correspondence in the mental and moral degradation of the people. A smoker needs some three hours a day to consume the opium that is requisite for him. He is unable to do more than two hours' consecutive work because he must have his opium, and when he needs it, whatever he may be doing, he must and will have it. If he has not time to take his rice and his opium, then he will smoke

his opium. If he has not money enough to buy both rice and opium, he will spend his last cash on opium. If he has no money left, he will pawn his garments. If he has already pawned his garments, then he will steal. By one means or another he must have it. If he is deprived of it too long, water flows from the eyes, he experiences a burning in the throat and a dizziness in the head, and coldness in the extremities. If he is altogether denied the use of opium, he will die, and in agony.”

I have stated to the House that one of the greatest evils in connection with this system is the almost hopelessness of cure. The torment undergone by the patient is such that very few have the moral courage to withstand it. This is what Dr. Galt, who has charge of an hospital for opium smokers, says:—

“Giving up the opium is something dreadful. No one who has not seen it can form any idea. The stomach sometimes rejects everything, even a drop of water. They toss about in their beds, and they are sleepless for nearly a week. In fact, they are in the most abject misery it is conceivable for a human being to be in, yet they came in hundreds every year to the hospital, and were willing to undergo all the misery that they might give up the use of the drug. They wished to do it, and wanted our help, as the craving is so strong that few can do it unaided.”

Surely it is unreasonable to compare the use of alcoholic stimulants or tobacco smoking with opium smoking. Why the Chinese people treat opium smoking as one of the worst vices. I know it will be said that China now grows so much opium that it is useless to stop the importation of the Indian drug. It is, alas! too true. But for many years the Chinese Government struggled with all their might against the introduction of opium; they punished with death those who grew it, and indeed there was very little grown until after the first Chinese war. Then they began to realize their incapacity to keep it out of the country; the restrictions on the growth of opium were not enforced with the same severity, and after the treaty of 1858, which legalized the trade, they were still further relaxed. It was only after the last war that the Chinese Government found how hopeless were their efforts to stamp out the vice, and now we see the sad result in the poverty, misery, and demoralization which it has wrought among the people. In the last few years there has been a great increase in the growth and consumption of opium in Western China. It is computed by some that

there are something like 25,000,000 of opium smokers in the country ; and that every year 60,000 of these persons commit suicide. Are we now to abstain from doing what is right in itself because the Chinese have abandoned all restrictions and are gradually sinking deeper and deeper into the mire ? Are we to go on having our share in the creation of all this misery, drawing our share of the wicked gain, simply because it is impossible to undo what has been done ? If we were to set a good example for conscience sake, perhaps the Chinese Government might be encouraged even yet to make a supreme effort to stamp out this vice. I cannot admit that we should continue doing what we know to be morally wrong. One thing is certain, unless the vice is combatted, China will commit something like national suicide and her population will succumb to pauperism, famine and death. It is for the Chinese a matter simply of life and death. There is a mote in our eye which prevents us seeing our duty in this great question, and that mote is that India derives six millions from the export of opium to China ; and the problem is how to make up that six millions which India cannot afford to lose. Remember that, owing to Chinese competition, the price of opium is falling, and we shall have to export more and more in order to keep up the revenue. I am afraid that the Indian Government will increase the export unless this House brings pressure to bear on the Administration. Of course, I cannot ask the Government to abandon this six millions of revenue without suggesting a substitute for it. Now, I am going to suggest one or two ways of making up this revenue. There is a tax which the population of India would willingly pay—a tax, speaking generally, on manufactured goods. To oblige Lancashire we took off the taxes on cotton goods imported into India, although the people of India did not object to that taxation. The manufactured goods imported into India exceed in value forty millions, and a tax of 10 per cent *ad valorem* would produce four millions, which would be increased by a corresponding tax on India home manufactures, and that would deprive the import duties of a protective character. Thus the taxation would not be protection ; it would

be simply a fiscal arrangement. Then I think it right that England should do something in the way of a direct subvention. It is well known that the annexation of Upper Burmah was very repugnant to the native population of India, who believe it was carried out for the benefit of England, and that it is unjust to saddle the cost upon India. But India has had to bear an extra charge of two millions a-year ever since the annexation was carried out. I hold that this country ought to take on its shoulders this amount, being the extra cost of the government of Upper Burmah. That would give relief to the finances of India. Again, we know that India is very expensively governed, and something might be saved by a larger employment of native agency. Again the Indian Revenue has been depleted to the extent of three or four millions by the fall in the silver currency ; and a considerable gain might be secured to it if we adopted bimetallism, even at the ratio of 20 to one. By these adjustments we would get out of this difficulty. I hope the nation may be induced to carry out a policy of practical righteousness. I know that such a great change cannot take place suddenly, but the adjustments could be made gradually in proportion as the opium revenue is surrendered. I may mention that this revenue is derived from two sources. About two-thirds is derived from the Government monopoly in Bengal, which brings in about three-and-a-half millions, and the remainder from what is called the Malwa opium, grown in native States, and which is subjected to a heavy tax as it passes through our territories. Now it will not be enough for us merely to retire from manufacturing and trading in opium, and leave the trade to private persons, in that case the remedy would be worse than the disease. The only logical policy that would attain the end at which we aim is one that looks towards the final suppression of the trade. Considering that the Bengal monopoly is in the hands of the Government, they have it in their power entirely to stamp it out. We have, of course, to get rid of the difficulty with the native states, which are semi-independent and are large growers of opium ; but none of their opium can reach the seaboard without passing through our territory ; and practically

the British Government would be able to accomplish the extinction of the opium trade if it set itself earnestly to effect that object. For instance, they could prohibit the opium passing through British territory, or they could raise the tax to a prohibitive point. Unfortunately, the Chinese Government have now ceased to protest against the traffic; and I am afraid that it connives at it. We have agreed to share the plunder with them and have dulled their conscience. China now derives a considerable revenue from it, though less than the Indian Government receives; and since she has shared so largely in the profit the conscience of her Government has, I fear, grown rather lax in the matter. I may be met with the argument that if we withdraw from exporting the drug to China other nations will take our place. But surely we can stipulate that when we retire from the trade it shall be prohibited all round. Already the Chinese Government in their treaties with the United States, Russia, and, I believe, other countries, prohibit the importation of opium into China; and, of course, if we surrender that revenue, it will be on condition that China concludes or maintains with other Powers treaties also excluding opium. When this country retired from the slave trade it was very jealous of its being carried on by other nations, and it employed a squadron to put it down; and so, if we obtain from China treaty stipulations absolutely excluding opium from all sources, no doubt we shall become exceedingly jealous that no opium should be smuggled into China. Japan, one of the most progressive countries in that part of the world, has stipulated with every Power that no opium shall be imported into her ports, and she imposes very heavy penalties on its sale; and the consequence is that Japan is rapidly rising in the scale, while China is declining. This is simply owing to the fact that one nation prohibits while the other allows the trade. I believe that if this nation had the honesty and moral courage to adopt the policy I recommend, compensations would come to us from unexpected quarters. We should gain enormously in our trade with China, which is at present stagnant compared with 20 years ago. With India our trade is increasing by leaps and bounds; with

China it has been falling off for the last ten or fifteen years. Let me quote a few figures in proof of this. I will take the returns of the exports from the United Kingdom to India. In 1871 the exports were valued at £20,900,000; in 1887 they had risen to £33,600,000. But whereas the exports to China in 1881 were £9,400,000, in 1887 they had fallen to £8,700,000. We have virtually free trade with China; we have access to all the great waterways and all the great cities, and yet our trade is falling off. China has 350,000,000 people, and India 250,000,000, yet while India spends 2s. 8d. per head with us, China only spends 6d. per head. The fact is the opium traffic has killed legitimate trade in China; and who can doubt but that the Chinese would spend much more on Manchester goods and on all our other products if they did not spend such large sums on Indian opium. I know that the proposals I am making will not be acceptable to Lancashire, yet most of my interests lie in that county; and let me point out that by the expansion of our trade with China, Lancashire would gain greatly, and there would be a great expansion if ten millions were not spent by the Chinese on Indian opium as now. I know that I am demanding a great deal of the House in asking it to pass a Resolution of this nature. After the kind support it gave the other night to a proposition of a not very dissimilar character. But I believe that the moral sense of the country is now rising in favour of such proposals more than it has done in former times. The reform I now ask for cannot be carried except by some self-denial, but nothing ennobles a nation more than to make sacrifices for a great cause. God has blessed this nation in many ways; and if we refuse to purge away this national sin, retribution will overtake us, and the evil thing will be wrested from us in tears and in blood. I appeal to the house to-night to show by their action that they believe in a righteous Ruler of the universe.

Amendment proposed.

"To leave out from the word 'That' to the end of the Question, in order to add the words, 'this House views with deep regret the history of our Opium policy towards China, and regards the traffic in that drug as repugnant to the true interests of that country; that it calls upon the Government of India to take steps looking to the final extinction of the trade, and urges

upon Her Majesty's Government to intimate to the Chinese Government that in the next revision of the Treaty of Tientsin full power will be given to extinguish the trade in Opium if it thinks fit."—(*Mr. Samuel Smith*).

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Questions."

***SIR J. PEASE** (Durham, Barnard Castle): I desire very heartily to support the views which my hon. Friend has enunciated with regard to the character of the opium trade with China, and the cultivation of the poppy in India. I know the statement that we forced this drug on China has been controverted in this House, I think the evidence proves—and I have looked carefully into it—that we did force the trade upon the Chinese. I find among my opium papers a despatch from a Chinese Minister to Sir Rutherford Alcock, in which the writer complained that England was poisoning his country with opium, that she was wilfully working China's ruin, and had no friendly feeling for her. This was the view of a Chinese statesman as far back as 1869, and I believe it is at this moment the view of those Chinese who take a warm and proper interest in the welfare of their own country. In 1876 the Convention of Cheefoo was negotiated, but we declined to ratify it because it would have placed in the hands of China the entire control of those duties to which my hon. Friend has alluded. Lord Salisbury in the House of Lords said that such an action on our part would have a result which practically would neutralize the policy which hitherto had been pursued by this country in respect of the drug. It was the desire of those who supported the ratification of that convention to neutralize the policy of bye-gone days, and to leave China to control the importation of this drug. In the correspondence which took place between Lord Salisbury and Lord Granville on the one side, and China on the other, we kept the Chinese Government hanging on for years, and at last the Treaty was ratified in 1880. In the meantime we were demoralizing China. We got a larger quantity of opium into China in those years than ever before. The four years of the Treaty expire on the 18th of January, 1890; at any subsequent time after that, on 12 months' notice being given

on either side, that portion of the Convention comes to an end. I would appeal to Her Majesty's Government to let the Chinese Government know that they are perfectly masters of the position, and that no pressure from Her Majesty's Government or from the English people will be put upon them again to negotiate a treaty of the same kind. All we ask is that the Chinese Government should have perfect freedom in this matter. Well, Sir, what has been our conduct on this subject? I think it was in 1843 or 1844 that the late Lord Shaftesbury called the attention of this House and the country to the iniquities of the Chinese opium trade, and made a speech of remarkable power and eloquence on the effect of that trade upon the Chinese, and he cited various authorities upon the physical effect of opium upon the human constitution. I may say that the cultivation of the poppy in China was then very small. As far as we can make out, there never was a time when the cultivation of the poppy was unknown in China, but it was at one time very little cultivated, and was very little known or used. It was we who stimulated the growth of the poppy in China by introducing the Indian opium. I maintain that our Government officials stimulated the China trade in every way possible in order to increase the Indian revenue. What we did was politically wrong—it was morally wrong, at any rate, and what is morally wrong can never be politically right. No statesman who has ever sat upon the Treasury bench has ever said a word in favour of opium cultivation in India as a matter of morality. Everyone who has supported it has done so because of the revenue which India derives from it. [*An hon. MEMBER: "No, no."*] I ask my hon. Friend who says "No," whether he has looked back, as I have done within the last few hours, to the different speeches made by Ministers on the subject. The noble Lord the Member for Rossendale (the Marquess of Hartington) wrote an excellent despatch on the subject, in which he tacitly admitted that a great deal was to be said against opium cultivation in Bengal. Lord Ripon, in a despatch, made use of very similar language. The present Governor of Madras, when Under Secretary for India, said that no one would defend the trade on moral

grounds. So it was with the late Governor of Madras, and so it has been with Under Secretary after Under Secretary in this House. I do not wish to give all the quotations that are in my hand, but there is an enormous phalanx of evidence going far beyond that which my hon. Friend (Mr. S. Smith) has read as to the consequences of the use of opium in China. As far back as 1817 Lord Cornwallis received a despatch from the directors of the East India Company, in which they said—

“Were it possible to prevent the use of the drug altogether, except for the purposes of medicine, we would gladly do it in compassion to mankind.”

A missionary in China, the Rev. Griffith John, at the Shanghai Conference, said—

“Attempts are sometimes made to palliate the sin of the trader, and to make light of the evil effects of the drug. On such points our utterance must be clear and emphatic. We know that opium is a curse—a curse physically, a curse morally, and a curse socially to the Chinese, and this fact we must declare in loud, ringing tones. It is our duty to appeal to the great heart of England, for she has a heart, and when that heart begins to beat warmly on the question, this foul blot on her escutcheon will soon be wiped off.”

No one ever condemned the trade in opium as strongly as our former Commissioner in British Burmah, Sir Charles Aitcheson. He says:

“The papers now submitted for consideration present a painful picture of the demoralization, misery and ruin produced among the Burmese by opium smoking. Responsible officers in all divisions and districts of the province and natives everywhere bear testimony to it. To facilitate examination of the evidence on this point I have thrown some extracts from the reports into an appendix to this Memorandum, to show that among the Burmans the habitual use of the drug saps the physical and mental energies, destroys the nerves, emaciates the body, predisposes to disease, induces indolent and filthy habits of life, destroys self-respect, is one of the most fertile sources of misery, destitution, and crime, fills the jails with men of relaxed frame predisposed to dysentery and cholera, prevents the due extension of cultivation and the development of the land revenue, checks the natural growth of the population and enfeebles the constitution of succeeding generations.”

I daresay it will be said that the Burmese are of not so strong a fibre as the Chinese. But, still, that which does so much damage to the Burmese must do damage to the Chinese, as it has

been proved to do damage to Frenchmen, to Californians and to Australians. The drink misery is undoubtedly bad enough, but the opium misery is ten times worse, and opium has a very much more degrading effect than alcohol. I hold in my hand a petition presented to this House a year or two ago and signed by 256 of the missionaries in China. They say—

“Opium is a great evil to China and the baneful effects of its use cannot be overstated. It enslaves its victim, squanders his substance, destroys his health, weakens his mental powers, lessens his self-esteem, deadens his conscience, unfits him for his duties, and leads to his steady descent—morally, socially and physically.”

I have had papers sent to me from China in which people are warned in the same placard against the missionary and against England which sends with the missionary the opium. Sir, we may lay upon ourselves the onus of having practically brought this trade into China, and now we have it in our Indian Empire in a way that is most demoralizing. [“No, no!”] I hear an hon. Member say “No, no.”

What did my hon. Friend the Member for Barrow (Mr. Caine) see in Lucknow? He says:—

“I have been in East-end gin palaces on Saturday nights, I have seen men in various stages of *delirium tremens*, I have visited many idiot and lunatic asylums, but I have never seen such horrible destruction of God’s image in the face of man as I saw in the Government opium dens of Lucknow. To my dying day I shall carry the recollection of the face of a handsome young woman of eighteen or nineteen years, sprawling on the senseless bodies of men, her fine brown eyes flattened and dull with coming stupor, and her lips drawn back from her glittering white teeth.”

He goes on to describe what he saw in the places he visited one after another, and shows that opium is doing immense damage in India. It is perfectly plain to every thinking man who chooses to go into the question with an unbiassed mind that our connection with the opium trade has been a curse upon civilization, and that it is rapidly extending. What we ask of the Indian Government is that they should take such steps as will gradually decrease our cultivation of the poppy and put a stop to a trade which is in defiance of every law of political economy and of every moral law, and opposed to every precept of the religion we profess. One

of the arguments used once or twice in debates on this subject is that there is an enormous increase in the growth of the poppy in China, and that the Indian opium bears no comparison to it. That we all admit. But there was very little growth in China when we began to send our Indian opium there. The argument seems to be—that of my hon. Friend the Member for Kircaldy (Sir. Geo. Campbell)—that it is far better that the Chinese should be poisoned with good Indian opium than with their own bad opium. But it seems to me that if the thing is bad we have no right to send it at all. What would be said if I saw a man was going to commit suicide and I shot him in order to give him an easier death? Or if a man was going to steal and I went into a jeweller's shop and took the watches out of a case before him? The argument seems to me to amount to the same thing in all these cases. A great temptation is placed before the eyes of the Indian officials to stimulate the trade whenever they are short of revenue, and I have on previous occasions quoted many despatches from Indian officials stating that they must grow more opium because the revenue is falling off. It is a degrading trade in all ways. Indian officials think so much of keeping up the revenue that they forget the consequences of the trade. The desire should be to decrease, and not increase, the exportation of opium from India. I think I have proved in this House over and over again that the opium traffic is of little or no use to the cultivators in India. But, Sir, what do your own people say? I have here a letter addressed to the Government begging that Government not to permit the poppy to be cultivated in Scinde, and expressing very strong objection to the introduction of an industry so demoralizing in its tendency as the poppy cultivation and manufacture of opium into a province where at present it is unknown and not asked for by the people. Now, Sir, the Indian Executive have ample power to do as they like in this matter as far as the cultivation is concerned, because they license every yard of land under cultivation, and if they choose to decrease the quantity they can do so, and I think this House will say they ought to do so. The Indian Government is acting, and the Government and my hon. Friends on

the other side of the House who are supporting this trade are acting in defiance of the expressed wishes of the whole of the Christian Churches of the country. And I say that a great responsibility rests upon them. The Convocations of Canterbury and York have petitioned this House against the trade; the whole of the Roman Catholic Bishops of the United Kingdom have done the same; the Wesleyan Methodists, the Primitive Methodists, the Baptists, the Congregationalists, the Society of Friends, and both the Free Church and National Church of Scotland have petitioned the House against it. The representative bodies of the Christian Churches are united on the question, and the feeling they have expressed regarding it is one which the House ought not to put aside. I should think there is hardly an hon. Gentleman in this House who does not subscribe to missions in some way or other; certainly there is not one who does not represent a constituency that does not largely subscribe to them. As long as you are sending your missionaries to China, taking with them the hard-earned money of your constituents, you ought to see that no unnecessary impediments are placed in the way of their work. The Indian Government Report states:—

“There is no doubt the depreciation of export opium is one of the indications of the great falling off in the China opium trade. The reports from Consuls lead to the belief that the loss to the Indian Revenue will continue, that there will be a steadily increasing deficit.”

I find that the largest net revenue we ever had from opium in any one year was in 1881 when it was £8,451,276. In 1885 it was £5,849,829, and in 1886-7 it was £6,213,913. Of these amounts £5,926,924 was the amount derived from Bengal in 1881, £3,316,172 in 1885, and £3,629,615 in 1886-7, the remainder being due to Bombay opium. I have always felt the great difficulty of touching the Malwa opium; it pays a high duty to independent States, and it can only reach the seaboard through British India, and I have never recommended that anything should be done beyond leaving this to be dealt with hereafter by negotiation with friendly States in a manner that meets the just requirements of the case. But we ought to deal at once, and I think we can deal,

with our own Department of Revenue. Looking at the depreciated value of silver we have to deal with a Bengal revenue from opium of some £2,500,000, but taking it even at £3,000,000 it is not a figure we need be afraid to deal with. My hon. Friend has made various suggestions as to how the falling off in the revenue could be met. The Cotton Dutes, as he said, were not abolished at the request of the Indian Government, or people, but to meet the desires of the manufacturers here. £1,200,000 was the amount thus taken from the Indian Exchequer, and the duties replaced would be so much (nearly one-half) towards the £3,000,000 we desire to find. Investigations have been made by Lord Northbrook and others into the Indian military expenditure, and it has been pointed out as the result how large savings might be effected under that head without in any way detracting from the power we ought to possess in India. I have put the question to a great many military men, and they all agree that large savings might be made without lowering our actual military strength. Suppose we get £500,000 or £600,000 from that, and speaking from memory I believe that it has been suggested by some authorities we could save a great deal more, more than double that sum. There is then the question of what is the duty of this country as regards the expenses of Burmah. I have always advocated that if we in this House ask the Indian Government to make considerable sacrifices of revenue in order to fulfil the demand made on them by this country, we ought to be prepared out of our own taxation to do something towards meeting the deficit, if such occurred, by the adoption of our policy. I feel perfectly certain that if the Indian Government, instead of looking at the abolition of the opium trade as something impossible to accomplish would regard it as an end which, is desirable, and is to be attained, and were to apply their minds to it with the desire of accomplishing that which all Christian people desire, the cultivation of the poppy in Bengal might be abandoned without injury to the cultivators there, for it is all we can do to get them to cultivate it at all. By these methods by the Cotton Goods Duty, by the help of this country in regard to Burmah, and by

economy in administration we could find a way out of the financial difficulty of the policy we earnestly recommend to the House. I have spoken earnestly, for I feel warmly on this subject as one of the greatest blots on the fair name of Englishmen and of English administration in the world. Turn over French and German newspapers, and you find it constantly alluded to. I really think, if Her Majesty's Government would look at it in the light in which we have endeavoured to indicate it, with the desire to do something that would not expose the people of India, who are poor enough and could not bear much more pressure of taxation, to fresh burdens, they would be able first to curtail and then abandon that portion of the revenue derived from the cultivation in Bengal, leaving for future negotiation the two and a-half millions of transport duties on Malwa opium. I have endeavoured to do what I could to throw light on the subject, and I have great faith in those religious teachings which, in one form or another, are dear to every Member here. This trade, demoralizing to so large a portion of mankind, stands in the way of the spread of the Christian faith that we all desire, knowing the blessings which always must accompany it.

*MR. J. M. MACLEAN (Oldham): The speech of the hon. Baronet who seconded this Motion is not nearly so thorough-going as that of the hon. Member who proposed the Motion. The contention of the hon. Member for Flintshire is that the Government of India is as responsible for the duty on the Malwa opium as for the cultivation of the poppy in Bengal, and that is thoroughly consistent with the principle he has always advocated. No doubt, if we are to take the moral view recommended by the hon. Members who have moved and seconded this Resolution, if we are to try and fulfil what they call the desire of the Christian people of this country, that the traffic in opium should be abolished, we cannot stop at half measures—the abolition must be complete. I have always admired the courage and consistency of the hon. Member for Flintshire, but I think to-night he has surpassed himself. Only two days ago he made a very serious attack upon the Excise Revenue: the Government of India derives from

the sale of spirituous liquors, and now he is attacking the Opium Revenue. Last year he attacked the Salt Tax, and, as we are now going back upon ancient history to make atonement for the sins of our fathers committed in carrying on the opium war of 1840, we might as well retrace our steps a little further and give up the land revenue of Bengal on account of the misdeeds of Warren Hastings; and as to the land revenue of the Punjab, I think, considering the number of undeveloped Burkes that sit below the Gangway opposite, we may look forward to the formation of a party to urge the claims of the Maharajah Dhuleep Singh to the revenue of that province. The hon. Member for Flintshire is perfectly insatiable in his attacks upon the revenues of India. I remember in his somewhat irreverent commentary upon certain passages in "Exodus" Mark Twain remarks that if Pharaoh had only dreamed another dream and Joseph had interpreted it, the people of Egypt would have had nothing left to live upon; and I think if the hon. Member for Flintshire makes another pilgrimage to Bombay the unfortunate Indian Government will be in danger of having no revenue left. However, on this occasion, the hon. Member was good enough to tell us how he intended to supply the Revenue he proposes to take away in the manner set forth in his Motion. The hon. Member is, I think, a little in error in his estimate of the total amount of which he would deprive the people of India; he puts it at six millions, and that is the net revenue derived by the Government of India, but the total value of the crop sold to China is between ten and eleven millions. If you are going to do away with the cultivation of the poppy, you deprive the people of India of 10 or 11 millions derived from the cultivation of the crop.

*MR. S. SMITH: They could grow something else.

*MR. J. M. MACLEAN: A suggestion readily made, but they could not grow anything so profitable. Opium is the most profitable crop that can be grown. The hon. Member made proposals to-night which were accepted substantially by hisseconder, and as to which I shall, with some curiosity, watch the course of this debate to see if any

responsible Member on the Front Bench opposite adopts them. The hon. Member would supply the deficiency he proposes to create in the Indian Revenue, first by laying a tax of ten per cent on all English manufactures imported into India, not only cotton goods but other goods, and he mentioned metals. From that he hopes to get four millions, and then he is going to ask the British tax-payer to be good enough to pay a million and a half a year for the expenses of the administration of Burmah, and then he proposes to get another half-million out of bi-metallism. This is the financial programme of the hon. Member for Flintshire, and I look with eagerness to see if it is adopted on the Front Bench opposite. It would be a delightful programme for the Liberal Party to go to the country with, but I should like to know how many Members who voted for it would return to this House to assist in carrying it into effect. The hon. Members opposite have told us a good deal about the frightful sufferings we inflict on the people of China by this Godless traffic, but I should like to know who are the hon. Members' clients. Are they the Government of China or the people of China? Where are the hon. Members' credentials? Why does the hon. Member for Flintshire come here and claim to speak in the name of the people of China, and ask for the abolition of the trade? The hon. Member has given us nothing in support of his claim, but extracts from the reports of missionaries—excellent men, no doubt, and animated by the best intentions, but, according to the hon. Member for Barrow (Mr. Caine), who lately travelled over the scene of their labours, they are not always so successful as one would desire them to be. After all, missionaries are but human, and it must be a great temptation to them when they know their mission has failed to raise a cry likely to appeal at once both to the hearts and the pockets of the English people. I maintain that portions of the language quoted by the hon. Member show a tendency to exaggeration greatly to be deplored. Human nature, in all countries and among all races, has always shown a craving for stimulants of one kind or another. Some persons satisfy this craving by indulgence in alcoholic drinks, some by

smoking tobacco, some by smoking or drinking opium, and some even gratify it by unlimited indulgence in platform oratory, or by moving sensational Resolutions in the House of Commons. All these ways of gratifying the appetite are injurious if carried to excess, but I believe a moderate use of stimulants is wholesome and beneficial rather than injurious to mankind. The hon. Member has declaimed upon the decay and degradation of the Chinese people, their terrible state of misery and poverty and so on, and offered as proof the falling off in the direct trade between Great Britain and China. Now I must say that in this part of his speech he was not quite so candid as I should have expected him to be, for he, with his very thorough knowledge of commercial affairs, must be perfectly well aware that the falling off in the value of trade between England and China of late years is due to these facts: First, a general decline in prices which has affected the trade of all countries in some degree; secondly, Indian tea now enters very largely into competition with Chinese tea, and the exportation of tea from China has considerably decreased; and also Indian cotton manufactures have to a considerable extent supplanted the cotton goods which used to be sent from this country to the East. So in both exports and imports there has been a considerable reduction in trade, but this falling off is not at all due to a falling off in either the producing or the consuming capacity of the Chinese people. The hon. Member tells us these people are in a state of miserable physical decay, but as everybody knows there is no more prolific, industrious, or energetic race in all the East than the Chinese; they overflow their own country and emigrate in such swarms, not only to the Straits Settlements, where they are predominant, but to America and Australia, that the Governments of America and Australia, the foremost communities of the Western World, are passing stringent laws to keep out the competition of Chinese labour, and this labour, which our own race find so difficult to compete with, the hon. Member says is that of a people utterly demoralized by the consumption of opium! Why, Sir, these are travellers' tales, which seem to me even to be

invented to trade on the credulity of the English people. For Heaven's sake let us deal with this matter as men of the world. The hon. Member for Flintshire sets up as a universal censor of morals; he has laid down the law that nobody in this country should drink a glass of beer or read a French novel, and now he appears to have taken under his protection the morals of all the people of India and China. I do not think they will thank him for his efforts. I do not believe that the Chinese people have any of those fine feelings about the consumption of opium he attributes to their Government. No doubt the Emperor at the time of the Chinese War of 1840 did give utterance to a very grand sentiment, that he would not at any price consent to the introduction of a drug that would demoralize his people, but I fancy that he must at the time have had at his elbow a mandarin of something of the same temperament as the hon. Member for Flintshire who indited this very beautiful moral maxim for him. The real position of the Chinese Government was to try and get as much revenue from the foreign importations as they possibly could, and the cause of their quarrel with us was that we would not let them have a larger share of the Opium Revenue than we thought they were legitimately entitled to. The hon. Member says we are responsible for the introduction of the taste for opium into China, but I think it can be proved that, long before the war of 1840, native opium was very largely cultivated in many of the provinces of China, and that cultivation has gone on increasing ever since. If we were to give up the traffic, and inflict on the people of India the loss of this large revenue, we should do no good to the morality of the Chinese people. There is another point that I would impress on the House, and it is this. The hon. Member, in talking so glibly of the millions of British taxpayers ought to present to the Indian people as compensation for their loss of revenue, has not told us where the money should come from. I hope when he lays his programme before the country he will tell the British taxpayers in what way he intends to bring this 1½ millions a-year of extra taxation we are going to make a present of to the Government of India.

Well, Sir, I do not say that we ought to extort any tribute from the people of India; but I must maintain that it would be far better for us to abandon that country, than to make it a drain upon the resources of England as the hon. Member proposes we should. I should have the greatest confidence in appealing to the country to maintain this revenue, which is of the greatest value to the people of India, against the programme of the hon. member to do away with it, and replace it by a burden on the taxpayers of Great Britain.

SIR G. CAMPBELL: The hon. Member below me has certainly been very fortunate in the ballot in securing two places in one week for his Motions in relation to India. I cordially voted with him on the last occasion but I cannot do so on this, and my main reason is that we are responsible for the people of India, but not for the people of China. This view prevents me voting with one part of the Motion though I could support the other, and in that sense I placed an Amendment on the Notice Paper that expresses what I think the right view in this matter. I entirely assent to the first part of the Resolution regretting the history of our opium policy in forcing the introduction upon China. That I think should be the subject of national regret, and I accept that part of the Motion in the most complete manner. But then my hon. Friend goes on to say that the traffic in the drug is repugnant to the true interests of China, and though I do not greatly differ from him I doubt whether it is any affair of ours whether the trade is repugnant to the interests of China or not. My view is that the Government of India have nothing to do with that; they impose a tax and restrict the cultivation of opium, as they might of any other drug, and for the rest my Amendment expresses my view that our Government should abstain from forcing or facilitating the introduction of opium into China by treaty or otherwise. We do not force opium into Chinese ports; China accepts it on certain terms arising

out of circumstances of former times; but I go further and say we should not afford special facilities for the introduction of our opium. We are bound to let the Chinese Government take their own course; we are bound to regard the Chinese as a free and independent nation, and to say "we repent of our past sins; you are now free to admit or leave our opium; tax high, tax low as you please, we are not entitled to interfere, more than that the trade is on our conscience, and we do not feel justified in forcing you to take ours or any other opium." That position I take it would be a just position and free us from much trouble. But I am afraid that it is the case that the Chinese Government are not now anxious to stop the trade, but are intent rather on dividing the profit with ourselves. They have made a bargain by which they agree to admit our opium on certain terms, and we agree to collect the duty for them. I object to that course. I think we ought to wash our hands of this business and make no attempt to induce the Chinese to receive our opium in return for our facilitating the collection of that duty. I think we should leave the Chinese free to do exactly as they like; but I object to the phrase in this Resolution, which says that it is the duty of the Indian Government to stop the opium traffic. The Indian Government have nothing to do with the introduction of opium into China. It does not encourage the growing of opium in India; on the contrary, it very materially restricts it by imposing a heavy tax upon it—a heavier one even than that upon alcoholic liquors in this country. Well, objecting as I do to the injury to Indian cultivators and to Indian taxpayers which would ensue from the stopping of opium cultivation, what strikes me is that neither the Mover nor Seconder of the Resolution has ever faced the practical question how you are to make up for the loss to the Indian Exchequer if you call upon the Indian Government to put an end to the traffic. What substitute would they propose for the opium duty? But I have denied before and I deny again that this is a question of Indian revenue. No doubt it is the case that the revenue derived from this source is incidentally an important question, but I maintain that it is not a

vital question which we are entitled to put forward as an argument against stopping the opium trade, if it could be stopped. If China herself were to put a stop to it I should say we must submit and make up for the loss of revenue as best we can. But I deny that it is purely a revenue question. If the cultivation of the poppy were stopped in India the effect would be to stimulate the cultivation in other parts of the world. The Seconder of the Resolution alluded to the cultivation in the Native States, but did not attempt to deal with the point to which I am now referring. The result of putting an end to the cultivation in India would be that it would be taken up in the Native States. It may be said that we could prevent the cultivation there also. So we could, but it would only be by the adoption of a high-handed policy. How could we do it without taking on ourselves the administration of those States? And even when we had stopped the cultivation in the Native States we should be powerless to prevent increased cultivation in China. Why, even now the cultivation is increasing to such an extent in China that it threatens to extinguish the Indian trade. And if the Indian trade is stopped it will be stimulated in Persia, Turkey, Africa, America, and other places; so that, whilst we shall be doing no good to our own people, we shall be encouraging the trade in other countries. It is because this result would be brought about, that I cannot support the Motion. I would urge the Government to intimate to the Chinese that the Treaties of Tientsin and Chefoo will be brought to an end, and that this country will no more interfere with the opium trade of China than it does with the whisky trade at home. I have lived in opium districts a considerable part of my life, and have been responsible for the opium revenue in Bengal, where a searching inquiry was made into the question. I can say, from my own knowledge, that the opium cultivators are not debauched by opium—that they do not use their own opium to any extent. I have studied this matter a good deal, and the conclusion I have come to is that opium smoking is a matter of race. Nations, we are told, require some sort of stimulant—

some opium, some whisky, some speechifying. Without dealing with the last-named category, the Arian races, I may say, are given to alcoholic stimulants, and the Turanian have a tendency to opium, and that probably is why opium is less baneful in its effects upon the Chinese than upon others. The opium question is not so difficult as the question of alcohol, and it is on that ground that I voted with the hon. Member for Flintshire (Mr. S. Smith) when he brought forward his Motion the other day relating to the liquor traffic in India, although I am not prepared to vote for a Resolution condemning the cultivation of the poppy in India, either as an Indian or a Chinese question. With regard to the picturesque description which has been given to us of an opium den, I venture to say that a Chinese traveller in this country would be able to draw quite as vivid and telling a picture of horror of a London gin palace. Drugs and strong drinks are no more injurious in the one country than in the other, and when we have put an end to the liquor traffic in this country we may begin to think about putting an end to the opium traffic in India. I admit that opium in India and spirits in this country are bad, but I contend that opium in India is not nearly so injurious as spirits in this country.

*MR. MARK STEWART (Kirkcudbright): I think that if we refer to what took place on this subject some 14 years ago when the question was brought under the consideration of the House we shall see that a great advance has been made towards a solution of the problem. At that time I myself brought forward a Motion having for its object a diminution in the manufacture of opium by the Government of India, and that Motion, as hon. Members may suppose, was rejected by a large majority. Since then the question has grown in the minds of the people of the country, so much so that in 1876, when considerable pressure had been brought to bear on the Government of the day and the Chefoo Convention was drawn up it took something like six years to

get the Convention ratified, the Government of the day being unwilling to ratify it. That Convention produced almost a revolution in political history as between China and this country. China had no independence up to then, but she has now become practically independent, and was able to impose a far heavier tax on Indian opium than she had ever imposed before. We no longer coerce China in the matter, and that I hold is a considerable advance to have made. Indignant protests were made, extending as far back as 1858, when the Treaty of Tientsin was ratified between this country and China, and great dissatisfaction was caused in the minds of thinking people, but much of that dissatisfaction has been since removed, and China is now in a very different position from what she was then. Now that the matter has come before the House of Commons in a somewhat different form than formerly—rather attacking the Government of India in regard to the manufacture of opium and the monopoly it holds than dealing with the matter on general grounds—I think we, at all events, may have some good hope for believing that the Indian Government will take note of the view so strongly held by many persons in this country—held by every Christian Church, so far as I know, in the country. The opinion of the Christian Churches in this country is that the Indian Government ought no longer to be the producers and manufacturers of this drug. Those who have studied the question know the great difficulties to be faced, especially the difficulty of dealing with Malwa opium. You will not by raising the tax stop the flow of opium into China; and you have to consider the difficulty caused by the fact that this has become a question of revenue in China. Since the Chefoo Convention China has obtained a large sum from the

opium trade, and now that she has got so much she will try to get more when the Treaty comes to be reviewed in the course of a few years. I hope she will be allowed to exercise a free hand in the matter, whether she desires to impose a prohibitive tariff or admit opium to the privileges of free trade. In addition to the evidence on this opium question quoted by other hon. Members, I would point out that Sir William Muir in an able article thought it most objectionable that the Indian Government should take so active a part in the opium trade, and that Sir Rutherford Alcock maintained some years ago that if there was a gradual diminution of the manufacture of opium in India the Chinese Government would *pari passu*, diminish the production of opium in China. Whether or not that can be said now I do not know. Travellers who have been to China tell us that the cultivation of the poppy is largely increasing in that country. Knowing well the difficulties that beset the Government, I do trust that they will use their best endeavours to, if not altogether abolish, at any rate diminish the amount of opium grown and manufactured in Bengal. Though we cannot hope for the total extinction of the manufacture of the drug, I believe that these protests from time to time, and the fact of our calling public attention to the matter, will strengthen the Government in taking a wise and equitable view of it, so that if any sudden resolution is passed by the House in favour of stopping the opium manufacture, this House will be found willing to recoup the Indian Exchequer for the loss.

*SIR R. TEMPLE (Worcester, Evesham): At this late hour I shall endeavour to be brief, therefore I will not touch upon what has been brought forward by the hon. Baronet the Member for Durham in what is practically a reproduction of a speech about India de-

livered from these Benches in 1886 and answered by me from the opposite Benches. I then ventured to play the part of St. George to the hon. Baronet's dragon. But more than this, I have the fear of your ruling, Sir, before my eyes, and do not desire to follow the hon. Baronet into irrelevant matter, the Motion before the House relating to China rather than to India. The hon. Mover of this Resolution has again made a temperance speech which ought to have been addressed to the people of China rather than preached to the Members of this House, who are already converted. The hon. Mover should go to China with an ascetic robe, accompanied by the hon. Member for Durham and the hon. Member for Cockermouth as acolytes. Their utterances would no doubt be adequately reproduced through the medium of a Chinese interpreter, and great would be the effect on Chinese hearts. Temperance advocates in this country, when they preach against the evils of gin-drinking, do not propose to do away with the revenue which the Chancellor of the Exchequer derives from that source. We are no more bound to give up the corresponding taxes on Indian opium than we are to abandon our revenue from wines and spirits in England. The hon. Baronet asks whether the whole opinion of China is wrong, and the opinion of England right, and points to the prohibitions against the use of opium issued from time to time by the Chinese Authorities. But are we to accept the opinions of men who preach against what they themselves practise? The Chinese proclamation of 1869 has been quoted, and its language sounded so near to the sublime that it touched hon. Members; but at that very time the Chinese Government were encouraging the growth of the poppy over a vast tract of their own country, and were deriving revenue therefrom. The very Mandarins were

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opium-smokers. Am I not entitled to say that these proclamations, which are quoted with such effect in this House, are nothing more than organized hypocrisy. One hon. Member mentioned the case of a district in China which had been depopulated from the consequences of opium smoking, and any outsider hearing him would have supposed that he was speaking of Indian opium. But that is not the case. It was native grown Chinese opium that the people had been smoking. Much is said about the evil of opium smoking in China: but the very same class of persons who draw these melancholy pictures of the condition of China would draw the same picture of intemperance at home. Why should we apply to China a standard which we dare not apply to our own revenue and our own people? The hon. Mover says England has a hand in the opium traffic, but I maintain that England has no hand whatever in the opium traffic in the sense that the hon. Member means. The fact is that the proportion of Indian opium to Chinese opium is now very small, the former bearing about the same proportion to the latter as is borne by the champagne wine of France to the rest of the wine grown in that favoured country. Thus it is China which has become the great producer of the opium drug. I will spare the House some quotations I had intended to make from the official reports of British Consuls, describing how the opium of China is superseding that of India; but they are accessible to any Member of this House. It is an extraordinary circumstance that 30 years ago India was a great opium producing country and China a great tea producing country, whereas India is now more and more driving the Chinese tea out of the British market, while, on the other hand, China is superseding India in production of opium which used to be chiefly an Indian drug. These results are, I think, altogether to the credit of India and of British rule. The

fact is that the cause of the Chinese opposition is fiscal jealousy and nothing else. The Chinese desire to participate in the revenue from Indian opium, and, therefore, with an eye to the temperance advocates in England they have tried to throw every opprobrium on the Indian opium. They brought that to the front, though they knew perfectly well they had their own opium at the back of it. China has now gained what she considers to be something like a fair share of the tax, and, therefore, is now ceasing to protest. She has gained her object, and is now competing in the production and so beating off the Indian drug, so that her own may have the command of the market. Some hon. Members have spoken to-night as if we have a share in the profits of the trade; but that is not an accurate expression. Those profits go to the Armenians and Jews, and various other classes of highly esteemed nationalities.

SIR G. CAMPBELL: I did not refer to the profits of the trade, but to the profits of the taxation.

*SIR. R. TEMPLE: I am afraid the word "profits" is used in a manner which involves misapprehension in this House. Our share is in the taxation, and we have no more concern in the profits than the British Exchequer has in the beer or wine trades of this country. With regard to the Chefoo Convention, it is a mistake to suppose that that Convention related to opium alone. That Convention is the latest edition of the Treaty of Tientsin. There is a tariff as long as your arm, containing hundreds of items, of which opium is only one. Of course, at the next revision of the Convention there may be modifications here and there, but opium must take its chance with the rest. That revision is, I understand, to take place in the year 1896, and not 1890, as has been said, that is beyond the duration of this Parliament. So I hope the House will not be inclined to interfere in the matter until then. I must say a word in contradiction of the statement that it

was we who taught the Chinese to smoke opium. They knew something about opium smoking generations before we ever went there. The report of Sir Robert Hart, who is probably the best informed man on the subject, and who is the Imperial Commissioners of Customs to the Chinese Government, sets forth that the use of opium in China has been going on for—I forget how many generations. Then, again, as to the causes of the Chinese wars to which attention has been called, it is misleading and an entire misreading of history to stigmatize those wars as opium wars. No title was ever given to particular wars which had less justification. It is nothing more than this—that the Chinese had for generations determined to get rid of the barbarians and to have no commerce with England or any other nation. In opposition to that policy it was determined that China should be thrown open to the commerce of the world, and it so happened that in the struggle which arose between the British local officials and the Chinese officials the first quarrel occurred about certain opium stores. It chanced that some opium stores were destroyed. The case would have been the same had the stores consisted of grain or of piece goods. That was only the spark which set the powder magazine on fire, and hence it was that there arose what appeared to be an opium war, whereas it was nothing but a war of commerce and international communication—and very justly so. Then, as to the second war the same thing occurred. It began with the *lorcha Arrow*. But was she an opium vessel? Not at all; she was a trader, and the question that arose was one relative to the commercial position we held on the Coast of China. I would merely add that the proportion which opium bears to the trade of China has always been small. The trade with China now is not far from £60,000,000 or £70,000,000 per annum, and the opium trade is not more than one-fourth or one-sixth of that amount. The hon. Gentleman opposite proposes that we should sacrifice some six millions of Indian Revenue not for the purpose of improving the con-

dition of the Chinese, because it would do no good in their behalf, and really for nothing at all that will conduce to the interests of China or the cause of practical morality anywhere. The hon. Member suggests by way of compensation for the loss of this revenue, that there should be a tax on the importation of piece goods into India; so that, for the sake of this most fruitless, bootless, and unnecessary sacrifice, we are to impose a burden on British enterprise entering British territory. To-morrow, I have to go to Manchester to address a meeting of my friends there, and I will take care to submit to the people of that city the proposal of the hon. Gentleman, and to ask them how they like the prospect of such a suggestion being carried into effect when the Party to which the hon. Member belongs returns to Power? Then it is suggested that there should be a subvention—that the British taxpayer is to bear a part of the cost of the late Burmese War. Why is not India to bear the cost of that war? Burmah is essentially a part of the British Empire. It is a neighbour of India—connected with India for two generations. The House will remember that for many years India has been drawing a great surplus from Lower Burmah. But after all that, India is not to bear the burden in relation to her own newly acquired territory, and the British taxpayer is to be called upon to sustain it, not for any moral purposes but simply to gratify or to satisfy the sentimental tastes of the hon. Mover. I appeal to the House to reject this resolution upon the very considerations which have been frankly and candidly adduced by the hon. Mover himself. His Resolution is virtually answered by his own reasons. He admits that the Chinese people are growing opium to such an extent that nothing we can do will have the slightest effect upon it. Therefore to sacrifice the Indian revenue would be merely to injure our own subjects in India for no purpose, and the remedies which the right hon. Mover approves and proposes by way of compensation are politically, socially, and administratively impossible.

*DR. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W.): My right hon. Friend has spoken of opium wars, but what he has

stated with regard to them was not well founded, because they were simply wars of tariff. I wish simply to deal with our Government in connection with the charge of our having forced opium on the Chinese. I do not know whether hon. Members recollect the correspondence which appeared in the *Times* nine years ago, and which was carried on by the Chinese Envoy and the late Mr. Lawrence Oliphant. M. Lay, Chinese Secretary to Lord Elgin's Special Mission, wrote to the *Times* on October 22nd, 1880, and said:—

“The Chinese Government admitted opium as a legal article of import, not under constraint, but of their own free will, deliberately.”

And Mr. Lawrence Oliphant, Secretary to the same Mission, also referring to the Tientsin Treaty, wrote:—

“I was appointed, in 1868, to the Commission for the settlement of the trade and tariff regulations with China, and, during my absence with Lord Elgin in Japan, M. Lay was charged to consider the details with the subordinate Chinese officials named for the purpose. On my return to Shanghai, I went through the tariff elaborated by these gentlemen with the Commission appointed by the Chinese Government. When we came to the article opium, I informed the Commissioner that I had received instructions from Lord Elgin not to insist on the insertion of the drug in the tariff should the Chinese Government wish to omit it. This he declined to do. I then proposed that the duty should be increased beyond the figure suggested on the tariff; but to this he objected, on the ground that it would increase the inducements to smuggling. I trust that the delusion that the opium trade now existing with China was extorted from that country by the British Ambassador may be finally dispelled.”

That correspondence proves successfully, if not to the House, to my own mind, that opium trade was not forced upon the Chinese Government by ourselves, and that really the Chinese were not reluctant to enter upon it, to say nothing more. I would like to say one word as to the effects of the use of opium. With great deference to my hon. Friend the mover of the Resolution, with whose object I have much sympathy, and who made an excellent and instructive speech on this question. I think there has been a great deal of exaggeration of the injurious effects of opium upon the

Chinese and Indian populations. Mr. Hart, Consul at China, an extremely experienced man, sums up the number of opium eaters in China at one-third of 1 per cent, an infinitesimal percentage indeed. He pointed out that the Chinese people are strong enough and industrious enough, and do not seem in any way or in any material degree to suffer by the use of the drug. Really I think that those who take the opposite view try to prove a great deal too much. If it were correct that there is this frightful demoralization from the use of opium, we should see the Chinese people making enormously rapid strides to destruction. I am not prepared to say that the evidence in proof of such a statement is of a satisfactory character. I think a case may be made out on the other side. I venture to say that the use of opium in small doses may be of a beneficial character. Very many use it in small doses with in no degree hurtful, but beneficial, results. The Chinese soldiers are in the habit of taking, as a matter of routine, certain small doses of opium; at the same time those who have had an opportunity of seeing them in the field admit that a more brave, hardy, and admirable set of men cannot be conceived. My hon. Friend the Member for Kirkcaldy will bear me out when I say that the Rajpoots, who are the finest race in India, the finest men, are also in the habit of taking opium as a matter of routine. It does not make the man sleep; it seems to brace him, and invigorate him for his work. I remember, on a former occasion, giving instances of opium eaters, and I recollect reminding the House that Wilberforce, one of the greatest of English statesmen, always took an opium pill before getting up to speak. Then I should like to say a word on the comparative effects of the use of opium and alcohol. Now, no one can deny, who has looked at the question, that the effects of alcohol are very much worse than those of opium. It causes degeneration of the tissues of the body, and injures the kidneys, or brain, or some other internal organ. No such effects are produced by opium, nor has anyone contended that such effects are produced. We often find a large number of

diseases, including insanity, as the results of the use of alcohol. And it has been said that 40 per cent of the crime of the country is produced by alcohol. There is no proof whatever that the use of opium has produced any specific disease, certainly not any crime, because opium eaters in excess sleep away a considerable portion of their life. We see a great number of painful and humiliating external manifestations of the use of alcohol, but these are not seen, nor proved to exist, in the case of opium. I do not pretend to say for a single moment that there are not evils in connection with the excessive use of opium; but I do not think any of them are so terrible as the effects of alcohol. I do not know that there is any specific deterioration from the use of opium. As I endeavoured to show, we do not force opium upon the Chinese people, and the effects of opium upon the Chinese people have been very much exaggerated. I think a case has been made out against my hon. Friend, and, therefore, in support of my own convictions I shall walk into the Lobby against him.

*THE UNDER SECRETARY FOR INDIA (Sir J. GORST, Chatham): Before I address the House on the main subject, allow me to say a few words on the moral aspect of the question. Now, I have the most profound respect for the good intentions of the mover and seconder of this Resolution, and I have been taught such a respect for all persons who spend their lives in seeking to improve the morals of their fellow-creatures. But the older one grows, and the more experience one has, the more one sees how frequently those who desire to improve the morality of their fellow-creatures inflict greater hardships and misfortunes upon them, and how dangerous it is for people, however good and however earnest, to endeavour to impose by violent means their ideas of what is right and moral upon their fellow-creatures. Now, I was brought up in the belief that it was very wicked either to smoke or to drink

opium, and that anyone who was engaged in that trade was guilty of a great moral laxity. Experience has taught me that no persons are more fond of abusing a particular food or drink than those who do not use it themselves. I remember I was myself once severely called to task by one of the New Zealand chiefs because my countrymen considered it a luxury to eat decayed and rotting cheese. And there are millions of people in the East possessing high education and strict moral fidelity who see no harm in indulging in opium. When one considers that the Rajpoots, the Sikhs, and some of the best men who cultivate the soil in India indulge habitually in the moderate use of opium, and when in this House one has experienced men like the hon. Member for Aberdeenshire, who tell us from their professional knowledge and experience that there is such a thing as the use and abuse of opium, one perhaps is induced to admit that on the whole, it might be best if we were to confine ourselves to our own errors and leave the people of China themselves to judge whether or not it is wise or just to use opium or not. There is another aspect of the moral question to which I will ask the attention of the House. This is a practical assembly, and it must consider what is the practical result of the Resolution. It is easy to pass abstract Resolutions in this House recommending abstinence from alcohol and opium, but there is no very high morality in indulging in this cheap philanthropy and virtue, and getting the credit and the glory when somebody else has to pay the price of our heroic and exalted virtue. Nobody in the House will be a penny the worse if the Resolution is passed. Your constituents will not mind it much, as their interests are not involved, and no Member's seat will be endangered. All the difficulty will be thrown upon the Government of India, and all the hardship upon the poor people of India, of whom the hon.

Sir J. Gorst

Member for Flintshire has sometimes made himself the advocate. And now after these observations on the moral aspect of the question, let me address myself to its practical bearing. In the first place, I will promise the House that I will not follow the hon. Member for Flintshire into ancient history. This ancient history of the conduct of Great Britain towards China has been discussed in this House over and over again. There have been debates in 1880, 1883, 1884, and 1886, and on all those occasions the House refused to go into ancient history and to condemn the conduct of previous Governments in respect of their relations with China. And, after these decisions of the House of Commons, I think it would be wise if the present House imitated the example of its predecessors, and confined themselves to considering the practical part of the hon. Member's Resolution. The Resolution calls upon the House to take steps to bring about the final extinction of the trade. Now, Sir, there are signs that the export of Indian opium may be extinguished without our assistance. All the opium which goes from India to China is only sufficient to supply the wants of about a million smokers; therefore of this 350 million of people less than one-third per cent can possibly be demoralized by the action of the Indian Government. The cultivation of native opium in China is increasing rapidly. As the importation had increased so had the native cultivation. The hon. Baronet the Member for Durham told the House there was no such thing as opium grown in China.

*SIR J. PEASE: No, Sir. I said that my reading on the subject showed me that there never was a time when there was no opium grown in China, but that when we began our dealings in it, in China it was grown to a very small extent.

*SIR J. GORST: That is very likely. No doubt there is a good deal of truth in that, and probably down to the end of the last century very little opium was either grown in China or imported into it. It may also be quite true there were the most stringent edicts against

it, and that the growth of it was punishable with death; but I believe there is no record of the death punishment having been inflicted (an hon. Member: Yes); well, it has been inflicted very seldom. I can quote passage after passage from Consuls in China showing that the decrees were merely colourable announcements, such as were sometimes made for moral purposes in this country; and that all people knew that the mandarins who issued the decrees were not in earnest, and that while they denounced the cultivation of the poppy, the people quietly sowed their fields, reaped their fruits, and paid duty to the very mandarins who issued the prohibitions. Besides Chinese opium, Persian opium is becoming a formidable competitor with the Indian drug, and this competition is more and more squeezing the Indian opium out of the Chinese market. Not only is the revenue diminishing, but the acreage under cultivation in Bengal is diminishing too, and it is possible the Indian opium trade may by degrees die out. The Resolution asks the Government of India to take active steps to kill it. On whom would the loss and the inconvenience fall? We have heard that the extinction of the trade would involve the Indian Revenue in a loss of six millions. Very little is made of the loss to the million and a-half of Indian cultivators in Behar—one of the poorest parts of India—who depend on the production of the crop for their livelihood and their prosperity. No, Sir; the hon. Baronet opposite gained a laugh at the expense of these poor people because they are guilty of the monstrous offence of paying their rents. He said what sympathy could they expect for people who by means of that cultivation were able to pay their rents.

*SIR J. PEASE: That is not what I endeavoured to point out. It was that the Indian Report said that the ready money enabled their rent to be paid to

the landlord. It was a landlord's benefit, not a tenant's.

*SIR J. GORST: Does the hon. Baronet suppose we paid their rent? I confess I thought that they paid it themselves. My knowledge of India is such as to lead me to think that if these cultivators do not pay their rent themselves nobody is likely to pay it for them. These people receive from 40 to 45 rupees per acre for growing those crops. The House will consider what a valuable crop it is. The hon. Member for Flintshire said, "Oh, they will grow something else." So they may in time; but you cannot turn 600,000 acres of land and a million and a-half of people from the cultivation of the poppy to the cultivation of corn or of something else at a moment's notice. Then we hear something about the native states which produce the poppy to a large amount. Are they to give up its cultivation? But the Chiefs have not got the moral sentiment of the hon. Member for Flintshire. They do not think it wrong to grow poppies or to eat opium as no doubt many of them are in the habit of doing; and how are we to make it intelligible to them that they are, for the sake of the idea of this Western Parliament, to abandon a cultivation that is so profitable to themselves and their people for some other kind of cultivation that has yet to come? The hon. Member for Flintshire would compel those people with whom we have made treaties to give up the cultivation of the poppy. I say we have no right to do so.

*MR. S. SMITH: I never proposed that we should compel the native States to give up the cultivation of opium, but I suggested that we should impose a tax on that part of the Indian opium which passes through our territory, and that it is in our power to put a prohibitory duty upon it.

*SIR J. GORST: A prohibitory duty would be just as much a breach of treaty. I cannot understand the morality which would break faith with those native Princes with whom we are

bound by treaty in order to put down the cultivation of a drug which in our opinion ought not to be grown.

*MR. S. SMITH: But treaties expire.

*SIR J. GORST: Yes, but these treaties are now in force. An hon. Member has spoken of compensating the native States for the loss to be sustained if we stop the growth of the poppy; but remember that the total revenue now received by the Native States from the cultivation of the poppy is 1,200,000 Rs, and the sum that would be required in compensation for the loss of that amount would be such as I should hardly like to propose either to the Indian or the British Chancellor of the Exchequer. And even if this were done, what would be the result? Would it stop the consumption of opium in China and turn the Chinese people into a people of abstainers? Nothing of the kind. It would simply open the door for native-grown and for Persian opium; and those poor Indian ryots would suffer in order that Persian cultivators might gain the profits which the morality of this House has deprived them of. Indian opium in China is a luxury, just as French wine is a luxury in this country. The common people in England consume beer and gin, and the rich drink French wine. So the Chinese common people consume native-grown Chinese opium, while the richer classes in China indulge in Indian opium, and it would be just as sensible for the French Government to stop the trade in French wine because of the intemperate use of gin and beer in Great Britain as it would be for the Government of India to stop the trade in Indian opium because of the excesses of the Chinese consumers of native-grown Chinese opium. Nay, the action of the French Government in such a case would be more sensible than that of the Indian Government, because the French Government would be inflicting injury on their own people, whereas we should be indulging our high moral sense at the expense of the Indian ryot who does not understand our scruples or our motives. The last part of the

Resolution is, I consider, really an insult to China. The hon. Member for Flintshire invites the House to urge Her Majesty's Government to intimate to the Government of China "that in the next revision of the Treaty of Tientsin full power will be given to extinguish the trade in opium if it thinks fit." A great independent Power like China does not want such an assurance from us. I do not know whether the House has properly appreciated the extracts which the hon. Member for Aberdeen gave from letters written by gentlemen concerned in framing the Treaty which, it is asserted, has been wrung from China. [AN HON. MEMBER: "Hear, hear!"] As the hon. Member said "Hear, hear," I am afraid I must trouble the House by again referring to those letters. Mr. Lay, who was Secretary to Lord Elgin's mission, said:

"All the negotiations at Tientsin passed through me. Not one word upon either side was ever said about opium from first to last. The preparation of the tariff devolved upon me at the desire of the Chinese no less than of Lord Elgin. When I came to opium I inquired what course they proposed to take in respect to it. The answer was, 'We have resolved to put it into the tariff as foreign medicine.' I urged a moderate duty in view of the cost of collection, which was agreed to. This represents with strict accuracy the amount of 'extortion' resorted to."

Mr. Laurence Oliphant who was one of the Commissioners engaged in the negotiation of the treaty, said:—

"When we came to the article 'opium' I informed the Commissioner that I had received instructions from Lord Elgin not to insist on the insertion of the drug in the tariff should the Chinese Government wish to omit it. This he declined to do. I then proposed that that the duty should be increased beyond the figure suggested in the tariff; but to this he objected, on the ground that it would increase the inducements to smuggling. I trust that the delusion that the opium trade now existing with China was 'extorted' from that country by the British Ambassador may be finally dispelled."

So far, however, from its being finally dispelled by that letter to *The Times* in 1880, the delusion is in full vigour to-night, and after those words has been quoted twice in the House the delusion in the mind of the hon. Member for Durham is as vigorous as ever. But the Chinese are not inclined to renounce this treaty. They raise at present a

revenue of £1,000,000 sterling from the opium imported from India, and they quite appreciate the advantages of that revenue, while they have no moral scruples which prevent them from accepting it. Therefore, if the Chinese and British Governments are let alone there is no doubt whatever that the Indian trade in opium will be continued so long as it is not displaced by the natural growth of the native Chinese opium or imported Persian opium. And what I submit to this House is that in matters of this kind we should leave to the Chinese Government the care of the morality of their own subjects, and should not in our presumptuous ignorance venture to dictate to Oriental nations what they may morally eat and virtuously drink, but should rather confine ourselves to the condition of our own home population, with whose wants we are far better acquainted, and when we have put a final stop to the abuse of alcohol in Great Britain then will be the time to commence a crusade against the evils of the use of opium in China.

SIR R. N. FOWLER: Having on several previous occasions voted in favour of similar Resolutions, I shall now support my hon. Friend opposite, but I desire to explain I feel very strongly that we have no right to impose any addition to burdens on the people of India, and if the tax is to be taken away it must be at the expense of this country. If we take from India a source of revenue we must put our hands into our own pockets. My hon. Friend (Sir R. Temple) the Member for Evesham seems to think that there is an analogy between the revenue for spirits in this country and the revenue for opium in India. But nobody knows better than he that the opium revenue in Bengal is obtained in a very peculiar way, and that the Government make advances to the ryots from whom they purchase the opium which they prepare for the Chinese market at Patna and Gazeepore. To make the analogy perfect our Government should distil their own spirits and sell them to the people. We do not do this, and I do not think, therefore, that the analogy is borne out.

*SIR U. KAY SHUTTLEWORTH (Lancashire, Clitheroe): My hon. Friend often brings subjects under the attention of this House in a manner calculated to command the sympathies of hon. Members on these Benches, and I always feel a desire to vote with him, especially considering the class of argument he advances. If a policy is morally wrong I agree with him that it cannot be politically right. Now he asks the House to call on the Government of India to take steps for the suppression of this trade. But we have before us evidence which has been quoted over and over again in the course of this debate, that the Chinese are themselves producing more and more opium, and that they produce much more than is imported from India. Therefore the only effect of stopping the cultivation of Indian opium would be largely to transfer the cultivation to China, and to Persia and Turkey, and the state of China in the end would be no better than it now is. The object in view is, therefore, impracticable. But there is also this very great difficulty. In India a large portion of the native population, in whom my hon. Friend takes such a deep and sincere interest, is dependent on the cultivation of the poppy, and to deprive them of their occupation would be dangerous. Moreover if my hon. Friend advocates this, as he does in some degree from the point of view of the interests of opium-smokers among the Indian people, he must know that it is highly probable that if they did not consume opium they would consume those local alcoholic spirits which are so pernicious in their effects. The last state of the Indian population, therefore, would be worse than the first. Then he asks us to pass this resolution in the interests of the Chinese. It is very doubtful whether any benefit would be done to the Chinese. My belief is that they would consume just as much opium if we took the action proposed as they do now. But if we are about to enter upon the extinction of the trade in stimulants surely we

should address ourselves to the question of the stimulants which are consumed in such great quantities in this country before we interfere with the stimulants in which the Chinese indulge. But what particularly called me to my legs at this hour was the substitutes for the Opium Revenue which my hon. Friend proposed to the House. He said that the problem of making good the revenue which would be lost by the non-cultivation of the poppy was insurmountable, and then he immediately proceeded to try and surmount it. He suggested that there should be a 10 per cent *ad valorem* tax levied upon all cotton goods imported into India, which he estimated would yield 4,000,000 sterling and he suggested a similar tax upon all goods manufactured in India. He also proposed that there should be something in the nature of a direct subvention and finally he advocated a resort to bimettalism. I will only deal with the first of these proposals. My hon. Friend himself indicated that he did not expect his proposal would be received with very much favour in the country in which he lives and a division of which I have the honour to represent. Certainly not. But consider it from the Indian point of view. He proposes to tax the cotton garments which the people of India wear. For what reason? In response to some demand, coming from the Indian people? No. Simply to satisfy a British cry the hon. Gentleman proposes to lay a tax on the whole population of India. Is this to benefit the Indian people? No: But to confer an imaginary benefit upon the Chinese. I say "imaginary" because it is well to remember that the Indian opium imported into China is the luxury of the rich in China. The opium consumed by the masses of the people is grown in China itself, indeed, the Under Secretary for India has told the House that out of 350 millions of people living in China only about one million consume Indian opium. Let us compare what we are asked to do with what the French Chamber of Deputies might be asked to do. Suppose the Chamber passed a resolution that it was immoral to intoxicate rich English and Scotch people with claret and brandy, and that therefore they must prohibit the export of the best claret and brandy.

What should we think of the French Chamber? That is precisely the same position in which we should place ourselves if we passed this Resolution. On these grounds I am sorry to say that I cannot support the Resolution.

*MR. SYDNEY GEDGE (Stockport), who rose amidst cries of "Divide, Divide": I ask the indulgence of the House for two minutes only. Having been for many years interested in the operations of the Church Missionary Society in China, I cannot allow the attack made upon the Bishops and Missionaries in China by the hon. Member for Oldham (Mr. Maclean) to pass without a word from me in contradiction. The hon. Member sneered at the Missionaries in China as men who, conscious of failure in their missions, made false excuses for that failure, and availed themselves of those false excuses to extract money from the pockets of the English people. I maintain that the missions in China have not been failures; that looking to the enormous obstacles in the way of the progress of Christianity in that country, to the great difficulty of the language, to the immobility of their ancient civilization, to the fact that many years ago—about the time we first planted Christian Missions there—opium was introduced into that country by the gun and at the point of the bayonet, I say the Missions have not been failures, but that the success of Christianity in that country has been equal to the success of the Apostles in the first century. Some of the Missionaries are personal friends of my own, and I know they are quite incapable of the conduct which the hon. Member for Oldham has imputed to them. I indignantly deny the charge, but I shall not vote on this question at all.

The House divided:—Ayes 165; Noes 88: (Div. List, No. 95.)

House adjourned at five minutes before One o'clock, till Monday next.

HANSARD'S PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES.

No. 12.]

THIRD VOLUME OF SESSION 1889.

[MAY 14.]

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Monday, 6th May, 1889.

SAT FIRST.

The Earl of Carlisle—after the death of his uncle.

STANDING COMMITTEES.

Report from the Committee of Chairmen of Standing Committees, that they have (in pursuance of Standing Order No. L.) appointed the Lord Herschell Chairman of the Standing Committee for Bills relating to Law, &c., and the Earl of Carnarvon, Chairman of the Standing Committee for General Bills; read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

COMMITTEE OF SELECTION FOR STANDING COMMITTEES.

Report from, that the Committee have added the Earl Beauchamp to the Standing Committee for General Bills, for the consideration of the Horseflesh (Sale for Food) Bill.

Read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY— QUESTION.

LORD LAMINGTON: My Lords, I desire, having given private notice, to ask the noble Marquess, whether he can state with whom rests the choice of site for the National Portrait Gallery which is to be erected by the munificence of a private donor, as announced by the noble Marquess on Saturday? Will the selection of the site lie with the Trustees of the National Gallery, or with others? Without saying a word

in depreciation of the munificence of the donor, I think it is not quite dignified on the part of a great country like this that it should be dependent for such a building on private generosity.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Marquess of SALISBURY): It is very difficult for me to answer such a question as that which is put to me off-hand, and my impression that it would be more fitting if the question were put to the representative of the Office of Works, who could state exactly the conditions imposed by the donor. Matters have not advanced far enough as yet to enable me to give the noble Lord all the details he appears to desire, but if he will put a question on the Paper no doubt further information will be forthcoming.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) PROVISIONAL ORDERS BILL.

House in Committee (according to order); Bill reported without amendment; and to be read 3^d to-morrow.

THE LIQUOR TRAFFIC AMONG THE AFRICAN RACES—OBSERVATIONS.

*THE DUKE OF WESTMINSTER: My Lords, in bringing this question of Liquor Traffic among the African races before your Lordships' House, on behalf of all the temperance societies of the country, combined with the missionary societies and others who are interested in the matter, I have to call attention to the evils attending the introduction of foreign spirits among native races in Africa, and to appeal to the Government to continue their efforts to mitigate them by restriction and, where possible, by prohibition of the Liquor Traffic. I have been requested to bring this

matter before your Lordships by the Committee which represents all the large temperance societies in the country, allied with the missionary societies, who are impressed by the gravity of the case, and are anxious to know what can be done to remedy the evil. Those societies have gained extensive information from all parts of the world, from the most reliable witnesses, and some of that evidence I should very much like to place before your Lordships. I hope I shall not trespass too long upon you if I call attention to a few of the strongest cases which have been brought before them. Debates on the subject took place last year in both Houses of Parliament, and nothing could be more satisfactory than the replies then given by the Members of the Government. I had the honour of accompanying a deputation last year to the Prime Minister, and was delighted to hear the reply of the noble Marquess. There is, however, one sentence in that reply, with regard to which I join issue with the Prime Minister, and that is the sentence wherein he said the Government must proceed with caution and circumspection, and with due respect to the craving for drink which had to be satisfied in Africa. We object to that statement, and assert that the want of drink among the natives is created by the supply. In many cases the natives make their own liquors, but these were as milk and water compared with the abominable stuff imported from this country, America, Portugal, and especially from Germany. In Africa there exists the curse of the slave trade, and the curse of the liquor trade, and some of the natives say that the liquor traffic is almost a greater evil than the slave traffic. However that may be, it is the duty of all the civilized nations to do what they can to put an end to the curse of the liquor trade. Professor Drummond says Africa is the land of the unemployed; the men do nothing but eat, and the women do the work. Under the great heat prevailing, the drink traffic reduces the natives to absolute ruin and misery. The blackest spots appeared to be on the west and south coasts in the district connected with the Cape. Liquors are poured into that country, and some of the spirits are sold at 4s. 6d. per dozen pint bottles. What is called "superior

gin" is sold at 2s. 6d. per dozen pint bottles, and "splendid rum" at 9d. per gallon. These horrible drinks supplied to the natives, under the hot sun beneath which they live, reduces them to misery and ruin. There is no question of moderate drinking with them. They will drink to excess. Former Governments have dealt with this evil, and the present Government should follow their example. Mr. Joseph Thomson, a very reliable witness, says:

"In the notorious gin trade, however, lies a still greater evil. It is indeed a scandal and a shame, well worthy to be classed with the detested slave trade, in which we had ourselves ever so prominent a part. We talk of civilizing the negro, and introducing the blessings of European trade, while at one and the same time we pour into this unhappy country incredible quantities of gin, rum, gunpowder, and guns. We are so accustomed to hearing a delightful list of useful articles which the negro wants in return for the products of his country that we are apt to think that the trade in spirits must be quite a minor affair. Banish all such pleasing illusions from your minds. The trade in this baleful article is enormous. The appetite for it increases out of all proportion to the desire for better things, and, to our shame be it said, we are ever ready to supply the victims to the utmost, driving them deeper and deeper into the slough of depravity, ruining them body and soul, while at home we talk sanctimoniously as if the introduction of our trade and the elevation of the negro went hand in hand. The time has surely come when, in the interests of our national honour, more energetic efforts should be to suppress the diabolical traffic. There can be no excuse for its continuance, and it is a blot on Christian civilization. From the moment the traveller leaves Liverpool he finds himself in an atmosphere of poisonous spirits. It pervades every corner of the steamer in which he takes passage. He sees the gin and rum disgorged from its capacious holds in thousands of cases at port after port, and he will almost look in vain for a bale of Manchester cotton. On shore he finds the warehouses of the merchants almost exclusively occupied with the same pernicious stuff. In marching through some of the native villages on the Kru Coast, one feels as if in a kind of Hades peopled by brutalised human beings whose punishment it is to be possessed by a never-ending thirst for drink. On all sides you are followed by eager cries of gin, gin, always gin. The line of African coast, dotted over with European settlements, stations, and factories, should be a fringe bright with promise for the future, a fringe which should radiate some of the warmth, the sweetness, and light of civilization, which, slowly extending onward, should tinge the whole heart of the Dark Continent. That is how I would like to describe the influence of the white man on the black; but if I am to speak the truth I must use far different terms. To me that fringe of coast is simply a hot-bed of cancerous roots, which are swiftly growing inward, threatening to turn the entire continent into one huge festering sore, rivalling in

magnitude that other great African disease from which that region has suffered for some centuries."

I believe, my Lord, that is a very true description of the state of affairs. There is an island of Lagos on the West Coast. It is not a very large place. It is inhabited by 75,000 odd of the natives, it has been a Crown colony for six years, and it is a very unhealthy part of the country. I will quote the statement made in the report of Mr. Johnson—

"Lagos is a small island on the West Coast of Africa, and has been a Crown colony for the last six years, and it is the key to the Yoruba country, with which it held commercial relations. It has a population of 75,000. Before its cession there was a small amount of liquor traffic carried on because it was a slave-trading port. Since the cession to the British Crown—and that cession was made with the distinct object of suppressing the slave trade and the amelioration of the country—the facility which this government gives to trade has enabled the liquor trade to grow steadily until it has attained at present tremendous proportions. In the town of Lagos, which has 35,000 inhabitants, the Government allow 25 wholesale shops for the sale of this drink. There are 50 licensed places where spirits are sold to the people of the town and district, and then through them to the interior of the country. The farmers bring their produce to Lagos, and they return to their vehicles loaded with rum and gin. Men and women and children all drink, and one result of it is that the people have become utterly demoralized. Their Kings and chiefs have endeavoured by their own laws to put a stop to the importation of this drink; yet they have no power over their people. The people are so demoralized that they will not conform to the wishes of their rulers, and these have been obliged to give way. And then as to the Niger, where we have 250 miles under British protection, there is a large trade done in liquor with tribes some of whom are cannibals and some of the wildest tribes that could possibly be imagined. We were able to introduce missionary work into some of these towns 30 years ago: but some of them have been in commercial intercourse with England for 100 years, and although this is the case we find during those times that the people indulged in cannibalism and other unimaginable vices."

Then there is a Report from Mr. W. C. Betts, one of the principal native liquor traders in Sierra Leone:—

"I am myself a large dealer in spirituous liquors; I have on the road now thousands of gallons of rum and several thousands of demijohns of gin bound for the Northern River countries, where I carry on the greater part of my business. The liquor traffic destroys body and soul together; such slaves have they become to the white man's rum and gin. Rum and gin are their incessant demand and cry. The traffic has so debased them that everywhere they neglect their own comfort."

From these reports, my Lords, it is clear

that everyone objects to the traffic, speaking from the results in his own part of the country. In the case of the Niger territory the Company have taken steps to prohibit the importation of liquor, and in some parts of their district they have had satisfactory results. The Cape Government Commission on the Liquor Traffic has reported as follows:—

"The Commission have been deeply impressed with the emphatic and urgent representations contained in nearly all the evidence taken, and especially from the natives themselves, on the evils arising out of the sale and consumption of strong drinks. All this evidence points in the clearest way to the use of spirituous liquors (chiefly ardent spirits, the produce of the distilleries) as an unmitigated evil to the native races, and that no other cause or influence so directly increases idleness and crime and is so completely destructive not only of all progress or improvement, but even of the reasonable hope of any progress or improvement. Those members of the Commission who, for the purpose of taking evidence, had occasion to visit the border districts were eye-witnesses of the mischief, wretchedness, and misery which multiplied facilities for the sale of spirits by licensed canteens in the neighbourhood of native locations are producing. If unchecked, it can only have one result, and that is the entire destruction of that portion of the natives who acquire the taste for brandy. All the better class of natives, and even the heathen and uneducated portion, appear to be conscious of this, and have implored the Commission to suppress the evil which is bringing ruin on themselves and their country."

Drink has very much the same effects upon the natives in all parts of Africa; they have the same craving for drink, which is never satisfied, except by some of this horrible stuff. The following extract from an article in the *Christian Express*, of Lovedale, South Africa, of the 1st of February, 1886, will show what has taken place in Basutoland:—

"What the state of affairs in Basutoland was six months ago is very well known. 'Drunken Basutoland, & Riotous Basutoland!' has been the common talk of all who take any interest in its future. From Caledon to the heart of the Blue Mountains brandy had become a curse under which individuals, families, and the whole tribe were crushed without any visible hope of rescue. And yet, incredible as it may look, matters have suddenly taken a new turn. Our chiefs had all become total abstainers and used now their great influence to oblige their subordinates to renounce strong drinks. It is a fact that for the last six months Letsie, Lerathodi, Mama, Masupha, and all the principal chiefs in Basutoland have not even tasted liquor, and that the bulk of their people have done the same. Strict watch is kept on the border to prevent either the Basutos from going into the Free State and buying brandy there, or the white smugglers entering Basutoland with their accursed merchandize. Canteens,

which were very common in Masupha's district, have disappeared, and heavy fines are imposed on those who have been caught in the act of trespassing against the orders of the powers that be.'

My Lords, I am afraid that the Portuguese are great offenders in this matter of importing spirits. They import great quantities, and I am told that in one opium factory on the Zambesi the people employed are paid in spirits. I quite recognize the difficulties which surround this question. In connection with this point, I may quote the evidence of two or three people. Mr. James Irvine, of Liverpool says :—

"Two hundred and fifty miles of the West Coast of Africa consume 20,000 tuns of spirits a-year—say, 20 ships of 1,000 tuns each. The amazing thing is that all this traffic is conducted in the main by not over a dozen firms, the members of which are excellent men, and many of them, I believe, sincere Christians. Convince them that they are wrong, and induce them to withdraw. What is accomplished? Simply that worse men take their place. I cordially believe that no effort should be spared to stop or reduce the evil. It is the Lord's work, and He can make it succeed in ways unthought of at present by us."

My Lords, we are perfectly well aware of the difficulties surrounding this question. Lord Salisbury told us that he was impressed with enormous difficulties in the way, and one cannot help feeling impressed with the extraordinary difficulties on all sides. Mr. Joseph Thomson, a great authority in regard to the West Coast of Africa, says :—

"There is something more required than to bring a British public to a proper sense of its duty in this matter. To be of any use, the entire conscience of Europe must be roused. Britain does not hold one-tenth of the African coast line, and her settlements are broken into by those of France, Germany, and Portugal. Hence, merely to stop the trade or heavily handicap it in our colonies, will only be to invite it to enter by the back door from French, German, or Portuguese sources. It is one thing to arouse a trade or an appetite, and another thing to stop either. If you do not supply the natives with gin they will find a thousand ways of getting it from other people. Therefore, to be effectual you must get all the countries of Europe to work in concert with you. How difficult this task will be is shown by the Berlin Conference, which would not prohibit the introduction of gin into the Congo, nor permit the suppression of the existing trade in the Niger, though it was, curiously enough, the company itself which worked the Niger trade that wanted the suppression."

Well then my Lords, there was a rather curious letter on the subject from the Hamburg Chamber of Commerce, re-

ceived by the Rev. R. Lang, of the Church Missionary Society, on June 18th, 1886 :—

"Honoured Sir,—In answer to yours of the 10th inst., I beg to state that the Chamber of Commerce has had no opportunity to go into the question of the liquor traffic in Africa, nor is it known to them that in any part of Africa spirituous liquors are used as a currency and a circulating medium with the natives. The question of the liquor traffic has been brought before the public through the Press, and frequently by the Imperial Diet warmly discussed. Merchants of this place interested in the African trade are of opinion that measures for the limiting of this trade are injurious to the development of the trade with those countries, and that the importation of those liquors as carried on at present has no injurious effect upon the natives. The assertions made by opponents that the chief liquors imported into Africa are deleterious on account of ingredients contained in them have been disproved by an official investigation, made upon ordinary so-called trade rum which was sent in by the Governor of the Cameroons. Yours respectfully, Dr. GUTSCHAM, Secretary."

My Lords, that shows the state of feeling in very influential quarters where the means of obtaining evidence is possessed, and it shows that the information so obtained has considerable influence in those quarters. The trade in spirituous liquors may be a very profitable one. No doubt great profits are made by it, but in the long run it acts injuriously to commerce in all articles which are conducive to the comfort, welfare, and happiness of the native inhabitants. Those who know Africa well know that it acts in the long run prejudicially to the interests of legitimate trade. The Rev. Hugh Goldie, 40 years a missionary in Old Calabar, said :—

"The moral aspect of the question is supreme; but its economical aspect is also very important. Commerce is employed as a means of elevating Africa; and if of a useful kind is a most powerful means. But in opening new roads for our manufactures we open new channels to the destructive flood, so that the benefit intended to be conferred is neutralized by the accompanying evil. One principal cause of the depression of trade existing at present in this country is doubtless, as is alleged, the vast amount of money spent in intoxicating drink. A friend mentioned to me lately that a member of a Glasgow firm stated to him that he formerly employed a large number of looms weaving cloth for the African market; now he has not one. A trader in the Calabar River wrote recently to this principals to send no more cloth—drink was the article in demand. Mr. Joseph Thomson, in his recent journey into the Niger regions, found this evil so abounding therein that it will render hopeless the demand, anticipated by some, by the

natives for unlimited supplies of calico, as effectually as will the sterility of the eastern countries through which he formerly travelled. In all its effects, moral and economical, this traffic is only evil—impeding the work of the Church at home, marring her mission work abroad, and destroying beneficial industry. The Christian community in past times aroused the nation to abolish the slave trade and slavery in British territory. A like task is now before it, the awakening of the nation to abolish this drink traffic."

Mr. Joseph Thomson again says—

"Let us for a moment lay aside questions of Christian morality and ask ourselves if this trade in spirits can be a paying one. Looked at superficially there seems to be no possibility of doubting that to raise a paying trade rapidly there is absolutely nothing like spirits. But let us ask, 'Is that a trade which will continue to grow? Will it pay in the long run? Will commerce thrive and branch out? Will the country flourish under such a system?' To these questions I answer emphatically, No! a thousand times no! A trade which commences with gin will continue with gin and will end with gin. Industry and thrift cannot be found in such company, and with the absence of these there can be no development of the mineral and vegetable riches of the country. In these facts lies the secret of the astoundingly small progress our West Coast Settlements have made through all the long period they have been in our hands."

My Lords, something may be done in this matter, and what may be done was suggested by the North Sea Fisheries Convention in 1887. There are at present some 11,000 men and boy engaged in the deep sea trade of the German Ocean, exposed to all weather at all seasons, and in winter it was the most boisterous and uncongenial piece of water in these latitudes. By the North Sea Fisheries Bill the liquor traffic is forbidden in the territorial waters of Great Britain, and by the international agreement between Great Britain, France, Belgium, Holland, Germany, and Denmark, which applies to that part of the North Sea outside territorial limits, the sale of spirits to fishermen and other persons on board fishing vessels is prohibited; fishermen are equally forbidden to buy spirits; the exchange or barter for spirits of any article, especially the fish caught, nets, or any part of the gear or "equiPAGE" of the fishing boat, is also prohibited. Vessels which ply on the North Sea for the purpose of selling to fishermen other articles have to be licensed by the Government of their own country, and are liable to strict regulations with the object of ensuring their not having

spirits on board for sale. That International Convention, signed at the Hague on Wednesday, November 16, 1887, binds the six countries I have named by their respective Legislatures to carry that arrangement into effect. I do not wish to hamper the Government, but I think that suggests a mode of dealing with this difficult question. The fact that a Resolution has been recently passed in another place dealing with the same question, and that the use of spirituous liquors in this country is diminishing, show that the circumstances are favourable for taking action in the matter. What I ask the Government to do is to take measures for the prohibition of the importation of liquors into Africa wherever that is possible, and, where that is impossible, to see that proper regulations, by means of high licences or otherwise, are taken to regulate the sale of liquors there, and to urge upon our Colonial Governments to see that their liquor laws are thoroughly and properly carried out. Although our hands are not clean in regard to the liquor traffic, I believe we are more free from blame than other nations, and that fact, coupled with the diminishing consumption of liquor in this country, will enable us to take action in the matter with stronger hands.

*THE EARL OF CARNARVON: My Lords, I do not think the noble Duke has at all exaggerated the evils flowing from the liquor traffic with native races, which according to Sir Richard Burton causes misery greater even than that of the slave trade itself. It destroys not merely life, character, and morals, and all that religion teaches, but even trade. It would perhaps not be untrue to say that for every gallon of spirits imported a bale of legitimate goods is kept out. The question concerns in part the Colonial Office, and in part the Foreign Office. As regards the Colonial Office there are three classes of territories concerned. There are the great responsible colonies, which may be well to include Natal. Secondly, there are the Crown colonies on the West Coast, and there is a group of protected territories of different sorts in South Africa. As regards the great free colonies, and especially the Cape, they must be left to deal with that question themselves. The Cape Colony have passed good laws in regard to the importation and sale of liquor to

the native races ; but the real difficulty is to enforce those laws, which mean considerable expenditure and the employment and maintenance of a large police force. There is an idea in this country that native Africans are one and all unmitigated barbarians, but those who know the Cape are well aware that there is every shade and degree and variety of civilization among the natives, and in some cases the civilization approaches so close to that of Europeans that it is extremely difficult to distinguish between them. This obviously constitutes a great difficulty in dealing with this question ; but a greater one is that there are great facilities for obtaining drink from the Transvaal, and it is here that the mischief is really done with regard to a very large portion of South Africa. In the Transvaal there are laws against the traffic, but they are notoriously not enforced. The frontier line is so thin that it is almost imaginary, and the facilities for crossing for the purpose of getting liquor are almost boundless. There is a second group of Crown colonies on the West Coast of Africa, and I am very much afraid that the condition of Sierra Leone, Gambia, the Gold Coast, and Lagos is very far from satisfactory. Perhaps Gambia is not so bad, but this is because the population is partly Mahomedan, and wherever we come into contact with Mahomedans there we find, as a rule, that this curse of drink does not exist, or at least that the people are comparatively free from it. I can refer with great satisfaction to the successful efforts of a native chief in the district northwards of Bechuanaland to the Zambesi. That chief has not only stopped the importation of liquor, but has induced his own people to abandon the manufacture of it. I think my noble Friend may do a great deal in this matter. I will not attempt to go through all the methods by which this might be attempted, but I will mention one fact. In some of the Crown colonies it is very common for the wages of the natives to be paid in drink. That is an abominable and demoralizing system. It is a system which can be controlled and checked by the authorities, but, as far as I know, there is nothing in the laws of any of those Crown colonies which prohibits or even restrains such a pernicious practice. In one such colony certainly, though not in Africa

(the Leeward Islands) there are regulations on the subject. I commend that fact to your Lordships' attention. It is a system which can be restricted by the authorities. But, after all, my Lords, the real difficulty with which we have to deal is this, the question of expense. The Treasury have now for many years past, through successive administrations, put down and bullied and cajoled each Secretary of State in turn to such an extent, that money which ought not to have been given up has been abandoned, and poor colonies have been thrown on their own inadequate resources. It is a question which concerns the Colonial Office and the Foreign Office. As regards the Foreign Office I quite admit the great difficulty that the Prime Minister, as Foreign Secretary, has to deal with ; at the same time it is not more important than the colonial side of the question. It is clearly the duty of the Government to endeavour to bring about some sort of common action with foreign Governments, and for this reason : that the imports from foreign trading houses are really larger than those in this country. I speak without figures before me, but I apprehend that where there are hundreds of thousands of gallons of spirits imported by English manufacturers, there are millions imported by foreigners. Some twelve years ago, when I was at the Colonial Office, I endeavoured to come to a settlement with France and Germany as to the possessions of the countries, which often run into each other, and overlap each other on the West Coast. The agreement which I had nearly succeeded in carrying out was upset, owing to an outcry by English merchants who declared that valuable territory was being bartered away. So the negotiations were not proceeded with, and very likely the chance will never occur again. I venture to urge on the Colonial Secretary the immense importance of using his powers to act in concert with other nations. I am afraid without that little would be done. There was another somewhat similar case in the Pacific Ocean where there was for a time an enormous trade carried on with the natives in arms and liquor, which were used to demoralize, degrade, and destroy the people in those seas. Nothing could be morally and politically more abominable. In that case my

colleagues and I passed a Bill through Parliament which created a High Court there and made the Governor of Fiji for the time being High Commissioner. My Lords, that would have been perfectly satisfactory and sufficient but for one single thing, viz.: that we could only unfortunately deal with British subjects, and the subjects of other countries set our legislation at defiance. Still, the Act itself has done some good. I do not desire to take up your Lordships' time further. This is a matter of immense importance, and I would only venture to press upon both my noble Friend the Prime Minister and the Colonial Secretary the advisability of using those powers which they have—the Colonial Secretary in the Crown Colonies and the Prime Minister—in bringing about that concert with the Governments of other nations which is necessary to enable anything effectual to be done.

***LORD ABERDARE:** My Lords, I have for the last five years been Chairman of one of the largest commercial enterprises in this country connected with these regions, and your Lordships will understand that I would not have become Chairman of the Company if I had not been desirous that the benefits of commerce might be introduced without those evils which have so often converted it into a curse; and I was rejoiced to find the experienced men who sat at that Board were as strongly convinced as myself that the introduction of spirits was a thing which not only affected the moral and physical condition of the natives, but interfered with the interests of trade and commerce. My Lords, I would like to refer to what has been done by the Royal Niger Company. Over an immense district extending for 1,000 miles up the Niger, the Company have imposed heavy duties on liquor with the result that there has been a great reduction in the quantity of spirits imported over the whole length of its great tributary the Binné, extending over 400 miles, the Company, availing themselves of the power conferred on them by their Charter, have absolutely prohibited the introduction of spirits. Altogether we have been able to reduce the consumption of liquor in the vast district under our control by 75 per cent. It may be asked why if the Niger Company has been able thus largely to reduce this traffic, it cannot be wholly

abolished? I think the answer to that question is afforded by a reference to the geographical position of the country. Take the lower part of the district; it is accessible by I do not know how many different branches of the Niger, and it would be next to impossible for the Company or for any Government to put a stop to the introduction of spirits into a district so formed. With regard to the Upper Niger, again, we are confronted with the difficulty that it can be reached overland from the West Coast, where as we know there is an enormous sale of strong liquors; and, if we were absolutely to prevent the introduction of those liquors into the upper part of the river district from the West Coast, we should in a short time have regular caravans starting from Sierra Leone and Lagos and from other places on the coast conveying liquor, so that the last state in regard to this traffic would be worse than the first. How far, then, is it possible to put an end to this state of things? What it seems to me it is possible to do, is to induce other Governments to join with us in checking this traffic by the imposition of heavy duties on liquors. By joining with us they would greatly reduce the importation of liquors on the West Coast where so much mischief is being done. Another thing which might be done is to follow the example of the Royal Niger Company in prohibiting the payment of wages in drink. That has been done by them for some time past, and might have been done by all the British Colonies on the West African Coast. One practical step, therefore, which could be taken, is to call upon foreign Governments to unite with us in taking measures for the regulation of the traffic, another for rendering illegal the payment of wages. I doubt whether, in the present disposition of foreign Governments, more than these measures is practicable. That has been done in the case of the North Sea fishermen, and I see no reason whatever why the same course should not be adopted with success in the countries along the Niger.

***THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY:** My Lords, we do not bring this matter forward as in any way connected with the home temperance movement, nor do we advocate it as a question on the views of total abstainers. I

have been convinced by the utterances of statesmen on the subject, and not least, by those of the noble Marquess at the head of the Government, that to apply for prohibition would be rather injurious than helpful. We shall not ask for anything but what we really believe will be calculated to do practical good, on all reasonable principles, nor shall we ask for anything which would embarrass Governments in dealing with this question, least of all, should it be supposed that we could do anything to embarrass our own Government. But by every word I have heard to-night I have been convinced more and more that there are preparatory steps which require at once to be taken. We are thankful indeed to the noble Marquess for the clear manner in which he stated the principle that we ought to regard native races as children to be protected by us. In order to take a proper view of the position we must realize that they are not only children needing to be protected, but children endowed with passions the most fiery and easily maddened, that they have all the worst passions of men along with little or nothing of self control; and that the first real work of civilization is to give them that self-control. We know that we are obliged to be cautious and circumspect, as the noble Marquess has advised, if we are to be sure we are proceeding in this matter on solid ground. We know that by the interlacing of territories in these regions and from the configuration of the coast, there are great difficulties in carrying out our object. But the moving power which is behind those who have spoken is, I am persuaded, although it has not been thought necessary to make allusion to it, a motive power to which I must make allusion; and I am sure it will be listened to in this Assembly with the most cordial and earnest sympathy. We stand before you, my Lords, as the Christian ministers of a Christian nation whose bounden duty it is to support Christianity by Christian methods. We say that the power of doing so is being rapidly taken from us by the action of Christian Governments. Our efforts are directed to the promotion of Christianity. We are now engaged in these places really in a contest with Mahomedanism, and Mohammedanism works against us with

the great advantage of being able to oppose a system of total abstinence to a system of drunkenness. We should work with still greater advantage if we could oppose to it a system of temperance, such as all men in their hearts approve. I mentioned in the debate which has been already alluded to the fact that in one of our own Crown Colonies a mosque had been built partly with the contributions of English people, because the Mahomedans were there civilizing and elevating the natives, which we were not able to do, in this respect. Through the drink traffic perdition, body and soul, is being brought upon large masses of the native people. This is no utterance on behalf of a fanatic section of people which I will read to your Lordships, but is from the report of Bishops who from all parts of the world met at Lambeth last year. The whole body of 150 Bishops say:—

“It has pleased God to make the Christian nations stronger than any other, stronger than all others combined, but this strength brings with it a higher responsibility, and this high responsibility the Church ought to rest on those who bear authority. It is grievous that it should be possible to say that so far from the white race benefitting the natives, it would be better that Christian nations should never come into contact with them at all.”

It may not convey a very distinct idea to us, but it is stated that in four years over 30,000,000 gallons of spirits have been imported into those districts. The other figures, however, which have been laid before you are a sufficient testimony to the ease with which natives are able to possess themselves of drink. Last year the Church Missionary Society sent a Commissioner to Africa for the purpose of observing what was going on in relation to this traffic, and nothing can exceed the vivid horror of the report which that gentleman has since furnished. He saw canoes in hundreds coming down the river laden with ivory, tusks, gold, palm-oil, and the most precious products of the interior, and returning with nothing but filthy spirits. The ground in villages and along by-paths was strewn with gin bottles and capacious glass jars worked with wicker, which had contained spirits, and in grotesque horror the very seats of a church were constructed of the green boxes in which the liquor had been

carried. Some of the native chiefs are ardently allied with us on the side of suppressing the evils of the trade, which are sufficient not merely to destroy the hope of Christianity, but the very hope of the continued existence of the race. There is a letter from one of the great native Princes, the Emir of Nupé, entreating Bishop Crowther and the great priests to "beg the English Queen to prevent the bringing of rum into his land." He says:—

"For God's and the Prophet's sake he must help us; he must not leave our land to be spoiled by rum. May God bless him in his work. This is the mouth-word of Maliki."

Those are the half heart-broken words of a Mahommedan ruler; and Khama, chief of an immense territory, appeals to Sir Sydney Sheppard in this moving strain. He says—

"It is one thing to offer his country to Her Majesty's English settlers, but another thing to be obliged to allow worthless men to occupy it with their drink canteens, and flood it with drink just after the long struggle with his people at the risk of his life, just when they themselves came to see what salvation there was in his drink Laws. It were better for him to love his country. To fight against drink is to fight against demons, not men. The assegai of the Matabele kill men's bodies, and it is over; the drink puts devils into men, and destroys souls and bodies forever. It would never heal. *I pray your Honour never ask me to open a little door to the drink.*"

Is not that pathetic, my Lords? I do not desire that it should be thought that I do not appreciate the encouragement which Her Majesty's Government are giving to right action in this matter. I own the difficulties, and I know the spirit in which the Government have worked, and will work. But we want to implore them to maintain the policy which was so well put forward by Sir Edward Malet at Berlin. What we want is that they should pledge themselves to those international efforts which we are assured can be made, and which we have been told will be made as opportunity offers. We want the whole power of the country to back them up and support them in using their utmost endeavours to have a high duty fixed upon the importation of drink. We do not ask for prohibition; we believe that it would be impossible, and there are many of us who do not believe that in the long run it would be an absolute gain. But we do feel certain that a great step would be made towards the repression

of the evil if a high import duty were by international concert fixed upon the introduction of these liquors. Another thing we desire—I do not know how it is to be done, I do not know the necessary details of the policy, but we want, if it can be done, that support should be given to those noble native chiefs who, just emerging from the darkness of Africa, see the worse ruin that is ahead, and see also the light and strength that England can give them. To all the world beside I truly believe that England's operations have always been the greatest blessing. When the Bishop of Calcutta was over here last year he bore the strongest and most spontaneous testimony to the fact that the very presence of the English of whatever class was a blessing to the inhabitants of India. It is not only the theoretical people—it is not only the working missionaries—but it is the actual presence of justice and right and honour in the very presence of the Civil Servants. And I truly believe that if our Government, as I am persuaded it will, continues its strong and generous efforts the civilization of England must be, as it ought to be, no less a blessing to Africa than to all other parts of the world.

*THE BISHOP OF LONDON: I do not wish to detain the House many minutes, but there are two points which I wish to press on the attention both of the House and the Government. One of them has been mentioned in the course of the discussion, but I think it requires more emphasis than has yet been given to it. This mischief which we are now considering is an increasing one at this very moment, and it is not a time, therefore, for our holding up our hands and considering for a very long while what it is that we ought to do. We ought to remember that year after year the influx of these intoxicating liquors into Africa is gaining ground, and that the examples that are quoted to us—one of them I think was quoted by the noble Duke—are only examples of what has become general. Thus, for instance, it is stated that within the present year in one place the introduction of intoxicating liquors—of rum of the very worst kind—has risen from about 400,000 gallons to 1,200,000 gallons, which it was in the year before last, and it is going on increasing still. The

same thing is taking place in many other parts. We ought, therefore, to be very strenuous indeed in our efforts, and not fancy that this is an evil which will bide our time, because it will not. As British influence and British power extend every year it is inevitable that the methods by which the native races have hitherto protected themselves where they chose to protect themselves are become impossible. They protected themselves very often by very violent methods, and such violent methods of stopping any evil are inconsistent with our notions of civilization. Instead of allowing people to put things down by physical force amounting to something like riot, we step in and require that everything should be orderly, and when we require that everything should be orderly we rob the natives of their usual methods of resisting the invasion of anything that they strongly disapprove of, and we do not supply them with any methods of our own. Now this goes on, and will still go on, unless we stop it. This is one point that I want to press upon the House and upon the Government. Then there is another and a more abstract matter. I will venture to suggest that we must not lay too much stress upon an argument which commends itself naturally to statesmen generally and to those who mix themselves up in political life; we must be always on our guard against it; I mean what I may call the butcher's-dog argument. Your Lordships know the old fable of the butcher's-dog, whose master's meat cart was attacked by a very large number of dogs, and who found it hopeless to resist the attack because the attacking dogs were so numerous. Therefore he joined them in devouring his master's meat, and when the master came out and drove the dogs away and killed some, his own dog pleaded that it was for his master's interest that he should have his share of the meat and join the other dogs in consuming it, seeing that he could not prevent them from doing the mischief. I cannot help thinking that there is a little of that argument very often present in the minds of statesmen in matters of this kind. What we want to do is to bring men to a sense of something that is morally higher than the rule by which they are living. We

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should try and persuade men to join in what is morally good; and we may depend upon it that we shall hinder our own endeavours considerably if we allow too much stress to be put upon the argument that, because we cannot stop other people doing mischief, therefore we are to join them in doing mischief. It should be made plain that we are ready to make sacrifices in such a matter as this, and I wish very much that all those who entered into negotiations should endeavour to maintain a high moral standard in the name of England whatever moral standard be adopted by any other country.

THE EARL OF MEATH: Your Lordships are, I think, very well agreed on the principle of this matter, and it might be asked if that is so, what is the use of continuing the discussion? Now, I think that the noble Lord who brought forward this matter intended this discussion to be in some way a demonstration, for he said that it was necessary to rouse the conscience of Europe. I think, my Lords, that it is necessary to arouse not only the conscience of Europe, but also the conscience of the United States. As your Lordships are aware, the United States did not see their way on a certain occasion to assist the late Government when they did what they could to put a stop to this iniquitous traffic. Both parties in this House are agreed upon this principle. The noble Lord at the head of the Opposition has shown what his feeling was at the time of the Berlin Conference, and the Noble Marquess at the head of the Government has stated very distinctly his opinion. He has said:—

“We will never cease to press this matter whenever we see an opportunity of pressing it with effect. We will press it in season and out of season, because we believe that a vast amount of human happiness or misery depends upon the course which these negotiations take.”

It is impossible for any man to speak in stronger terms than that, and I thank the noble Marquess for having been bold enough, if I may say so, to speak his mind, and, I believe, the mind of Her Majesty's Government. We have heard very stirring and eloquent words from his Grace the Archbishop with regard to the Christian point of view of this question, and from the Right Rev. Bishop with regard to the moral point of view. Now, I am going to take your

Lordships down to a very much lower ground—a ground which has not yet, as far as I know, been very much touched upon, although it has been slightly touched upon by the noble Lord, Lord Aberdare, the ground of the commercial value or disvalue of this drink traffic. This country is growing at an enormous pace in population. It is long ago since this country has been able to maintain its population by its food supply. Every year it is increasing in numbers, and every year it is more and more difficult to feed this population. The population is fed to-day by food which is purchased by the sale of the manufactures that are made by the working men of this country. In order that those manufactures may be sold we must have markets, and every year our markets become more difficult to find. If we look at this continent of Africa we find it peopled by millions who are yet unapproached, we may say, by the trader. You may ask what has that to do with the liquor traffic? It has this: that wherever a trader with his cask of rum or his bottle of gin goes, there disappears the commerce of England; and it is therefore common wisdom on the part of the traders of this country to see that the native races of Africa should not be demoralized so that they shall be unable and unfit to avail themselves of the products of civilization. We know for a fact that wherever this drink traffic has gone it has ruined the population, and they are unable to purchase our goods. Now this is a very low ground, but it is a practical ground, and I lay it before the merchants of this country, before the working men of this country, to consider whether it is not worth thinking over. As soon as the gin bottle gets into a district it becomes much more difficult for the honest trader to get into that country. Evil passions are aroused, feuds take place, hostilities commence, and the trader has to fight his way. Well it may be said, "how is this country to help in this matter?" We have heard of the difficulties which Her Majesty's Government and other Governments have encountered. I must say that I think some of those difficulties have been rather exaggerated. We learn that in Basutoland it has been found possible altogether to prohibit the drink traffic, and I do not see why, in other districts wholly or partially

under British rule, a similar policy should not be pursued with like success. It has been contended that we cannot interfere with our Colonial Governments—that we must leave them free and unfettered. That may be true, but we can assuredly expostulate and advise with those Governments. I can well understand that a much greater difficulty arises when we come to deal with the Governments of other countries. I am certain that if there is one man who will do his best to secure the co-operation of foreign Governments in this matter it is Her Majesty's Prime Minister, and this demonstration—for I look upon it as a demonstration—will strengthen his hands. I hope that the opinion of this House and the opinion of the House of Commons, which has already been expressed, will be known far and wide, and that the United States will re-consider their determination, and will not be afraid of mixing themselves up in the affairs of Europe on a question such as this, which can hardly embroil them in any political difficulty. I trust that the debate which has taken place this day will be of service not only to the advance of Christianity and of morality, but may be of service in increasing our markets and in providing food for our working classes.

*LORD KNUTSFORD: My Lords, if my reply on behalf of Her Majesty's Government to the appeal made to them by the noble Duke be somewhat short, it is not because the Government are not fully alive to the importance and interest of the subject submitted to the House, not because they do not desire to give effect to the assurances made to the deputation by the noble Marquess at the head of the Government, but because I have very little information to add to that which has already been given to Parliament. The replies to the circular to which I referred in my speech of March, 1888, will be found in the Parliamentary Paper (C 5563), and I think that all who have read those and the previous papers will arrive at this general conclusion, so far as Africa is concerned, that there is not so much want of legislation, as want of effective enforcement of the existing law. I certainly was not aware that labour had been paid for on the West Coast of Africa in drink as has been stated this evening, and I need

hardly say that I shall ask at once for a Report on that subject, and, if necessary, require that an ordinance should be passed to stop that practice in the future. I think that in dealing with this subject of liquor traffic laws, it must in fairness to the Colonial Governments be remembered that those laws are of all laws the most easily evaded, and therefore the most difficult to enforce, and especially so where, as in the case of Bechuana-land, there is a large non-native population. It is found to be very much easier to enforce the law in places like Zululand and Basutoland, where there is not that large non-native population. Where there is a large European population it is not possible or practicable to prevent importation of spirituous liquors or their sale to other than natives; but, of course, the more liquor there is introduced, the more difficult is it to prevent the natives getting hold of it in exchange for goods, or to stop the sale or gift of it to them. I will now very briefly refer to the different places in South and West Africa referred to by previous speakers. I venture to think that the noble Duke has hardly dealt fairly with the Cape. The noble Duke, in speaking of the Commission appointed at the Cape, omitted to mention that the Cape Government had immediately, after receiving the Report of that Commission, passed a most important measure—Act 28 of 1883—which was most stringent in its terms, and entirely prohibited the sale or gift of any liquor to natives in certain native locations, and the Governor was also given power to constitute native areas within which liquor was not to be sold at all. I have reason to believe that that law has been enforced in those native locations and areas, as from the Cape Blue Book on native affairs published in 1888, which contains Reports from all the districts, it appears that drunkenness on the whole is decreasing among the natives. There was a good deal of Kaffir beer brewed and consumed at festivities, but in six only out of 42 districts do the reports make reference to the prevalence of brandy drinking. The Magistrates seem fully alive to the desirability of diminishing the supply of spirituous liquors by the canteens. In the Transkeian territories the Proclamation of 1885 was very stringent in terms, both as to importation of

spirituous liquors and sale of them to natives; and the last reports are quite satisfactory as to spirits, though it appears there is a large consumption of Kaffir beer. I would only add, as regards the Cape, that, as has been observed by the noble Duke, we have no hand in the administration or legislation of that colony; but I would venture to suggest to those Associations or Committees who have so usefully taken up this question in this country, that if they are made aware of repeated infringements of the law upon evidence on which they can rely, they should communicate these cases, with full details, either direct to the Cape Government or through the Secretary of State. I am satisfied that such communications will receive full consideration. With regard to Natal, although the law appears to be sufficiently stringent, I admit that, owing to lack of police supervision over roadside places of entertainment in rural districts, there has not been sufficient enforcement of that law. The finances of that colony have not hitherto been in such a condition that any great additional expenditure could be lightly incurred, and no doubt the increase of police to secure the full supervision would have been very costly. But I am glad to state that proposals has just been received for appointing supervisors over the natives, who will, among other duties, advise the chiefs against the excesses which prevail at their ceremonies. I have been able to sanction the appointment of those supervisors, and, when giving my sanction, I have strongly urged upon the Colonial Government that these supervisors should exercise all their influence towards securing the efficient working of the law prohibiting the sale of liquor to natives. As I pointed out in my speech last year, the question of regulating the importation of liquor into South Africa by means of the imposition of an uniform high duty, was not favourably received by the Cape or Natal. The view taken by the Cape Government with regard to high tariffs was that, so far as the natives were concerned, the traffic could only be checked by internal regulations, and that a high tariff would stimulate smuggling and illicit manufacture of spirits much of which would be of a most deleterious character; and the view taken by Natal was that it would be of

little use for them to pass any measures until the Cape and the Portuguese Governments had acted in the matter. With regard to the territories and places under the more direct control of the Home Government, a much more favourable account can be given. In Zululand the Natal liquor laws are in force, and I have received no complaints of evasion of the law. In Basutoland, as has been stated, the drink traffic has ceased to exist. In a Report of July, 1888, it is stated that—

“The drink traffic has been suppressed, and considering the extent of border, there is little smuggling. For this we are indebted to the assistance we receive from the Orange Free State authorities.”

As to British Bechuanaland, I have already pointed out why it is more difficult to prevent evasion of the law in that Colony, where there is a large non-native population, than in other places; but, although in the past there has been a want of energy on the part of the police, every care is now taken to enforce the law. The original Proclamation against selling liquor to natives has been made more stringent. Giving liquor to natives is prohibited, and a license is forfeited on the second conviction. There is, however, great difficulty in obtaining proof of breaches of the law. Although the system of “trapping” is not a very desirable one, it has to be resorted to. “Trapping” is sending natives to the houses to get liquor sold to them; and the chief difficulty about that is to get trustworthy natives to do the work. It is, however, satisfactory to learn that the largest liquor dealers at Taungs have recently been convicted of selling liquor to natives, and that their licenses have been forfeited. I have also directed that greater care should be taken about the granting of licenses, and confining them to persons who could be trusted, and I have transferred the power of granting licenses from the Licensing Boards to the Resident Magistrates, so as to have the licenses more under the control of the Government. Turning to the West Coast of Africa, while I am quite free to admit that the state of things there is unsatisfactory, at the same time I would urge that the remedies are not easily attainable, and the peculiar circumstances of those colonies with regard to the colonies of other nations, make it

difficult, if not impossible, either to prohibit or restrict the importation of liquor into our colonies. If the Government of Lagos were to attempt by high duties or in any other way to restrict the passing of spirits through Lagos, the effect would simply be to divert the trade from Lagos to some other place under the French or the German flag. I fear upon further inquiry that there are grave, if not insuperable, difficulties in obtaining an international agreement for imposition of high uniform rates of import and license duties. It would be next to impossible to prevent the smuggling along the vast stretch of Coast line. A large and expensive augmentation of Custom Officers would be required, and this expense would have to be incurred while the revenue was diminished. Take the Gold Coast for example. I am not sure that there is any staff at Liberia, Assinee, or Togo; but if there is, such staff would have to be largely increased, and I do not think it probable that the foreign Powers would view this with favour, even if the Gold Coast finances would justify the expenditure. As far as Lagos itself is concerned, I do not hear much complaint of drunkenness there, although large quantities of spirits pass through into the inland territories, but I will call for a report upon the state of things. I may mention one fact of some interest: Katanu, which is a place under our protectorate, not far from Lagos, has been entirely flooded with spirits from Porto Novo, where the king is under French protection. An appeal has come from Katanu, asking that the Spirit Licensing Law of Lagos might be applied there; and to that application I have recently given assent. I shall watch with great interest the result of that extension of the law of Lagos. I shall, of course, take notice of the points which have been raised with regard to the Colonies on the West Coast. In conclusion I would say it is satisfactory to the Government to find that in the notice of the noble Duke there is a general recognition of the efforts Her Majesty's Government have made to restrict this traffic; and I can assure the noble Duke that the appeal which has been made by him will not be made in vain. With reference to a point made by the Lord Bishop of

London, I desire to state that the latest returns of the import of spirits into Lagos, those for 1887 show a diminution in the quantities imported as compared with former years, except in Geneva, in which there has been an increase.

FACTORS BILL (No. 27).

SECOND READING.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR: In moving the Second Reading of this Bill I need trouble your Lordships with only a few observations. Its object is to amend and consolidate the laws relating to various commercial transactions, to repeal four Statutes which up to now have embodied the law, and to remove from the minds of many of the commercial classes difficulties which have arisen in consequence of a recent decision of your Lordships' House—I refer to Lord Sheffield's case. Undoubtedly the decision, which made certain commercial documents Bills of Sale within the meaning of the Act of 1878, amounted practically to an alteration of the law of Factors, and its effect has been to seriously entangle the law on this subject, so that codification and amendment are urgently required. An important part of this measure is that which gives definitions of "mercantile agent," "goods," "document of title," and other commercial phrases. I may mention that I have received communications from the Association of Writers to the Signet in Scotland and from a number of country bankers approving of the Bill, and suggesting other alterations of the law. If your Lordships give the Bill a Second Reading, I propose to move that it be referred to the Standing Committee for Bills relating to Law, &c., where its provisions may be carefully examined and possibly improved.

Bill read 2^a (according to order) and committed to the Standing Committee for Bills relating to Law, &c.

ARBITRATION BILL (No. 5.)

THE LORD CHANCELLOR: I have to inform your Lordships that the difficulty which had arisen between my noble Friend Lord Branwell and me has been satisfactorily adjusted. When I desired that the Bill should be referred to Committee of the whole House,

Lord Knutsford

my object was (to put it very plainly) to avoid the Bill being tied up with the Bill of my noble Friend. I am happy to inform your Lordships that my noble Friend, after considering the reasons which I put to him, has consented to withdraw any further progress of his Bill, in order that mine may proceed with due diligence to another place. The result of that is that if your Lordships will allow me, I shall now move that this Bill go to the Standing Committee for Bills relating to Law, &c., and the other Motion, which stands in the name of my noble Friend, he has authorized me to withdraw.

Order of the Day for the House to be put into Committee, read, and discharged; and the Bill committed to the Standing Committee for Bills relating to Law, &c.

ARBITRATION (No. 2) BILL (No. 31).

Order of the Day for the House to be put into Committee, read, and discharged; and Bill (by leave of the House) withdrawn.

House adjourned at a quarter before
Seven o'clock, till To-morrow,
a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Monday, 6th May, 1889.

EAST INDIA (DISTRESS AT GANJAM).

Address for "Reports by Mr. J. H. Garstin, C.S.I., on condition of Ganjam, Madras."—(*Mr. Bradlaugh.*)

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887 (IMPRISONMENT OF MESSRS. CONDON AND JOHN O'CONNOR, AND DR. TANNER).

MR. SPEAKER acquainted the House that he had received the following Letters relating to the imprisonment of certain Members of this House:—

Court House, Tipperary,

May 2, 1889.

Sir,

I beg to inform you that the appeals of Mr. Thomas J. Condon, M.P. for East Division of Co. Tipperary, and of Mr. J. O'Connor, M.P. for the South Division of County Tipperary, from the order of two Resident Magistrates sentencing them to be imprisoned for four

months each without hard labour, came on to be heard before me at this Sessions, and that I this day confirmed the order of the Magistrates, and sentenced the appellants to be imprisoned for four months without hard labour, and issued a warrant for their arrest.

I have the honour to remain,

Sir,

Your most obt. servant,

WM. ANDERSON.

County Court Judge and Chairman of
Quarter Sessions for the County
of Tipperary.

The Right Honble. the Speaker,
House of Commons, London.

Court House, Tipperary,

May 2, 1889.

Sir,

I beg to inform you that the appeal of Dr. Charles K. D. Tanner, M.P. for Middle Division of Co. Cork from the order of two Resident Magistrates, sentencing him to be imprisoned for three months' without hard labour, came on to be heard before me at this Sessions, and that I this day affirmed the order of the Magistrates and sentenced the appellant to three months' imprisonment without hard labor, and issued a warrant for his arrest.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your most obt. servant,

WILLIAM ANDERSON,

County Court Judge and Chairman of
Quarter Sessions Co. Tipperary.

The Right Honble. the Speaker,
House of Commons, London.

QUESTIONS.

NEWFOUNDLAND LOBSTER INDUSTRY.

MR. SAMUELSON (Gloucester, Forest of Dean) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the French have the right, under existing treaties, to take and preserve lobsters on the so-called French shore of Newfoundland, and whether the text of the treaties, which speak of "stages made of boards necessary and usual for drying of fish," can cover the erection of factories for tinning lobsters, with boilers and other apparatus; and whether, with reference to the dispatch of Governor Blake, dated St. John's, Newfoundland, 10th July, 1888, setting forth the interference of the French with British subjects carrying on the

lobster fishery at White Bay, it is intended by the Colonial Office in future to support British subjects where they may be engaged in the lobster industry on the portion of the coast where the French possess treaty rights, provided such taking and preserving of lobsters does not interfere in any way with the prosecution of cod fishing (and the catching of bait necessary for the same) by the French?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir J. FERGUSSON, Manchester, N.W.): The French claim this right, but Her Majesty's Government do not admit that it is conferred by the Treaties. Her Majesty's Government will support British Subjects in the Lobster Fishery, provided they do not interfere with French Treaty Rights. The position of British and French Fishery Rights in Newfoundland is not free from difficulties, but those difficulties have hitherto been generally prevented from becoming acute by the prudence of the Governments concerned, and of their officers; and it may be hoped that like success may attend their proceedings in the future.

MILITARY BLANKETS—H.M.S. SERAPIS.

MR. SAMUELSON asked the Secretary of State for War whether, on the arrival of the East York Regiment at Portsmouth from Aden in December last in the *Serapis*, the non-commissioned officers and men were deprived of their blankets by order of the Naval Authorities on board the ship, in spite of the protestations of the Regimental Authorities that the blankets were required, as the men were not to disembark until next day; whether, in consequence, the men had to sleep on the bare and damp decks; and whether within eight days of arrival at Sheffield, twenty-four men were admitted to hospital suffering from chest affections, one case nearly proving fatal?

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (MR. E. STANHOPE, Lincolnshire, Horncastle): It is true that in December last the non-commissioned officers and men of the East York Regiment, on their arrival at Portsmouth from Aden in the *Serapis*, were deprived of their blankets, and had to sleep on the bare decks in their greatcoats. It is also

true that within eight days of their arrival at Sheffield twenty-seven men were admitted to hospital suffering from chest affections. There is no doubt that the weather on their arrival was specially inclement, but there can be little doubt also that the taking away of the blankets contributed to, if it did not actually cause, this amount of illness. No blame whatever attaches to the naval authorities. The responsibility rests entirely with the Colonel commanding the battalion, who seems to me to have committed a grave error of judgment likely to imperil needlessly the health of his men. (Hear, hear.)

MR. SAMUELSON: Is it the fact that the Regimental Authorities protested against the blankets being taken away?

*MR. E. STANHOPE: No, Sir; that is not the fact.

TRADE CHARGES COLLECTION SCHEME.

MR. BARTLEY (Islington, N.) asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps have been taken by the Treasury with reference to the Trade Charges Collection Scheme of the Post Office; and, whether any system of paying the postmen per transaction is proposed?

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN, St. George's, Hanover Square): In reply I have to inform the hon. Member that, after a full consideration of the scheme, I have been unable to adopt it. The business undertaken by the Post Office is already so extensive, and even its ordinary growth is so difficult to deal with, that it has appeared to me inadvisable to impose upon it new responsibilities not absolutely unavoidable which would involve an increase of charge for staff accommodation, and which ought, I think, to be met, if required, by private enterprise.

GOLD AND SILVER PLATE.

MR. HOWELL (Bethnal Green, N.E.) asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether, having regard to the recommendations of the Royal Commission on Gold and Silver with respect to the abolition of the duties upon gold and silver plate, and the injurious effects of those duties upon the several trades connected with this branch of British industry, the Government will under-

take, at the earliest opportunity, to abolish those duties; whether he will explain to the House the exact position of the question of drawback in relation thereto; how much is demanded by the trade; what precedents there are for the quantity of drawbacks in the case of other goods, such as paper, bricks, glass, &c., when relieved from taxation; and whether he is aware that a sum of about £50,000, or equal to one year's duty, would satisfy the claims of manufacturers of and dealers in silver plate, and that no drawback can be claimed on gold goods, seeing that the duty is almost entirely derived from wedding rings?

*MR. GOSCHEN: The hon. Member's question deals with two distinct subjects—the duty on gold plate and the duty on silver plate. The Royal Commission on Gold and Silver did not touch on the gold plate duty at all. It only recommended the repeal of the duty on silver plate, and based its recommendation on the interest, not of the home industries, but of India. I cannot accept any proposal for the repeal of the gold plate duty, but I may say at once that I should be glad to see my way to abolishing the silver plate duty. I have, however, already explained to the House that the state of the revenue would not justify my taking any steps in this direction at present, and I can give no pledge on the subject. On the question of drawback, in the event of the abolition of the duty, no definite understanding exists between the Government and the trade, and no demand has been formulated by the trade in general on the subject. The precedents quoted by the hon. Member show that similar drawbacks in the past cost the country a very considerable sum. I should be very glad to learn that £50,000 would satisfy the silver plate trade. No drawback could be claimed on any articles, whether of gold or silver, if they were unstamped.

MR. HOWELL also asked the right hon. Gentleman whether, having in view the Paris Exhibition, and with the object of placing the manufacturers of gold and silver wares of the United Kingdom upon equal terms of competition with their foreign rivals, he will so far relax the laws relating to the duties on gold and silver plate, and the compulsory hall-marking of gold and

Mr. E. Stanhope

silver wares, as to permit manufacturers of the United Kingdom to execute foreign orders of any quality to suit foreign markets, without payment of duty, and free from the obligation of assay, upon notice being given to one of the Assay Offices; goods so manufactured to be exported under the official seal of such Assay Office, under the simple declaration of "hard ware," in conformity with the practice prevailing in France in the case of goods exported, either of a quality below that allowed by law for home use, or not required to be hall-marked in France?

*MR. GOSCHEN: I should not be prepared to make so great a change as the hon. Gentleman proposes without a strong and general expression of opinion in its favour on the part of the trade. I do not say that even if such an opinion were expressed it could be done, but in any case I am not prepared to take steps in the absence of such opinion.

NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY.

MR. DIXON-HARTLAND (Middlesex, Uxbridge) asked the First Commissioner of Works if he was now prepared to propose to make proper provision for the National Portrait Gallery in accordance with its importance and its value to the Nation?

MR. AIRD also asked if the Government contemplated the erection of a suitable building for the National Portrait Gallery.

*THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (Mr. PLUNKET, University of Dublin): Early last week I received a letter from a gentleman freely offering to build at his own expense a National Portrait Gallery if the Government could procure a suitable site not more than a mile and a half from St. James's Street. I answered thanking him for his handsome offer and asking him to favour me with an interview in order that we might discuss the subject. He was good enough to come to see me last Saturday. I then suggested to him a scheme for providing a National Portrait Gallery which I had, just before I received his letter, submitted to the Government, and I am glad to say that this scheme met with his entire approval. There the matter rests at present, but I expect that within a few days I may be able to give further information, and that, if our plan should be, as I hope it

will be, at once taken in hand, this most valuable collection of National portraits may within a couple of years be permanently housed in a manner suitable to its wants and in every way convenient to the public. I must add that when, at the conclusion of my interview on Saturday, I asked this gentleman whether I might make his offer public he told me that I might do so on condition that I did not mention his name; but I must be allowed to say that the absence of ostentation and the straightforwardness with which this gentleman has acted is worthy of the greatness of his open-handed generosity and of his public spirit.

MR. MUNDELLA (Sheffield, Brightside): Arising out of the question, may I ask whether, as the Government will now be relieved of the cost of erecting a gallery for the National portraits, they will consider the propriety of finishing the South Kensington Museum?

*MR. PLUNKET: That is not a matter which arises out of the question.

THE POSTAGE OF SAMPLES.

MR. ALFRED THOMAS (Glamorgan, E.) asked the Postmaster General whether his attention has been called to the fact that traders can forward samples of merchandize to their private customers at the pattern or sample rate of postage, but, upon the samples being returned to the trader by the customer, and bearing stamps of the same value that conveyed them in the first place, that the package is treated as a letter, letter rate is charged, and double the deficiency of the letter rate of postage is demanded when tendered back to the trader; and whether he can see his way to put an end to this difference of charge upon the same packages?

*THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. H. C. RAIKES, Cambridge University): I think the hon. Member must be labouring under some misapprehension. Subject to certain necessary conditions, intended to show the *bona fides* of the transaction, patterns sent by tradesmen to their customers at the pattern rate of postage are entitled to pass at the same rate when returned. It is only when the conditions are not complied with that letter postage is charged. Complaints of such charge are, I am informed, extremely rare.

INDIAN AFFAIRS—PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) asked the Under Secretary of State for India whether Her Majesty's Government have taken any, and what, steps to give effect to the official declaration made in 1886, and formally recorded in the Resolution No. ³⁴₁₈₇₃₋₉₄ Simla, 4th October, 1886, that it was then the intention of Her Majesty's Government, at an early date, to undertake a Parliamentary inquiry into Indian affairs; and, whether he will state the reasons for the delay in undertaking such Parliamentary inquiry?

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Sir J. GORST, Chatham): An immense mass of information has been obtained by the Indian Finance Committee and the Indian Public Service Commission, and their reports have been laid before Parliament. This fact, in the opinion of the Secretary of State, has rendered a Parliamentary inquiry into Indian affairs at the present moment inexpedient.

MR. BRADLAUGH: Let me ask whether the Government, when it made the declaration referred to in my question, had not in view the investigation of those Commissions, and had not expressly declared that it was its intention that a Parliamentary inquiry should follow that of the Public Service Commission?

*SIR J. GORST: Yes, Sir. The Government had those inquiries in view, but they had no idea how completely the result of those inquiries would exhaust all information that it was necessary to obtain on the subject.

MR. BRADLAUGH: Do I understand the hon. Gentleman to mean that the whole of the matters as to which the Government on the 4th of October, 1886, intended and expressed its intention then to inquire into has been exhausted in the two inquiries he has mentioned?

*SIR J. GORST: The hon. Gentleman is quite right in concluding that in the opinion of the Secretary of State the inquiry is now exhausted. Any further inquiry would merely obstruct the necessary reforms in India.

MR. BRADLAUGH: I beg to give notice that if I cannot obtain an opportunity before, I will call attention to the

subject and ask for further information upon the statement of the hon. Gentleman in reference to the Indian Budget.

POOR LAW SCHOOLS AT HANWELL.

MR. MUNDELLA: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether his attention has been called to the long continued prevalence of ophthalmia in the Central London District (Poor Law) Schools at Hanwell, in which there are 1,100 children from the unions of the City of London and St. Saviour's, Surrey; whether ophthalmia has been present in these schools for the last 28 years; whether, in 1874, the proportion of children with healthy eyes were reported to be less than 15 per cent; whether, between October 1875 and April 1886, 2,420 children suffered from ophthalmic disease, of which 191 cases were "annually produced in the school"; and whether the number now separated on account of this disease is more than double the number separated a year ago; whether in the North Surrey Schools at Anerley, there are from 800 to 900 children, drawn from the same class as the Hanwell children, with only one case of ophthalmia, although in 1873 there were 300 to 400 children suffering from it, and whether the disease was practically eradicated by action taken on the advice of Mr. Nettleship, an eminent oculist; whether Mr. Nettleship has now advised the Hanwell managers to follow the course which was pursued in the North Surrey Schools, and notwithstanding that his suggestions have met with the support and approval of Mr. Hedley, the General Inspector of the Local Government Board for the Metropolitan district, and have been before the managers for more than four months, no action upon them has yet been taken; and whether, having regard to the serious consequences attendant upon this disease, which often remains active, with intervals of comparative cure, for many years after a child leaves school, and respecting which Mr. Nettleship states that "it is no uncommon thing at our Eye Hospitals, and eye departments of general hospitals, to see young men and women, of from 20 to 30, whose lives have been made miserable, and their livelihood precarious in the extreme, by frequent relapses of granular ophthalmia, which

was first contracted in a Poor Law school," he will take such measures as may be needful to secure that this scourge shall be promptly and effectually dealt with?

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. RITCHIE, Tower Hamlets, St. George's): The statements in the question of the right hon. Gentleman as to the prevalence of ophthalmia in the schools at Hanwell belonging to the Central London School District appear substantially to be in accordance with the facts. With regard to the schools at Anerley belonging to the North Surrey School District, Dr. Bridges and Dr. Mouat, two of the Board's Inspectors, in 1873 advised that between 300 and 400 children at those schools should be placed under medical care, and Mr. Nettleship was selected to take charge of them. The Inspectors at the same time advised many structural and hygienic alterations, which were adopted by the managers, and the result has been that ophthalmia has been practically eradicated from the schools. The managers of the Central London School District were in 1875 strongly urged by the Local Government Board, by letter and in conference with the Board's Inspectors, to take steps similar to those taken at Anerley, but they did not carry out the suggestions then made. Measures, however, were taken which, though not in the opinion of the Board sufficiently energetic, had yet the effect of reducing the disease for some years. Two years ago ophthalmia became again prevalent, and since then the Board's Inspectors and Architect have had interviews with the managers, and the advice given by them has been endorsed by Mr. Nettleship, who was subsequently called in by the managers. The managers have not as yet, however, given effect to this advice. The Local Government Board on the 3rd inst. addressed to the managers an urgent communication, impressing upon them the very grave responsibility which they will incur if any further delay occurs before steps are taken to provide an effectual remedy for the very unsatisfactory condition of things which has so long existed. The Board have specially urged certain structural alterations at the school, and especially the provision of a distinct infant school. I cannot

but express my regret that these arrangements have not already been adopted by the managers. I am strongly impressed with the importance of the matter, and I will take care that every pressure is brought to bear upon the managers so as to secure the sanitary condition of the schools being placed in a satisfactory state.

MR. MUNDELLA: I am grateful for the answer of the right hon. Gentleman, and I will repeat part of the question a week hence in order to ascertain if anything has been done in the matter.

THE SUGAR CONVENTION.

MR. CAUSTON (Southwark, W.) asked the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether, under the Convention or the Bill before the House, Jersey or Guernsey would be bound to receive no sugar from France if that country came under prohibition by the decision of the International Commission, on account of having bounty-fed sugar?

*SIR. J. FERGUSSON: Jersey and Guernsey are not effected by a Treaty or an Act of Parliament unless specially named therein.

DUTIES OF SHERIFFS' CLERKS IN SCOTLAND.

MR. MACKINTOSH (Invernessshire) asked the Lord Advocate whether his attention has been called to the great increase of duties thrown upon sheriff clerks and sheriff clerk deputies by the operation of the Crofters' Acts of 1885 and 1888, within the counties embraced by those Acts; whether any representations for an increase of salaries have been given in; and, whether Government are prepared to take any steps in the matter?

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. P. B. ROBERTSON, Buteshire): I have heard nothing of this matter except through the hon. Member. Section 27 of the Crofters' Act authorizes payment of remuneration to sheriff clerks for the work thrown on them by that Act. Any applications or representations will therefore be considered by the Treasury.

THE FACTORY AND WORKSHOP ACT.

MR. COGHILL (Newcastle-under-Lyme) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether, with a view to prevent the great injury that is caused to operatives in various manufac-

tures by the inhalation of the dust that arises from the processes in which they are engaged, he will be able this Session to introduce a short Bill for the amendment of "The Factory and Workshop Act, 1878," Section 3, with a view to secure the compulsory adoption in factories and workshops of the best known means of protecting the operatives from dust and other impurities?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (MR MATTHEWS, Birmingham, E.): The whole subject of amending the Factory Acts, and this point among others—namely, whether effectual means can be devised for preventing injury from the inhalation of dust—has lately been engaging my attention, and I have a Bill in preparation. The state of public business is such that I cannot at present give a positive pledge that I shall introduce legislation on the subject during this Session, but I shall be very glad if I can find an opportunity of doing so.

THE VAN AND WHEEL TAX.

MR. SWETENHAM (Carnarvon, &c.) asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he has abandoned the proposed Van and Wheel Tax; if not, whether, in view of the great increase in bicycle and tricycle traffic, and the superior roads they require, he will reconsider the propriety of including them in the tax; and, if the Van and Wheel Tax is abandoned, will he bring in some measure whereby the rural ratepayers may be recouped some of the extra outlay they are obliged to incur in consequence of the wear and tear the country roads receive from the heavy and narrow wheel wagons emanating from the towns.

*MR. GOSCHEN: The Van and Wheel Tax was a part of the Excise Duties (Local Purposes) Bill, and fell to the ground when that measure was withdrawn. Besides the Wheel Tax, the Bill in question proposed the imposition of a horse duty, and I may say that my hon. Friend the President of the Local Government Board contemplates the re-introduction of that proposal. But we have not yet seen sufficiently strong evidence of the desire of the County Councils for the revival of the Wheel Tax to encourage the Government in re-introducing that most just and reasonable duty. In reply to the second

paragraph of the hon. Member's question I would remind him that it was just because the owners of heavy vans and wagons emanating from towns objected to paying for the wear and tear of country roads that so formidable an opposition arose to our previous proposal. I have no reason to suppose that the opposition to the tax proceeding from the urban districts is diminished. I wish that the matter could be treated locally; but it is for the County Councils to realize that it is only a strong and general opinion on their part which would justify us in again taking up the question.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT, 1888—COUNTY BOROUGH.

MR. TUIE (Westmeath) asked the President of the Local Government Board whether a County Borough became a separate Poor Law Union under the Local Government Act of 1888; and if so, whether he could state in what manner the residue (if any) of the Union from which such County Borough is taken will be dealt with?

*MR. RITCHIE: No, it does not. The Local Government Act has not the effect of constituting a County Borough a separate Poor Law Union.

ANTHRAX.

SIR JOHN SWINBURNE (Staffordshire, Lichfield) asked the Vice-Chamberlain what steps Her Majesty's Government intend taking with a view to stamp out and prevent the constant recurrence of anthrax amongst cattle in the neighbourhood of Cottesbrooke, in the county of Northampton?

THE VICE CHAMBERLAIN (Viscount LEWISHAM, Lewisham): It does not appear from the returns that anthrax has existed in Northamptonshire to any serious extent. The total losses on seven farms on which the disease has appeared since the beginning of the year amount to seven cattle and three sheep. Under these circumstances it does not seem to be necessary to adopt any exceptional measures.

IRELAND—LAND CASES AT KILMALLOCK.

MR. WILLIAM ABRAHAM (Limerick, W.) asked the Solicitor General for Ireland when will the Sub-Commissioners for Limerick County give deci-

sions in the land cases heard by them in February at Kilmallock and elsewhere; and have all the farms been examined; if not, what is the cause of delay in doing so?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. MADDEN, Dublin University): The Land Commissioners state that decisions have been given in all cases heard in the County Limerick in February except as regards those in Kilmallock Union. The cases in that Union were held in the last week in February, before the lay Assistant Commissioners had finished their inspections in the Croom Union, to avoid clashing with the assizes. The inspection in the Kilmallock Union has now been nearly completed, and the decisions in these cases will shortly be given.

VACCINATION.

Mr. CHANNING (Northampton, E.): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether his attention has been called to the evidence given at the inquest on an infant of one month, named Ellen Madd, at the Holborn Town Hall, on 2nd April, from which it appears that the child was born in the workhouse, was too feeble from its birth to take either breast or bottle, and that it was vaccinated on the third day without the consent of the mother having been obtained; whether his attention has been called to the rider added by the jury to their verdict, protesting against the workhouse rule of vaccinating children within three days of birth; and whether, having regard to the circumstances of this and similar cases, he will direct an alteration of the rule, and place children born in workhouses or hospitals in the same position as other children as regards the Vaccination Laws?

*MR. RITCHIE: I have made inquiry of the Guardians as to this case, and obtained a copy of the depositions taken at the inquest. It appears from the report of the medical officer of the workhouse that the child was vaccinated on the fourth day after its birth, and that at that time and when it left the workhouse, three weeks afterwards, it was perfectly healthy. According to the evidence of the mother she was not able to suckle the child, but it was fed with the help of the bottle. There was no suggestion at the inquest

by the mother or anyone else that vaccination was in any way concerned in the death of the child. The medical officer of the workhouse states that no vaccination is performed without the knowledge of the mother, and that if any objection were made by her, the child would not be vaccinated by him. With regard to the alleged protest by the jury, the note of the coroner is as follows:—"Some discussion among the jury followed as to the advisability of vaccinating infants at a very early period, and ultimately they determined to leave the matter in the hands of the Guardians," but they added a rider to their verdict, asking the Guardians' consideration as to the advisability of continuing the practice of vaccinating children at so early an age. It is to be borne in mind that if children born in a workhouse are not vaccinated before their discharge, they commonly escape vaccination altogether, and the Local Government Board are advised that there is no medical reason against early vaccination in the case of healthy children.

Mr. PICTON (Leicester): May I ask whether the express consent of the mother was asked, or was the vaccination carried out in the absence of any audible refusal?

*MR. RITCHIE: The consent of the mother was not expressly asked, but she was informed before the vaccination took place, and she raised no objection. Had she raised an objection the vaccination would not have taken place.

PRISON REGULATIONS.

Mr. HENEAGE (Grimsby) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether there is a discretion vested in either the magistrates or prison authorities in England to absolve persons sentenced to short terms of imprisonment from certain sanitary regulations in reference to dress and haircutting; if so, in whom the discretionary power is now vested, and what are the conditions under which such powers can be exercised; and, whether he will consider the advisability of placing England, Scotland, and Ireland on an equal footing, by giving some discretion either to Visiting Justices or the Governors of Her Majesty's Prisons, on the recommendation of the Presiding Magistrate in cases of summary juris-

diction, as to the necessity or advantage of enforcing all the sanitary regulations as laid down by the existing prison rules?

MR. MATTHEWS: Under the Prisons Act of 1865 no discretion is vested either in the magistrates or in the prison authorities to dispense persons sentenced to short terms of imprisonment from wearing prison dress. With regard to haircutting, the Act of 1865 lays down that the hair of male criminal prisoners shall not be cut closer than may be necessary for the purposes of health and cleanliness. The practice now pursued is that the hair and beard are cut once a fortnight to a length proper to insure cleanliness; but, in accordance with instructions issued by Sir R. Cross in 1879, prisoners are allowed to grow their hair to a moderate length a short time before discharge. I will refer the suggestion as to placing England, Scotland, and Ireland on an equal footing to the Committee which, as the right hon. Gentleman is aware, has lately been appointed to inquire into the whole question of prison rules.

MILITARY BANDS.

MR. BROOKE ROBINSON (Dudley) asked the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that the principal festival in South Staffordshire for its mining and iron making community are the fêtes held annually at Whitsuntide, by permission of the Earl of Dudley, in the grounds surrounding the ruins of Dudley Castle; that these fêtes are of an entirely non-political character, the profits arising from them being applied in support of various charitable institutions; that they have been held continuously for a period of 40 years, the average attendance being about 30,000 persons, and one of the principal attractions having been hitherto military bands; that last year, and again this year, permission has been refused for bands to attend, although this year a memorial upon the subject has been presented to the War Office, signed by the Mayor, Clergy, and other principal inhabitants in the town; that last year the committee of the fêtes supplied the place of a military band by engaging the Hungarian and other bands, which, however, were found unsuited for the locality and concourse of people; and,

whether he will bring these facts under the notice of H.R.H. the Commander in Chief, with the view that the withdrawal of the privilege of allowing military bands to attend the fêtes in question may be in future re-considered?

*MR. E. STANHOPE: No application appears to have reached the War Office as regards the Whitsuntide Fêtes at Dudley Castle; but, considering their importance, as explained by my hon. Friend, any request for the attendance of a military band will have the favourable consideration of His Royal Highness the Commander in Chief.

INDIAN MAILS.

MR. W. S. CAINE (Barrow) asked the Postmaster General if he would consider the desirability of establishing a ship-mail for India, for newspapers and printed matter, at a reduced rate by the mail steamers of the Peninsular and Oriental Company leaving London for Bombay each week?

MR. RAIKES: As far as I am aware, there is no public demand for any arrangement whereby newspapers and printed matter, could be sent to India by the all-sea route at reduced rates. Weekly newspapers posted for conveyance by steamers leaving the Thames on Thursday or Friday afternoon would be a week older than those posted on Friday evening for transmission *via* Brindisi; and as the papers sent by the all-sea route would lose another week on the journey, they would be a fortnight older on reaching their destination than those sent by the regular overland route, and would thus be practically worthless. Other printed papers can now be sent weekly by the route indicated by the Parcel Post to India.

THE INDIAN LIQUOR TRAFFIC RESOLUTIONS.

MR. CAINE asked the Under Secretary of State for India if any action had been taken by the Secretary of State for India with regard to the Resolution passed by the House on Tuesday last?

SIR J. GORST: The Resolution passed by the House of Commons has in regular course been sent out to India. A despatch upon the subject is in preparation, and will be considered by the Secretary of State in Council as soon as possible.

THE INDIAN FACTORY ACTS.

MR. CAINE asked the Under Secretary of State for India whether he was now in a position to inform the House of the decision taken by the Secretary of State with regard to any reform or alteration of the Indian Factory Acts?

SIR J. GORST: A despatch from the Government of India on the subject has been received. The matter is under the consideration of the Secretary of State in Council, and no unavoidable delay will take place in dealing with it.

KING EYO OF CREEK TOWN.

MR. BUCHANAN (Edinburgh, W.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir J. Ferguson) whether it is a fact that King Eyo of Creek Town, within the British Protectorate there, was forcibly carried on board a German man-of-war on the 25th of February, and kept on board until certain natives from the German Protectorate of the Cameroons were delivered up; whether any intimation was given by the German Authorities of their intention to take this course, or whether any negotiations with the British Consul preceded this action of the German Commander; and what representations have been made by Her Majesty's Government to the German Government on the subject?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: Consul Hewett has reported that, at the date of the last mail, he was going to Old Calabar, where these events were said to have occurred, in order to ascertain the facts. Judgment must be suspended till the result of this inquiry is known.

WAR OFFICE COMMITTEES.

MR. HANBURY (Preston): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War what public official means of information exist for ascertaining the names of persons serving on War Office Committees, such as those connected with the invention or the supply of arms and other War Office stores; how such Committees are paid, if at all; what official regulations exist preventing Members of such Committees from themselves becoming personally interested, directly or indirectly, in the adoption, rejection, or improvement of the inventions or stores upon which they may be called in to advise the

Secretary of State; and whether he will lay such regulations upon the Table of the House, and publish the names of the Members of such Committees quarterly in the official Army List, as the names of other Committees are already published?

*MR. E. STANHOPE: My hon. Friend will find in the Army List the names of the Members of all War Office Committees connected with the invention or supply of arms or of war-like stores, except the Permanent Dress and Equipment Committee at Aldershot and the Small Arms Committee, which was a temporary Committee and has just concluded its labours. The names of its Members are well known. The rules for the payment of Committees will be found in the Royal Warrant for pay and promotion in Articles 243 to 247. Members of the Ordnance Committee are forbidden to take out patents for inventions in any way connected with their duties on the Committee. In the case of other Committees, it is a well understood rule that no Member may have a pecuniary interest in the success of any invention on which he is called on to advise. Any breach of this rule would involve the removal of the Member from the Committee. I shall be very glad to insert in the Army List the names of any permanent Committees that may be appointed for these purposes.

BRITISH GUIANA.

MR. A. PEASE (York): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, whether any steps have been taken by Her Majesty's Government to carry out their expressed intention of taking into consideration the constitution of British Guiana with a view to its amendment?

*THE UNDER SECRETARY FOR THE COLONIES (Baron H. de WORMS, Liverpool, E. Toxteth): Her Majesty's Government continue to be of opinion that the constitution of British Guiana should be amended, and are considering the manner in which this can best be effected.

SCOTCH EDUCATION DEPARTMENT.

MR. HUNTER (Aberdeen, N.): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate when "the Minute of the Scotch Education Department to be forthwith laid before

Parliament," as mentioned in Sub-clause 4 of Clause 19 of the Local Government (Scotland) Bill, will be in the hands of Members?

*MR. J. P. B. ROBERTSON: I beg to refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on Friday to a question, put by the hon. Member for West Edinburgh in almost identical terms.

DISCHARGES OF GOVERNMENT WORKMEN.

MR. BROADHURST (Nottingham, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State of War whether it is true that mechanics who had left their employment at Woolwich Arsenal, and who had obtained work at the Small Arms Factory at Enfield for the purpose of bettering their condition, have been discharged from Enfield at the instigation of the Woolwich Arsenal Authorities; and, if so, whether he will cause an inquiry to be made to ascertain what justification there is for such action on the part of the officials?

*MR. E. STANHOPE: Five men have been discharged from Enfield for violating a necessary rule of old standing, which requires that a workman shall not leave one of the Government Ordnance factories for the purpose of obtaining work in another without first obtaining the sanction of his superintendent.

THE IRISH LAND COMMISSION.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, South): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland when the appeals from the decisions of the Sub-Commissioners in the several land cases on the Charlemont estate in county Tyrone will be heard; and if the Government can take any steps to expedite the hearing?

*MR. MADDEN: Unless means are taken this year for expediting appeals, I do not think the appeals will be heard this year.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: What I want to know is whether means will be taken for expediting appeals this year?

*MR. MADDEN: That is a matter which is at the present moment under the serious consideration of Her Majesty's Government. I am not in a position at present to make any further statement on the subject.

Mr. Hunter

THE PRICE OF POSTCARDS.

MR. ESSLEMONT (Aberdeen, East): I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether, in view of the saving of £40,000 to £60,000 a year effected upon Messrs. de la Rue's contracts, he is now prepared to reduce the price of postcards to the public; and, if so, from what date the reduction will take effect?

*MR. RAIKES: I am not yet in a position to communicate to the House the decision of the Government upon the subject of the contemplated reduction of the price of postcards, but I hope very soon to be able to make an arrangement which will, I hope, be satisfactory to the public.

WALES—BURIAL GROUNDS.

MR. THOMAS ELLIS (Merionethshire): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether, in March last, an application was made by the parishioners of Trawsfynydd, county of Merioneth, to the Home Office for its sanction of a new burial ground; whether he is aware that much inconvenience has arisen, owing to the impossibility of burying the dead in the new burial ground until such sanction is given; and whether the Inspector of Burial Grounds will report upon the ground without further delay?

MR. MATTHEWS: My answer to the first two paragraphs is in the affirmative. The Inspector will report as soon as he has had an opportunity of conferring as to the suitability of the site with the medical officer of the district, whom he has arranged to meet on the spot.

MR. T. ELLIS: May I ask whether any burial can take place on this plot of ground without the sanction of the Home Office?

MR. MATTHEWS: I rather think not.

IRELAND—CASTLEBAR PRISON.

MR. HAYDEN (Leitrim, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the Governor of Castlebar Prison has refused the application of their friends to see those in gaol in default of bail, unless they came to tender security; under what authority has the Governor so acted; and, if he is not justified in his refusal, will he intimate

the fact to him in order to prevent the annoyance caused to parties going long distances to Castlebar from other counties, only to find themselves disappointed?

*MR. MADDEN: I have asked for a report on this subject, but I have not yet received it.

INTERNATIONAL CODE OF SIGNALS.

MR. CHANNING (Northampton, E.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade how soon the alterations and additions in the Signal Book proposed by the International Code of Signals Committee will be in print, and will be sent to the Governments of other Maritime States for their approval; and, whether a letter of inquiry, similar to the letter of inquiry on the subject of night signalling, will be issued by the Committee to shipowners and Mercantile Marine Associations to obtain opinions as to the establishment of a system of sound signals to be used by steam and sailing vessels during foggy weather to indicate the course steered, and the limits and most practical way of carrying out such a system?

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Sir MICHAEL HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): The revised book is being got through the Press as rapidly as possible, and will be communicated to the Governments of Maritime States at the earliest possible date. A letter of inquiry in the sense suggested by the hon. Member has, I find, already been addressed to representatives of the interests concerned, by direction of the Chairman of the Committee.

COUNTY ALDERMEN AS RETURNING OFFICERS.

MR. PICKARD (York, W.R., Northampton): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether it has come to his knowledge that Mr. William Peed, the paid Deputy Returning Officer for the County Council for the county of Cambridge, has been elected and accepted the position of alderman in that Council; whether he is aware of the fact that since such election he has again acted in the capacity of Returning Officer for the same county, and has been paid for such services; and, having regard to Section 12 of "The Municipal Act, 1882," whether it is competent for such

a person to hold office as alderman in that county?

*MR. RITCHIE: I have made inquiry as to the facts, and I find that, as the High Sheriff of the county of Cambridge was desirous of becoming a candidate for the office of County Councillor, the Court of Quarter Sessions appointed Mr. Peed, who was the Under Sheriff, to act as Returning Officer in the election. At the first meeting after the election, Mr. Peed was elected a County Alderman, and since that time he has conducted the election of two new councillors, considering that he was required to do so by virtue of Section 107 (2), of the Local Government Act, which provides that the person acting as Returning Officer at the first election shall act in the like capacity in any election held to fill a casual vacancy before the appointed day. It does not devolve on me to determine whether or not a member of the County Council is disqualified, but I may say that as Mr. Peed was appointed to the office of Returning Officer by the Court of Quarter Sessions, he has not, in my opinion, by reason of that appointment held any office or place of profit in the gift or disposal of the County Council, within the meaning of Section 12 of the Municipal Corporations Act. With regard to any election to fill a casual vacancy after the appointed day, it will of course devolve on the County Council to appoint the Returning Officer.

THE SITTINGS OF QUARTER SESSIONS.

MR. COGHILL (Newcastle-under-Lyme): I beg to ask the Attorney General whether he is aware of the great inconvenience that is caused by the practice prevailing in some counties of holding adjourned Quarter Sessions, and that at these adjourned Quarter Sessions there are frequently three or four times more prisoners to be tried than at the regular Quarter Sessions; whether the practice of holding adjourned Quarter Sessions is a contravention of the Act of 11 Geo. IV., and 1 Will. IV., c. 70, section 35, which provides for the holding of Quarter Sessions four times a year; whether he will bring in a Bill this Session to make the times of holding Quarter Sessions uniform in the different counties, to limit the number of such Sessions to

four in a year, and to enable the justices to fix the days for holding them at suitable dates immediately before the Assizes are held; and whether, if the Chairmen and Deputy Chairmen of Sessions and Recorders of boroughs are to be called on to do the work which properly falls to the Judges of the Queen's Bench Division, he will provide for their receiving some remuneration for the additional work cast upon them?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir R. WEBSTER, Isle of Wight): The information conveyed to me does not support the statement in the question of the hon. and learned Member, that the holding of the adjourned Quarter Sessions has been found to be seriously inconvenient. I have no doubt that the practice is legal and in accordance with the Statutes. The matter is under the consideration of the Lord Chancellor, with a view to legislation for relieving the Judges of Assizes from trying Quarter Session prisoners without the necessity of increasing the number of Quarter Sessions, and I am in hopes that some legislation may be effected during the present Session with that object. It would be beyond my province to deal with the question of remuneration referred to in the last paragraph of the hon. and learned Member's question. There is a Bill pending before the House also dealing with the same subject in the name of the hon. Member for Carlisle.

TITHES.

MR. SWETENHAM (Carnarvon, &c.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if it is the intention of Her Majesty's Government to introduce a Bill this Session dealing with the Tithe Question; and, if, so, whether he will introduce it in time to enable it to become law this Session?

*THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (MR. W. H. SMITH, Strand, Westminster): It is the intention of the Government to introduce a measure dealing with the tithe question, when further progress has been made with the important Bills now before the House.

TENDERS FOR THE NEW WAR SHIPS.

MR. BROADHURST (Nottingham, W.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, in inviting

tenders for the shipbuilding in connection with the proposed increase of the Royal Navy, the Government will only communicate with such firms who pay the standard rate of wages to the workmen they employ?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Lord G. HAMILTON, Middlesex, Ealing): The Admiralty see no reason to depart from their usual practice with regard to putting out of the contracts for the new ships, and will invite the firms on the list to tender as before.

A MINISTER OR DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE.

MR. HENEAGE (Great Grimsby): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether there is at the present moment any Minister who is personally responsible for the charge of the interests of agriculture; and when it is the intention of the Government to make arrangements for the presence of a responsible Minister in the House of Commons, in accordance with the practice in previous Administrations since the establishment of a Committee of Agriculture at the Privy Council Office in 1882; and, whether he will state the names and official position in the Government of the members of the present Committee of Agriculture, and whether they were selected on account of their special knowledge of agricultural questions, or for other reasons?

SIR E. BIRKBECK (Norfolk, E.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury when he will introduce the long promised measure for the constitution of a fully equipped Department of Agriculture, such as has been recently pressed on the Prime Minister by a deputation from the Central Chamber of Agriculture?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: The Lord President of the Council is personally responsible for the charge of the interest of agriculture, and the Department is at present represented in this House by my noble Friend the Member for Lewisham (Viscount Lewisham). The following are the names of the Members of the Committee of the Privy Council for Agriculture:—The Lord President of the Council, the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, the Duke of Richmond and Gordon, the Earl of Lathom, Viscount Lewisham, the Home Secre-

tary (Mr. Matthews) and the Secretary for Scotland. Some of these gentlemen were selected on account of their special knowledge of agricultural questions, others in virtue of the offices they hold. I hope to introduce the Agricultural Bill on Thursday or Monday next.

THE STATE OF WESTMINSTER ABBEY.

MR. G. A. CAVENDISH BENTINCK (Whitehaven): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether there has been communications between the Government and the Dean and Chapter of Westminster relative to the overcrowded state of Westminster Abbey; whether the Government intend to institute an independent inquiry into the subject; and whether Her Majesty's Government will use their best endeavours to induce the Dean and Chapter to forbid the erection of any more statues, busts, or so-called memorials within the walls of Westminster Abbey, and to remove the statue of the late Earl of Shaftesbury from the west-end of the nave to some other position or place?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: Communications have passed between the Dean of Westminster and the Government on the subject to which the hon. Gentleman refers, and I have reason to believe that further representations will probably be made with a view to some inquiry of the nature indicated. My right hon. Friend will probably accept this answer as sufficient for the present.

PRINTING OF RETURNS.

Mr. JOHN ELLIS (Notts., Rushcliffe): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he is aware of the great and growing interval which often elapses between the Order of the House being given for the printing of a Return or Paper and its distribution among Members; whether this often arises from the detention of proofs of the documents in the Public Departments longer than is necessary; and, whether he will cause steps to be taken to ensure the more prompt distribution of these documents?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I would point out to the hon. Member that after an Order has been given by the House for the printing of a Return, it has to be prepared, and some Returns are of so intricate a nature as to require much

time for their preparation. If the hon. Member will give me the name of any particular Return which he considers has been unduly delayed by the Department concerned, I shall be quite ready to draw their attention to the allegation of the hon. Member, but it is quite impossible for me to deal with any general complaint unsupported by details.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—REPORT OF SUPPLY.

Mr. JOHN ELLIS (Notts., Rushcliffe): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he will arrange for the "Adjourned Debate on Report of Supply [29th April]," on to-day's Orders of the Day, to be taken at a reasonable hour before midnight?

*Mr. W. H. SMITH: I will take care that the Report of Supply to which the hon. Gentleman refers, shall be taken at a reasonable hour.

Mr. E. ROBERTSON (Dundee): The right hon. Gentleman gave a conditional promise that he would give us an opportunity for a discussion on the Report of Supply with reference to the absence of our Ambassador from Paris at the time of the opening of the Exhibition.

*Mr. W. H. SMITH: I did enter into such an engagement, but I think the hon. Member will own it was impossible for us to report progress on Friday morning as the Vote was not obtained till the last moment. I will endeavour, as far as I can, to meet the views of the hon. Gentlemen, but I think it must be admitted that some sacrifice must be made by hon. Gentlemen, looking to the condition of financial business.

SIR W. HARCOURT (Derby): I am very anxious that progress should be made with Supply, but there is a question arising upon the Foreign Office Vote, upon which it is desired to have a short discussion, and if it be inconvenient to bring it on at a late hour to-night, I would ask the right hon. Gentleman to consider whether he could not take all the rest of the Votes on Report of Supply, and allow this matter to be discussed possibly to-morrow morning.

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I will postpone the Foreign Office Vote this evening, at all events.

ADMIRALTY CHARTS—THE ZAMBESI.

SIR J. SWINBURNE (Staffordshire, Lichfield): I beg to ask the first Lord of the Treasury whether he will have the Admiralty Chart, with the latest corrections on it of the mouths of the Zambesi, placed in the Tea Room of the House?

LORD G. HAMILTON: I have no objection to have the Admiralty Chart of the mouths of the Zambesi, with the latest corrections, placed in the Tea Room of the House. There have, however, been no recent corrections.

SIR J. SWINBURNE: Will the noble Lord give telegraphic instructions to the Commander-in-Chief at the Cape to send one of Her Majesty's ships to examine and report upon the navigable channels of the Zambesi?

LORD G. HAMILTON: A surveying ship, refitting at the Cape, will visit the Zambesi on its way to Zanzibar.

CUSTOMS—HERB AND GINGER BEER.

MR. C. GRAHAM (Lanark, N.W.): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he can promise any relief to the manufacturers of herb and ginger beer from the provisions of the Customs and Inland Revenue Act of 1888?

*MR. GOSCHEN: I presume that the hon. Member refers to the Act of 1885. Herb beers, which do not contain more than 3 per cent of proof spirit, can be made and sold without any interference. For the security of the revenue it is absolutely necessary to attach a penalty to the selling of any such beers containing more than 3 per cent of proof spirit. Complaints have arisen in the trade as to the method of enforcing these penalties, and representations have been made to me through the instrumentality of the Member for West Birmingham. In consequence of these representations some changes in their method of procedure have been adopted by the Inland Revenue, which I hope may be satisfactory to the trade.

ADMIRALTY—SPEECH OF SIR A. HOOD.

MR. CREMER (Shoreditch, Haggerston): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether his attention has been called to a speech reported in the

Times as having been delivered at the Institution of Civil Engineers on the 11th ult. by the Senior Naval Lord of the Admiralty (Sir Arthur Hood), in which there occurred the following passage:—

"He first denied positively that the Navy was in an inefficient state; further, he asserted that the Navy at this moment was in a better state of preparation for war than it had been at any time for the past 20 years,"

and, if so, whether these statements were made with the sanction of the Board of Admiralty?

ADMIRAL MAYNE (Pembroke and Haverfordwest): I beg to ask whether at the same time Sir A. Hood did not say that a large increase of the fleet was necessary to bring it up to its proper relative strength in 1874?

LORD G. HAMILTON: The two sentences quoted by the hon. Gentleman were used by Sir Arthur Hood, and they merely express what, both in this House and outside, I have frequently before said. They do not refer to the sufficiency of existing naval establishments.

HALL MARKING OF SILVER PLATE.

MR. HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he has received strong evidence of the feeling of the silver trade that Hall-marking should still continue compulsory; and whether, before any proposal is laid before Parliament to abolish the Import Duty now levied upon foreign plate, he will take care that the trades likely to be affected in their capacity for giving employment to the industrial population at home by the probable increase in the competition of inferior foreign and Indian plate, if the duty be taken off, will have full opportunity of being heard?

*MR. GOSCHEN: I have received evidence that there is a strong feeling on the part of at least a portion of the silver trade that Hall-marking should continue compulsory. I think that the trades to which the hon. Member refers already have full opportunity of making themselves heard, and that they are, as a matter of fact, making themselves heard in the public discussion which is taking place.

IRELAND—CHEERING FOR THE PLAN OF CAMPAIGN.

MR. CRILLY (Mayo, N.): On behalf of Mr. Flynn, I beg to ask the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that at Rathmore (county Kerry) Petty Sessions, on Thursday 11th instant, before Mr. Leonard, J.P., who is Agent to the Kenmare Estate, and Mr. M'Dermott, R.M., two men, Daniel O'Keefe and John Moynihan, were charged "with forming part of a disorderly crowd and cheering for the Plan of Campaign," and were sent to gaol for six months in default of giving bail; was there any evidence of disorder other than cheering as above mentioned; has his attention been called to the evidence of the two police witnesses, to the effect that the defendants called for "cheers for the Plan of Campaign and William O'Brien," and to the evidence of the witnesses for the defendants, to the effect that these men were members of the Rathmore Football Club, calling themselves "Blackwater Campaigners," and that having won a football match there were cheers called for and given for the "Blackwater Campaigners;" and, whether, taking the circumstances into account, he will cause inquiry to be made into the case, with a view to the remission or reduction of this sentence?

*MR. MADDEN: It appears that the men named were summoned under the ordinary law for being concerned with a number of others in disorderly conduct in a public place, and that the conduct in question consisted of forming part of a disorderly crowd who were making a demonstration in favour of the illegal conspiracy known as the Plan of Campaign. The information before me does not furnish details of the evidence of witnesses for the defence referred to in the third paragraph. The Court ordered the men to give bail to be of good behaviour for six months. They declined to do so, electing to go to prison in default. It is open to them to obtain their immediate release by giving this guarantee of future good behaviour.

MR. CLANCY (Dublin co.): Will the hon. and learned Gentleman state what were the disorderly demonstrations

which these men were said to be guilty of?

*MR. MADDEN: On the information before me, shouting in the public streets of the town and cheering in the public streets for the Plan of Campaign. It was a disorderly crowd.

MR. MAC NEILL (Donegal, S.): Does the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary now adhere to the statement that no one has been imprisoned for cheering the Plan of Campaign?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (MR. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): In the first place, no one is in prison, except for the fault of giving bail; in the second place I entirely adhere to my statement, and in the third place I say that the mere fact that a disorderly mob shouts for the Plan of Campaign does not make the conduct of that mob innocent.

THE GLASGOW BOUNDARIES COMMISSION.

DR. CAMERON (Glasgow, College): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether he can yet state when the Bill promised by his predecessor in office will be introduced to carry into effect the recommendations of the Glasgow Boundaries Commission?

*MR. J. P. B. ROBERTSON: As the hon. Member is doubtless now aware the Government do not intend to introduce a Bill on this subject. I have been unable to find any trace of such a promise having been made as is suggested in the question.

DR. CAMERON: I beg to give notice that I will take an early opportunity of calling attention to the subject.

IRELAND—MR. E. HARRINGTON, M.P.

MR. JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant whether it is a fact, as stated in some of the morning papers, that the hon. Member for West Kerry, being about to appear before the Special Commission, has expressed his intention to start on his journey in prison clothing, though he is free to resume his usual attire?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: As my hon. Friend is aware, for some time past prisoners in a similar position in Ireland have been perfectly at liberty to wear their own clothes. I understand that

Mr. Harrington has expressed a preference for travelling in prison clothes, and has expressed a desire to be clipped before coming over.

MR. JOHN ELLIS: I beg to ask whether the hon. Member for West Kerry was not taken through the streets of Tralee in prison clothes?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I presume that was before the new Rules.

SANITARY MATTERS IN BELFAST.

MR. DE COBAIN (Belfast, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if his attention has been drawn to the serious neglect of the Chief Sanitary Authority of the city of Belfast, which had for years permitted the receptacle for the night soil and filth of the entire population to remain in the centre of the Cromas Ward, and in close proximity to the dwellings of a rapidly increasing population; whether he has seen that this condition of things has been condemned by the report recently issued by the Chief Medical Officer of the Sanitary Department of Belfast, while the only remedial measure adopted up to the present has been to whitewash the manure heap, that they might be concealed from public observation to some extent; and whether, as this nuisance is closely contiguous to the new bridge to be opened by his Royal Highness Prince Albert Victor during his visit to Belfast, he would request the Local Government Board to call upon the Corporation of Belfast to take immediate steps to remove this nuisance?

*MR. MADDEN: The Local Government Inspector stationed in Belfast reports that the contents of the manure dépôt referred to consist nearly altogether of street and road scrapings. The Corporation of Belfast has made repeated efforts to obtain a site for a dépôt outside the city, but so far without success. Last month the whole subject was under consideration of the Town Council, and in accordance with a report obtained from the Medical Superintendent Officer of Health, steps are being taken to have the contents speedily removed, and to secure that until a suitable place be secured outside the city the contents of the present place be kept as low as possible. The place is also being disinfected with lime.

Mr. A. J. Balfour

IRELAND—THE POLICE AT FALCARRAGH—ARREST OF MR. CONYBEARE AND MR. HARRISON.

MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE.

*MR. ATHERLEY-JONES, Member for North-West Durham, rose in his place, and asked leave to move the Adjournment of the House, for the purpose of discussing a definite matter of urgent public importance, viz., the conduct of the Police at Falcarragh, and the circumstances attending the arrest of Mr. Harrison, and the prosecution of Mr. Conybeare.

But the pleasure of the House not having been signified,

*MR. SPEAKER called on those Members who supported the Motion to rise in their places, and not less than 40 Members having accordingly risen,

*MR. ATHERLEY-JONES: I am sorry to have to trouble the House on this question, but I think it necessary to seek some explanation from the Government in respect of what I conceive to be one of the grossest violations of the elementary principles of justice ever known. I am sensible how undesirable it is that matters under judicial investigation should be discussed in this House, and yet no hon. Member will deny that the prerogative of this House does extend even to such matters. Having regard to a most wholesome doctrine, I will avoid discussing the evidence before the tribunal, and will abstain from expressing any opinion on the manner in which the justices performed their duty. I shall exclusively confine myself to information obtained from the pure and undefiled columns of the *Times*. On the 19th of April there appeared in that newspaper a statement to the effect that the police made another raid upon the houses of evicted tenants upon the Olphert estate who had re-taken possession, and made about a dozen arrests; that an old man, aged 90, was also placed under arrest; that at the house of the widow Coyne, a cripple over 80 years of age, who was in bed, four armed policemen were in the room and two emergency men, and as she refused to go out she was put on a chair and placed by the roadside. The hon. Member who poses as the agent-general of the landlords of Ireland, the hon. Member for Tyrone, has admitted in his letters to

the *Times* that the tenantry on the Falcarragh estate are in a most miserable and destitute condition. It was under these circumstances that a young man, an undergraduate of Baliol College, Oxford, moved by pity for these unfortunate people, found his way to Falcarragh, and introduced into their houses some loaves of bread and packages of tea. For that, caught in *flagrante delicto*, he was arrested by the police. Now what I want to ask the House is, what offence Mr. Harrison committed in handing in these loaves of bread, and secondly, what is of more importance, assuming that he had committed an offence, which might be the subject of some civil remedy, what justified the police in arresting him? In amplification of this question, I wish to ask the right hon. Gentleman what are the functions of the Royal Irish Constabulary in respect of evictions. I have followed with great care and interest the information we have at various times received in regard to the conduct of the Irish Constabulary at evictions, but, as an English lawyer, and speaking, as I know I do, the confirmed opinion of every member of my own profession, I say without hesitation, that the duties of the police at evictions are confined within these limits: they are entitled to protect the bailiffs in the event of an assault being committed upon them, and in that case to enter a house and arrest any persons who may have committed the assault. That is the sum total of their functions, and I challenge contradiction. I know that my mere statement is no authority, but I have examined the text books in the library, and I hold in my hands a very useful little book, called "The Irish Constabulary Code," issued by Mr. Reid, Inspector General of the Royal Irish Constabulary. In looking through the book I find that Mr. Reid points out what are the duties of the Constabulary at evictions, and he says at page 302—

"The Constabulary at evictions are not to assist in making a seizure or to do any act connected with handing over to the bailiff the possession of land, and are only to protect in case of violence, and if necessary to enforce entrance for the purpose of arresting those who have committed violence."

Then, again, I refer to a judgment of Chief Baron Pallas reported in volume 21, page 18 of the *Irish Law Times*. That learned judge, a fair and high-minded

man, although he has no sympathy with the Plan of Campaign, lays down in the most clear and distinct language that the Constabulary have no right whatever to lend any assistance to bailiffs for the purpose of supporting any civil process except to protect the bailiffs from assault, and if necessary to arrest those who commit an assault. Now, I wish to ask the law advisers of the Crown and those who are otherwise legally responsible, what was Mr. Harrison doing that he was arrested by four or five constables, including the head constable? It is idle to tell me that Mr. Harrison has been acquitted. It was the duty of the law advisers of the Chief Secretary, who undoubtedly had cognizance of this procedure, as soon as they discovered that Mr. Harrison had been arrested on such a charge, to order his immediate release. A more gross violation of the elementary duties of the Constabulary than the arrest of Mr. Harrison it is impossible to conceive. But I do not stop there. I find that four armed policemen were in the house of an old woman. What right had they in that house? If they were there to arrest the old woman for an assault I can understand it, or if they were of opinion that the old woman was endangering the lives of the emergency men who were engaged in carrying out the evictions. But according to the *Times* perfect quiet reigned in Falcarragh, and here again I maintain that the police were guilty of a gross violation of duty. Mr. Conybeare—I presume I am entitled to mention the hon. Member for the Camborne Division by name—has been convicted of having called out "Three cheers for the Plan of Campaign." The report in the *Times* states that the learned magistrates—if they are learned—acted to the best of their lights, and they stated that they conceived the calling out of "Three cheers for the Plan of Campaign," constituted an overt act connecting Mr. Conybeare with conspiracy. That is a somewhat startling assertion.

*MR. WHARTON (Yorkshire, W. R., Ripon): I rise to order. I do not wish to interrupt the hon. Member, but I wish to ask you, Sir, whether it is in accordance with the practice of the House for an hon. Member to refer to the circumstances of a case pending legal jurisdiction. The fact is that all

the circumstances to which the hon. Member is alluding, will come before the Court of Appeal, and will probably form the charge against the hon. Member opposite before that Court. I wish therefore to know if it is in accordance with the practice of this House, that the circumstances of the case can be referred to on this occasion?

*MR. SPEAKER: When the hon. Member on a previous night gave his Notice, I thought it my duty to take upon myself the responsibility of saying that I thought, under the then circumstances, it would be indecorous in the highest degree to bring the circumstances under the notice of the House. But to-night the hon. Member has varied the Notice on moving the Adjournment of the House, namely, "For the purpose of calling attention to the conduct of the police at Falcarragh." He now appears to be dealing with another subject, namely, the prosecution of the hon. and learned Member for the Camborne Division (Mr. Conybeare), and I hope I may say I do not think I am travelling out of my responsibility and my proper functions when I say that I do not think the House will sanction any remarks which are likely to prejudice the trial which, though it is over in the first instance, is now the subject of appeal. The hon. and learned Gentleman has asked me whether it is the practice of the House. I am not aware that there has been any definite and distinct expression of opinion on the part of the House that pending trials should not be alluded to. Nor am I aware of any distinct and definite ruling from the Chair, though I am aware of frequent expressions of opinion both from Ministers in this House and other Members with regard to the impropriety of alluding to pending trials in such a way as to prejudice a fair trial of the case. With these remarks I shall leave the subject in the hands of the House.

*MR. ATHERLEY-JONES: I have no intention of discussing the mode in which the trial was conducted. I say that the charge which was formulated against Mr. Conybeare was that he called out "Three cheers for the Plan of Campaign." It may be that it was an imprudent thing to call out "Three cheers for the Plan of Campaign." That is another matter; but I will put a hypothetical case. Assuming that there was

a conspiracy in existence in which certain persons were known to have assisted. As an illustration let me take the case of what is known as "the long firm." Suppose that some individual were to call out "Three cheers for the long firm," would that be held to be taking part in the conspiracy of the long firm? Would it be an overt act?

*THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH, Strand, Westminster): Whether there is any Rule of the House or not, I venture to appeal to the hon. and learned Member whether he desires to set up a precedent for discussing the conditions under which a conviction has been given by a Court of first instance—a conviction that has been made the subject of an appeal to a Higher Court. I venture to say, following the remarks that have fallen from you Sir, that such a course has never been taken and is not in accordance with the view of the House. I think that the practice is one that may have serious consequences and that it is contrary to the course which has been generally followed by the House. [*Cries of "Order."*]

*MR. ATHERLEY-JONES: I listened with the greatest respect to what has fallen from the Leader of the House, but at the same time I am bound to say that I do not think the trial of any Irish Nationalist in Ireland is likely to be prejudiced by anything that can take place in this House. Certainly the case of the Crown is not likely to be prejudiced. I have sufficient respect for the judicial tribunals of my own country and Ireland to avoid saying anything that will be derogatory to them. Passing from that I wish to show, as indicating the spirit and temper of the prosecution, what the kind of evidence was which was given against Mr Conybeare—

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. Member is now entering into a matter which is clearly irregular, and I cannot say that it is one which constitutes a definite matter of urgent public importance. The hon. Member is mixing up two distinct matters. He moved the Adjournment of the House for the purpose of calling attention to the conduct of the police, and now he is going into the question of the prosecution of a Member of this House. These are two matters that should be kept

perfectly distinct, and they are not both covered by the notice given to the House.

*MR. ATHERLEY-JONES: If you, Sir, had borne with me a little longer you would have seen that I was alluding to the conduct of the police. The police stated that Mr. Conybeare had cried, "To hell with Mr. Balfour." I do not believe that my hon. Friend did use such an expression. Those who knew Mr. Conybeare well knows that he is incapable of using such an expression.

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. Member is distinctly violating the Rule I have laid down.

*MR. ATHERLEY-JONES: Then I will abstain from commenting upon any of the evidence which was brought before the Magistrates on that occasion. There is, however, another matter to which I wish to call attention, and which is of great importance when we consider the mode in which justice is administered in Ireland. It is reported that Mr. Conybeare during his visit to Falcarragh was subjected to an odious system of police espionage. Members of the constabulary followed my hon. Friend about, with note books in their hands, and wrote down every word he uttered in private conversation. They acted as eavesdroppers when he visited private houses, and I want to know by what legal authority or statute they are entitled to follow the humblest of Her Majesty's subjects from house to house and take notes of what he says? Under the controlled and restricted conditions with which I have been able to bring forward the Motion, I think I have a right to demand some satisfactory explanation from the Chief Secretary and the law advisers of the Crown of the action of the police. It is not a question of the administration of the law for the purpose of preventing acts of violence. No doubt, the right hon. Gentleman is entitled to enforce all the machinery of the law in order to preserve law and order in Ireland, but in this instance the action of the police has been far more calculated to lead to disorder. Possibly we shall hear the right hon. Gentleman denounce the disorder which exists in Ireland, and arraign the conduct of the people in resisting the entrance of bailiffs and emergency men into their houses. But that is not the

point. The point he is called upon to address himself to is whether it is within the legitimate functions of the police to establish a reign of terror in Ireland. I say, with a perfect conviction that I am speaking the truth, that it is a perilous thing for any English Member of Parliament who is in sympathy with the Home Rule Party to visit any place in Ireland where evictions are pending and, speaking personally, having regard to my professional duties, I am free to confess that I should hesitate for a long time before I followed the example of my hon. Friend. All the authorities have to do is to prove that there has been a conspiracy in existence, and then haul any hon. Member before a magistrate and accuse him of being a party to it. You may call that firm government of Ireland, but to my mind it is infirm government, equalled only by that which has been found to exist in countries which do not enjoy the blessings of Constitutional Government. It is not the law of the realm, but of irresponsible police officers, and an equally irresponsible magistracy. I desire to see the law of the country properly vindicated, but I appeal to independent Members on both sides of the House to say whether the course which is being pursued by the Government in Ireland is not one which has analogy only in the acts of Turkish Pashas and Bashis Bazouks.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."—*(Mr. Atherley-Jones.)*

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. MADDEN, University of Dublin): If an illustration were wanting of the inconvenience of discussing matters which are pending before the Courts of Law of this country I think that such has been furnished by the speech which has just been addressed to the House. Although the hon. Gentleman did not discuss the events in detail, yet he did state to the House the nature of the charge as it presents itself to his mind, on which the hon. Member for Camborne is arraigned—a statement with which I cannot concur. But I shall not discuss that point, nor enter into it at all. The hon. Member asks by what authority and by what law the hon. Member for Camborne was shadowed by the police

during his visit to Falcarragh. It has been a common practice not only in Ireland, but in this country for the police to obtain evidence in this manner. The Court in the first instance has decided that during his presence in Ireland the hon. Member for Camborne broke the law. If there is any reasonable ground for believing on the part of the authorities that any person is engaged in an undertaking which involves a breach of the law, it is not only within the right and lawful for the police, but it is their duty to obtain all necessary information by all lawful means—[An hon. MEMBER: "Yes, lawful means."]—which may be necessary for the purpose of ascertaining certain facts. Will any hon. Member get up and state that the means used by the police have been unlawful? ["Certainly."] Then let the illegality of what is called shadowing a person and watching his movements be tested; but I maintain that the practice is lawful. I submit that if the authorities in any district have reason to suppose that any person is present for the purpose of offending against the law of the land, they are bound to adopt all reasonable means of obtaining information as to his proceedings. The hon Member is in error as to the presence of the police in a house which I should call the landlord's and not the tenant's.

*MR. ATHERLEY-JONES: The house to which I referred was the house of Widow Coyne, an old cripple over 80 years of age.

*MR. MADDEN: If that to which the hon. and learned Member referred is not the house in respect of which Mr. Harrison was arrested, I fail to see the pertinence of his remarks in regard to the Motion. But still, if the hon. Member thinks anything tends on this point, let him put a question down on the Paper and I will cause inquiries to be made.

*MR. ATHERLEY-JONES: I obtained my information from a report in the *Times* of the 18th or 19th of last April.

*MR. MADDEN: I surely cannot be expected to carry in mind full details as to all occurrences that have been reported from time to time in the public Press. If the hon. and learned Gentleman wishes to ascertain the facts, let him put a question down on the Paper,

and then I will get any information in my power. Now, Sir, I will pass to the portion of the speech of the hon. and learned Gentleman which dealt with the case of Mr. Harrison. I presume that the House is aware that that gentleman was acquitted by the magistrates of the charge of committing the acts which he did commit in pursuance of an illegal conspiracy. I will venture shortly to recapitulate the facts with regard to Mr. Harrison's arrest. Certain evicted tenants on the Olphert estate had re-taken possession, forcibly or otherwise, and were in unlawful possession of the houses from which they had been evicted. It was alleged and proved before the magistrates that there existed on that estate an illegal conspiracy to defeat and frustrate the action of Her Majesty's Courts, and that in two ways—first by violent opposition to the execution of the process of eviction, and secondly by unlawfully returning after execution of the writs to the houses from which they had been evicted. Both these facts actually occurred. Fierce resistance was made to the execution of the writs, violent assaults were made on the police, an Inspector was seriously injured, and rendered insensible. After the execution of the eviction, the resistance to the law took the form of re-taking possession of the premises. It might be a question whether the possession thus taken was not violent and forcible, and therefore a criminal offence. But at any rate, it cannot be disputed that the evicted tenants were in unlawful possession. Now it came to the knowledge of the police that a visit had been paid by several gentlemen to the houses which had been re-taken possession of by the evicted tenants, and on that occasion Mr. Harrison did what has been euphemistically described as administering relief to a starving people; in other words, he selected out of all the people of the districts as the objects of his bounty the inmates of houses who had returned and were in unlawful possession of those buildings. When the House remembers that it was proved before the magistrates that there was a conspiracy among these people to defeat the execution of due process of law, and that the people unlawfully returned into possession of their houses in pursuance of this conspiracy, the case wears a very different

aspect, and is totally different from the suggestion that Mr. Harrison was a young gentleman who had only gone over there to relieve distress. Mr. Harrison was guilty of what I will only characterize as a thoughtless act. He did not realize the consequences of what he was doing; he did not realize that instead of relieving distress he was accumulating distress and misery. That is why I venture to characterize his action as thoughtless. Evil is wrought by want of thought. Still, Mr. Harrison was acquitted by the Court of the charge of having acted in pursuance of the conspiracy which I have described. He was not arrested by the police for what is described as the distribution of charity. He certainly was arrested and was put in prison. But why? Because, Sir, when the police pointed out to him that the persons he proposed to relieve were resisting the law, and asked him for his name and address, he did not comply with their request.

MR. CONYBEARE: That is not true.

*MR. MADDEN: That is what was sworn at the trial.

MR. CONYBEARE: And I say it is not true.

*MR. MADDEN: It was sworn to at the trial of Mr. Harrison. At all events, whether he gave his address, or whether he is under the impression that he did, it did not reach the police, and that is the material point, and therefore the fact that he was arrested, and not summoned, is due to the fact that the police could not get his name and address, the police had no alternative than to arrest him. What occurred afterwards? When Mr. Harrison was arrested and taken before the magistrates for what the police believed to be an illegal offence, the magistrates offered to release him on bail, but he deliberately, in open Court, refused to give bail. That may be right or wrong, but the offer of bail having been made to Mr. Harrison, he cannot complain of being imprisoned when he declined to give bail, and deliberately preferred to go to prison.

SIR HORACE DAVEY (Stockton): I think the House is indebted to my hon. and learned Friend for having brought this subject forward, because we cannot too often impress on the House and the country the extent to which Ireland at the present time is police-ridden. So

far as my knowledge and information goes, there is no better example, no more flagrant instance of what I do not hesitate to call the illegal action of the police than their conduct with respect to the Falcarragh evictions. Now, Sir, we have been told, and I intend absolutely to accept your ruling, that we must not refer to a case which is *sub judice*; but, Sir, the Crown having thought fit to try Mr. Harrison and the hon. Member for Camborne together on a charge for conspiracy, I am not to be precluded from discussing the case of Mr. Harrison because part of the evidence given against him was also given against the hon. Member. There is one point I desire there shall be no mistake about, and that is that the prosecution of Mr. Harrison was undertaken by the express directions of the authorities at Dublin, as was stated by the learned Gentleman who conducted the prosecution on behalf of the Crown. It seems to me, Sir, that the Government has been overriding and trampling on the most ordinary liberties of the Irish people. At any rate, in this case they have succeeded in making themselves ridiculous, because anything more absurd than to prosecute Mr. Harrison on a charge of entering into a conspiracy with a number of persons whose very names he had never heard of, and for acts which were done while he was still pursuing his studies at Oxford, could hardly be conceived. With regard to the act for which Mr. Harrison was arrested, what happened, as appeared from the reading of the evidence, is perfectly plain. Mr. Harrison called on the tenant inside the house to open the door; the door was put ajar, and he threw in a loaf of bread, and for that the heavy machinery of the law of conspiracy is called down, and Mr. Harrison is arrested for alleged forcible entry. He was also charged with aiding and abetting in the frustration of the law, which is a new criminal offence to me. The hon. and learned Gentleman opposite has made a most unsatisfactory answer to every one of the questions asked by the hon. and learned Member for Durham. Since when I ask him again was it a crime by statute or common law to give a loaf of bread or a packet of tea or of cakes to a starving man who is committing a civil offence? Suppose the people in re-taking possession were

committing a trespass, what statute, English or Irish, makes it a crime to give them a loaf of bread or a packet of tea? By what law, or by what right, are the police entitled to lay siege to a house of which possession has been re-taken by the tenant and to try to starve him out by blockade? It appears to me that in this case they formed a cordon round the house, more or less perfect, and prevented people from approaching it. Both in the south-west of Ireland, and more particularly in Donegal, the police seem to be under the impression that they may do whatever they please. I have read the evidence of a policeman that he gave passes to the people to enable them to get through the cordon of the police. That was wholly illegal and unjustifiable. It was perfectly preposterous for the Crown to institute an action for conspiracy against Mr. Harrison and to try to connect him with acts done three or four years before, when he was a boy at school or at college. But that is what was done, and it naturally followed from committing the administration of so delicate a law as that of conspiracy to Resident Magistrates. The thing from which more mischief has come than from any other is the withdrawal of such actions from the decision of a jury. If the law of conspiracy is to be administered by magistrates, we shall have to alter the law. The only thing which makes it tolerable in this country is that it is administered by a jury. Now, Sir, one more point, and I will sit down. The hon. and learned Gentleman gravely said and challenged the House to contradict the statement that it was lawful for the police to shadow a man, note-book in hand, if they believed he was about to do an unlawful act. I do not believe because the police thought the hon. Member for Camborne was going to cheer for the Plan of Campaign that they were entitled to follow him about like a shadow. When Mr. Harrison was arrested he was cheered by the crowd, and according to the report in the *Times* the crowd were charged by the police for so cheering, and the Inspector of Constabulary said it was a scandal to cheer a prisoner. But if the police arrested persons like Mr. Harrison I fear I shall be guilty of the scandalous conduct of giving those persons a cheer.

Sir Horace Davey

*MR. JAMES LOWTHER (Kent, Thanet): It may appear very presumptuous for a layman to join issue with an ex-Solicitor General on a point of law. But, Sir, I am emboldened in this instance to make that attempt because I think that the hon. and learned Gentleman's eminence at the Bar has not been attained by personal attention to such trivial matters as Police Court prosecutions, otherwise I think he would have known that what he has laid down as indisputable law is without a shadow of foundation; in fact the hon. and learned Gentleman has lent the weight of his great authority to the astounding doctrine that the police are not justified in keeping out trespassers from houses of which illegal possession has been taken.

SIR H. DAVEY: The right hon. Gentleman is mistaken. That is not what I said. I said I was not aware of any law which enables the police to besiege a house and form a cordon about it to starve those in possession.

*MR. J. LOWTHER: The hon. and learned Gentleman went a good deal further; he asked what right had the police to prevent people from entering those houses? That position taken up by the hon. and learned Gentleman, I am glad to think, after fuller consideration, he deliberately repudiates. Then he went another step further still, and said the police had no right to follow about, note-book in hand, as he put it, persons whom they choose to think are objects of suspicion. I venture to say, Sir, that no person who has had a share, however humble, in carrying out the law can deny that the police are justified, if they believe any person is engaged in acts likely to bring him into conflict with the law, to see when and how any breach of the law occurs. I do not consider that I or anyone else would be justified in detaining the House by referring to the action of a Court of Law; there has been too much discussion of that kind already of late, which has largely brought discredit upon those who have indulged in it. I will, therefore, merely content myself with saying that the police in the matter referred to have discharged their duty, and in the like circumstances I hope they will do precisely the same again.

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Cambridge): I do not think I should be justified in wasting the time of the House by replying to any of the comments which we have just heard from the right hon. Gentleman, and which seem to me to prove only this—that a right hon. Gentleman may occupy one of the highest positions in connection with the Government of Ireland without his legal knowledge being such that even the Lord Lieutenant could satisfy himself of it. I presume no one will contradict me when I say I am probably the only Member of the House who can place in the possession of the House the actual facts which are at present under discussion. [*A laugh.*] Hon. Members opposite laugh as they usually do when matters are being discussed of which they are strangely ignorant. I happened to be present with my friend Mr. Harrison during the whole course of the proceedings for which he was arrested and imprisoned, and after my friend Mr. Harrison was arrested I carried on his work with my friend Mr. Benson. I am not going now to touch upon the actual charges of which I stand condemned, as I do not for one moment presume to anticipate the appeal that will be heard later on in my own case; but I trust I shall not trespass upon forbidden ground if I place before the House the facts as stated in Mr. Harrison's case. Stripped of their legal verbiage, the charges against us amounted to this—that we had, by giving bread to Mr. Olphert's starved and besieged tenants on the night of the 16th of April, aided and abetted them in connection with the Plan of Campaign and also in the holding of forcible possession. The first charge applied equally to Mr. Harrison and myself, and if he was acquitted upon that charge so of course must I have been. The other charge, with respect to the holding of forcible possession, broke down, I imagine for two reasons—in the first place, because the very persons who were accused of having held forcible possession were not even proceeded against by the Crown when their cases came on, and secondly, because, as I conclusively proved to the magistrate by the citation of English authority, to prove the holding of forcible possession it is necessary to show that there was actual violence, as to which not a shred

or tittle of evidence was advanced. I mention these matters in order to bring out as strongly as possible the point that so far as the Plan of Campaign, as an illegal criminal conspiracy, exists on the estate, and I am not going to deny that it does exist—so far as it exists, and so far as we were in any way whatever either by giving bread or otherwise assisting, cheering, and comforting the starved and downtrodden tenants of Mr. Olphert, we were guilty of a charge of which Mr. Harrison has been acquitted, and of which I to-day stand condemned. The only other evidence on which the Crown was able to make out a case against me at all was that I, for the distinct purpose of—

*MR. SPEAKER: I am bound to say that the hon. and learned Member is now referring to his own case.

MR. CONYBEARE: I want to distinguish between the exact charge against myself and the charge against Mr. Harrison, of which that gentleman was acquitted. I do not propose to discuss now the question of the cheering of the Plan of Campaign. That was the charge against me as contradistinguished from the charge preferred against both Mr. Harrison and myself, and on which one was acquitted, while the other was found guilty. I only want the House to distinctly understand that so far as we were charged either jointly or severally with promoting and aiding and abetting the Plan of Campaign the evidence of the bread giving upon which we were prosecuted was the strongest that could be brought forward. Now so far as I am concerned the House, knows that I had nothing to do with originating the Plan of Campaign on the Olphert estate. It was originated at a time when I was travelling in South Africa, when Mr. Harrison was living in England, and when Mr. Benson was travelling in the United States. On Friday the 12th of April I was performing my duties in this House, and I left on that evening for Ireland. I had never at that time either met or heard of either Mr. Harrison or Mr. Benson. I reached Falcarragh on the 14th of April, and it was on the evening of that day that the only act took place on the part of the tenants which could be construed to be anything in connection with the Plan of Campaign. The tenants on that evening went back to the houses from which they

had been evicted during the previous week.

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! I am reluctant to call the hon. Gentleman to order, but he is not now discussing the conduct of the police. The hon. Gentleman is clearly defending himself against charges which may be said to be pending against him.

MR. CONYBEARE: I have not the least intention of defending myself. I defended myself before the Magistrate, and I suppose I shall have to defend myself before the County Court Judge. I am content to await that time. Now, as to the control of the police, the first thing I desire to allude to is the system of espionage which is adopted in Ireland. Now the Solicitor General for Ireland stated that it was a common fact that I was breaking the law.

*MR. MADDEN said that he had said that the Court of First Instance had held the hon. Member guilty of breaking the law.

MR. CONYBEARE: You first assume a man is guilty of something, then, for the purpose of making him guilty, you set spies to shadow him and track him everywhere, and take down every word he may say, and then, when that course of action is called in question, you say that the police were perfectly right because he was found by the Magistrate to have been guilty of something. The hon. and learned Gentleman assumes that I was only followed by the police after they had some idea I was taking part in an illegal conspiracy. That is not the explanation given by the police authorities on the spot. It is not their practice to wait to know whether a man is doing that which is illegal before they shadow him and track him out. Several English ladies and gentlemen complained of the inconvenience to which they were subjected, and Mr. Divisional Commissioner Cameron said to them, "You must understand that this country is in such a condition that strangers must be watched to ascertain if they are respectable, and not Members of Parliament or others coming to incite the people to crime." These are the words of this Pasha who had autocratic control of the whole of the management of the police and military in Falcarragh at that time. I have here the notes of the evidence of Sergeant Kenny of Falcarragh. This officer in

cross examination said it was his duty to know who stopped in the hotel and in every house in the district, including Mr. Olphert's house itself. He added, "I saw Captain Butler and Mr. Russell were there. I heard that Mr. Russell was an Irish Member of Parliament. I did not see he was respectable." The hon. Member for South Tyrone must be glad to receive a certificate of respectability from Sergeant Kenny. The officer went on, "I set my men to watch whether they are respectable or not. There are many persons coming into the district whom I did not set my detectives to follow." The fact is that at this moment such is the police intimidation in Falcarragh, such are the daily irregularities and illegalities practised by the authorities there, that it is not at all surprising that they should go beyond what we, as English gentlemen, have a right to claim as their duty in setting spies to track out everybody who may come into the district. But there is further evidence on this point. Two ladies—Miss Chapman and another lady—came to Falcarragh during the last few days I was there. They were tracked and insulted by the police; and, therefore, it is idle for the Solicitor General for Ireland to get up and say it was in the fulfilment of their duty that they followed me, because they recognized in me a dangerous person and conspirator. The irregularities of the police have infected the emergency men, for Armstrong, an emergency man, stated that his instructions were to interfere with English ladies and gentlemen and representatives of the Press whom he saw walking about. He added, "They were in a lane when I ordered them away and took their names." It is monstrous that ladies and gentlemen from England should not be able to talk to these poor wretches, who are being turned out of their homes by Mr. Olphert, in order to ascertain the facts, and to refute the libels and false statements which are being spread by the family of Mr. Olphert and the hon. Member for South Tyrone (Mr. T. W. Russell). That is what we complain of, and I very much mistake the feelings of the people in this country if they will not resent, in the highest degree, an interference with liberty, even in Donegal, without the slightest provocation. At this moment there is

no crime in Donegal except that which the police, and the emergency men, the riflemen, and the landlords' men generally, choose to commit. Falcarragh is not in a disturbed condition, save for the riotings of the riflemen and police who roll about the streets in a drunken condition at all hours of the night and day, making a most disgraceful exhibition of themselves, and actually insulting and assaulting English gentlemen, as they did in the case of Mr. Harrison, without the slightest reason. But it is not merely a question of the action of the police in the particular matter which has been most prominently brought under the notice of the House. We complain of the illegal action of the police in other respects. We complain of the police authorities, deliberately, by a petty dodge, getting hold of the houses from which these poor people have been evicted. They have done this on the pretence of hiring them from the landlord's agent. It was unearthed in the course of the recent trial that one day, after the people had been turned out of their homes, the emergency men, and the landlord's agent, and Mr. Cameron, and other police officers went round. The police authorities asked the agent if this house and that house were to let, and, on being assured by the agent that they were, Mr. Cameron said, "I will have this house and that house at 1s. a week as a police barrack," and at once installed some half dozen constables in them. So fearful, however, were they of the consequences of the exposure, that a few days later the police were hurriedly turned out of the houses. Then I will take another point. The police in this country are supposed to be employed for the purpose of defending the property and lives of poor and rich alike, but in Falcarragh, as no doubt in other parts of Ireland, the police regard their duty as strictly limited to the persecution of poor people. What do they do if a petty larceny takes place? They positively decline to institute any inquiry. I affirm without hesitation that if the police in Falcarragh would only apply themselves to their proper duty of protecting the poor people, as well as protecting Mr. Olphert, against intrigue and crime, there would be less disturbance, and less call for any of the coercive practices in which the Chief

Secretary delights so much. I should like to give one or two illustrations of what I consider illegal action on the part of the police. Inspector Herd swore in this case that he arrested persons before he had got warrants. I want to know by what right police arrest persons, break into their homes, break in the doors with hatchets at five o'clock in the morning, and turn out women and children without warrants. Has it come to this, that there is no protection whatever for the poor people against these illegal malpractices of the police? I think these facts need to be blazoned abroad throughout the land to show to what an odious extent the Government have travelled in their illegal coercive progress throughout Ireland. These police are not content with doing what I have described, they are deliberately aiding and abetting the emergency men in wholesale destruction of the tenants' property. It is all very well to say the house belongs to the landlord; it is not so with the fittings and furniture. We might argue that the walls of the houses in some cases were built by and are the property of the tenants. But the furniture of these poor people was thrown out and wantonly smashed—cooking pots, tables, spinning wheels of the women—every article of furniture was pitched out and maliciously destroyed. Day after day, evening after evening did I hear complaints from the tenants, days after the evictions, of how the emergency men, protected and assisted by the police, had been going into these poor people's houses, tearing down the roof and rafters, tearing up the flooring, taking away every particle of timber they could find to the police station for firewood. Two or three nights ago one of the tenants described to me how his house was gutted in this fashion, and how the police and emergency men hurled a great rock against a partition dividing two rooms, shattered it, and the timber was carried away by one of the Olphert carts to the police barracks. I went to the barracks afterwards and saw the remnants of the partition thus wantonly destroyed. It is bad enough if the emergency men do these things, but we do not expect the police to aid and abet the landlords' agents in such proceedings. I have full particulars of the assault on Madge McGally, felled to the ground by a policeman's baton.

I saw the wound on her head from which she suffered for many days. Again, there was the case of Neil Doogan of Ballinish, not the man of the same name who has just been imprisoned, whose wife was assaulted by an emergency man, and yet Mr. Cameron would take no notice, although Mr. Harrison swore an information against the emergency man whom he saw strike her. Mr. O'Brien also, the member for Monaghan, swore he saw an emergency man strike her on the breast with his closed fist, and a serjeant of police saw it too, but beyond pulling the emergency man away would do nothing. Such assaults as these are countenanced by the police, and it is right they should be brought clearly before the people of this country. I do not want to unduly prolong this discussion, but a great deal might be said in connection with the terrible scenes of suffering we have witnessed at Falcarragh during our stay there. I think at any rate these specimens of the illegal actions of the police we have adduced demand some explanation from the Government, and amply justify my hon. Friend in making his Motion. I am sorry that the fact of my appeal has prevented him from taking a wider and larger view of the question, for I think it is time the whole of these transactions should be clearly and vividly brought before the country, and the sooner the better. At any rate, I have endeavoured to place these few facts before the House, not because they are the only facts by any means, but because they are some of the more sober facts, and indicate the state of police terrorism that exists from one end of Donegal to the other. It is idle for the police to attempt to frighten Englishmen from going there. They may bring charges of conspiracy against me and others, but I hope that the English people will not be intimidated from going to Ireland to see for themselves the facts of these cases. That is the intention of the Government and the Police, for Mr. Mackay, the Crown Prosecutor in the case against myself and Mr. Harrison, wound up his remarks by an insolent threat against visitors appealing to the Magistrates from such a sentence as would not only deter us from continuing the duties we considered were enforced upon us, but which would also frighten other

English people from visiting that part of Ireland. It may suit the Government to try and frighten away English people; the Chief Secretary may think his black deeds are best done in darkness without witnesses, but, at any rate, some of the truth shall be known throughout the length and breadth of this country. It is because discussions of this kind are, perhaps, the most efficient means of bringing the facts to the notice of the people of England through the Press that I rejoice the hon. Member has brought these proceedings at Falcarragh before the notice of the House.

*MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton): I cannot help thinking the Government must feel that they, and they alone, are responsible for the discussion which has taken place this evening. What is the case, about which there is no doubt? The police, thinking they were following the instructions received from the right hon. Gentleman and those whom he trusts, and evidently not wrong in so thinking, from the statement made to the House by the Law Officer of the Crown, took on themselves to prosecute a gentleman named Harrison, under charges worded in the gravest language, of which the only overt act, the only act attempted to be proved, was, that Mr. Harrison had offered food to the people whom it is alleged had re-taken possession of the holdings which had been theirs. That is a matter upon which the House can judge. It stands to the country, that in Ireland it has become an offence, an offence which warrants the police in summarily arresting an individual, that he should have given bread or food to a man whom the Government consider criminal. How long has this been a criminal act in England or in Wales? If this man had been a felon, and his felony undoubted, since when under the common law, or under the statute law, has it been an offence warranting arrest, to give him food? I submit it is a monstrous proposition. There must be a perversion of all ideas of justice in the land, a distortion of all legal principles, or no policemen would be such idiots as to take action in such a fashion, and no law officer would be mad enough to endorse what they had done. The learned Solicitor General speaking with reference to the watching by the police,

said, if it be alleged to be an illegal action, it could be tested; but how can it be tested? By what process? If I have spies set upon me, unless I can prove conspiracy against them, by what process known to the law can I take action against them? If the spying that is pursued is such that I can allege that it is likely to lead to a breach of the peace, it is possible I can make some summary application, but short of that what action can I bring, what indictment would lie? How can it be tested? The way in which it is tested is that there is a series of provocations which sometimes end in resistance, and then the police use force with great brutality on one hand, and send the unfortunates to gaol on the other hand. There can be nothing more shocking than the state of feeling existing among the police at Falcarragh as shown by the conduct of these prosecutions. The Solicitor General says the act of Mr. Harrison was a thoughtless act, but thoughtlessness is hardly criminality. The law officers in Ireland, who had the same opportunity of judging the nature of the act as the magistrates, instead of treating it as a thoughtless act, for which Mr. Harrison might have been subjected to a warning, treated it as a criminal act for which the man was prosecuted on a grave charge of conspiracy for which he might have been sent to gaol for six months. If this was a thoughtless act then it should have been so recognized by the hon. and learned Gentleman's colleague in Dublin, and the proceedings should have stopped short at the unfortunate action of the police, and the prosecution by the law officers should not have been added. It is unfortunate that we should occupy our time in this House discussing proceedings which have taken place in Courts of Justice, but it must not be forgotten that these Courts of Justice are special Courts of Justice created for the express purpose of dealing with special kinds of offences never known before, and manufactured solely, both the Courts and the offences, by a Statute drawn by the right hon. and learned Gentlemen who now have the enforcement of it; and these Courts of Justice have been so constituted as to lay them open to the gravest suspicion, the magistrates and police acting together; and magistrates chased out of

one country for conduct unworthy of honourable men have been considered worthy to sit and sentence men to gaol on charges of having broken the law. I have no wish to occupy time, but I desire the country should understand why I vote for this Motion for Adjournment, if it should be carried to a Division; that it is a new thing that the giving of bread to a man, however wrong that man might be, however criminal that man might be, is to be made an offence for which the giver might be sent to gaol, and still more do I vote for the Motion when the man to whom the bread was given is admitted to have been a wretched starving tenant, who had crept back to his own homestead, from which hard times and hard conditions of life had driven him.

*THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): I should have preferred to have given way to the right hon. Gentleman, because my hon. and learned Friend the Solicitor General having spoken, nobody else on this Bench has the necessary knowledge of details in reference to matters that have occurred in Donegal to enable him to reply. But as the right hon. Gentleman prefers, and I think wisely, to speak after me rather than before me, I will not interfere with his wishes. The hon. Gentleman who has just sat down appears to have entirely mistaken the ground on which the Government object to discussions of proceedings pending in Courts of Law. It is not that the Government fear publicity and discussion. What we object to is the sort of maimed discussion which necessarily occurs if hon. Gentlemen are allowed to raise topics in the House in regard to pending proceedings, and which we are not allowed to reply to because the matters are still *sub judice*. You, Sir, have had occasion three or four times to call hon. Members to order for trespassing on matters not relevant to the Motion, and which had close connection with matters still under consideration by Courts of Law, but though stopped from going into details, that did not prevent them from making insinuations against the Government with regard to such matters as the cheering of the Plan of Campaign—insinuations which are freely made use of in controversy outside the House, and which hon. Mem-

bers no doubt think will find their way into the Press if repeated in the House—but to which I am precluded from replying by the ruling of the Chair. That is the reason, and the only reason, why I object to this discussion. Personally, I like discussions on Irish matters. It is not when Parliament is sitting, but when it is not sitting, that I am afraid of the speeches and criticisms of hon. Members. They may say what they like when I am able to reply to them; but it is the reckless and irresponsible utterances on platforms where there is no one acquainted with facts to answer them that I objected to; not to utterances in this House. So far as the Irish Government are concerned, I can assure the hon. Gentlemen we have no objection either to the number or the character of the debates they may raise in the House, provided always they are debates into which we can enter freely and not with our hands tied by the circumstance that they concern matters still to be determined by a Court of Law. Two very eminent legal authorities appear to me to have made strange blunders in their law in the course of proceedings this evening. The ex-Solicitor General uttered a good many sentiments on the criminal law which I think, though I speak most humbly, showed that he is not so intimately acquainted with that branch of legal procedure as he, by universal acknowledgment is with other and more difficult branches of the law. The hon. and learned Gentleman appeared to think that it was a peculiarity of Irish law, administered by the present Government, that a man cheering a prisoner should in any circumstances be regarded as guilty of an offence. I recommend the hon. and learned Gentleman, when a suitable occasion offers, to go at the head of an excited crowd and cheer by name some prisoner coming out of Bow Street. I think I can promise the hon. and learned Gentleman that under the English Law he might find himself brought very summarily before the magistrates, and if it could be shown that his conduct was likely to lead to a breach of the peace, or to bring the law into contempt, I may also promise him that the magistrates will not take a very lenient view of his offence. So much for the hon. and learned Gentleman. I go now to

another eminent legal authority. The hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh), though not technically learned, has a large experience in these matters, and he appeared to regard it as being contrary to law to interfere with any man who supplies bread to a person guilty of an offence. The hon. Member asked under what law in England or Ireland could it be illegal to supply bread or the necessities of life to a man, even if he be guilty of a criminal offence. Giving bread by itself, of course, is not an illegal offence in Ireland or anywhere else, but giving bread for the purpose of assisting a man in committing an offence is, I apprehend, an offence against the law both in England and in Ireland. Is that proposition denied?

*MR. BRADLAUGH: My point is that no case is known to the English Law in which the giving of bread to a criminal, either before or after committing a crime, is held to be an offence.

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I distinctly traverse the statement just made. I repeat that I do not believe there is a lawyer who will contradict me when I say that to give bread or anything else to a man for the purpose of enabling him to break the law, is an offence against the law in every civilized country in the world. This brings me to the conduct of the police in arresting Mr. Harrison. Mr. Harrison was acquitted. The magistrates took a lenient view of the circumstances and acquitted him.

MR. CONYBEARE: The magistrates said the Crown had not made out their case. [*Cries of "Order, order!"*] I rise to order.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member has no right to interrupt, and should not continue his remarks when I am standing and calling him to order. Mr. Conybeare on a point of order.

MR. CONYBEARE: I only wished to correct a wrong explanation of circumstances within my knowledge. The magistrates distinctly stated in their judgment, not that they were taking a lenient view of the case, but that the Crown had failed to prove their case. That was on the charge of having given bread to those poor people, enabling them to break the law which, the right hon. Gentleman says, is both in this country and in Ireland an illegal offence.

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not know what the hon. Member considers the interruption in order; he makes a fresh speech when I was not referring to him, directly or indirectly. I take it that it is admitted, or not denied, that the law of the hon. Member for Northampton is bad law. (No, no). Well, I will leave to those of a contrary opinion the opportunity to maintain it, and come to what I may call the ethics of the case. Was the constable justified or not in arresting Mr. Harrison? We must assume that Mr. Harrison was innocent, because he has been acquitted. But was there a *prima facie* case for the arrest? The whole body of tenants who had been evicted on the Olphert estate in January, by one consent, when the hon. Member for Camborne appeared on the scene, retook forcible possession. [No, no]. Well, illegal possession of their houses. In so doing there could not be any doubt that they were acting apparently in concert for the purpose of setting at naught the decrees of a competent court. No one denies that. Mr. Harrison appeared on the scene and proposed to give bread to one of the tenants who had acted in this illegal manner, and he, in the opinion of the police, did so for the purpose of enabling the tenant successfully to carry out that illegal operation. Has that fact been denied by Mr. Harrison? The allegation is that Mr. Harrison acted purely from charitable motives. I do not doubt that Mr. Harrison is probably a young man of charitable instincts and wishes, but his charity in this case was of a very selective character. Did Mr. Harrison give bread to any person who was not engaged in the illegal proceedings? Was this part of a general charitable scheme to relieve poor tenants in that part of Donegal? Is there anything in the behaviour of Mr. Harrison or his friends and associates which would lead the policemen to believe that Mr. Harrison was actuated by purely charitable motives. The policeman warned Mr. Harrison that his action was illegal.

*MR. ATHERLEY-JONES: How?

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am not traversing the action of the Court; I am only saying that the policeman had a *prima facie* case, and that is all that is required to justify him. The policeman told Mr. Harrison he was acting

illegally, and asked him for his name. Mr. Harrison refused to give his name.

MR. CONYBEARE: No.

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: He did refuse to give it, and it was only on his refusal to give his name that he was arrested and taken before the magistrate. The magistrate suggested that Mr. Harrison should be let out on bail, but Mr. Harrison having taken for his guide, philosopher, and friend the Member for Camborne, the Member for Camborne advised him not to give bail. That was nobody's affair but Mr. Harrison's, and neither the police, nor the magistrates, nor Her Majesty's Government are to be held responsible for the advice which the hon. Member for Camborne chose to give his friend. The only imprisonment, therefore, which Mr. Harrison suffered was because he was fool enough to take the advice of the hon. Member for Camborne. I have every hope, however, that as Mr. Harrison grows older he will grow wiser, and if he chooses his associates with care his course through life may be an honourable and a useful one, and we can only sympathize with him in this case because his openly expressed wish for martyrdom was not gratified. The hon. Member for Camborne is deeply indignant because of the espionage, as he calls it, which the police are alleged to exercise over strangers travelling in disturbed parts of the country. That formed the main part of his speech to-night. He stated that one police officer deposed on oath that it was the practice of the police to observe the behaviour and physiognomy of any person who came into the country, and if he did not look respectable they followed him, and the Member for Camborne was naturally indignant that after that definition of the duties of the police, he should have been followed himself. Is the hon. Member really of opinion that where there is an illegal conspiracy of a serious kind going on in a country, which has led to wide-spread disaster, to the injury of the police themselves, as well as of the tenants and landlords, and where the police are of opinion that persons of influence coming in the country—because in Donegal the mere fact that a man is a Member of Parliament is still supposed to give him character and influence—that such persons have either for their object, or as

a necessary consequence of their action, the furthering of an illegal conspiracy. I will put it to the hon. Member himself whether the police would not have failed in their duty if they had not made it their business to watch the proceedings of such persons. If the hon. Member, or any Member of this House, thinks I am going to suggest that the police went beyond their duty in this case, I can give them no such satisfaction. The police did their duty, and they would have been wanting in their duty if they had done anything less than what they have done. In speaking of the attacks made upon the police, may I remind the House that these men are carrying on most difficult and critical work in a country practically in a state of revolution. I observe no less than three right hon. Gentlemen opposite eagerly taking notes of that observation, with the obvious intention of using it for their own purposes. I am grieved to interfere with their benevolent purposes, but if they had given me half a moment to explain, I should have saved them the trouble of making the notes. What I said I adhere to. I say that the part of Donegal we are dealing with is in a state of revolution. [*Cries of "No; that is not what you said."*] Who has made it so? [An hon. MEMBER: You have made it so.] The Plan of Campaign has made it so. [*"No; the battering ram."*] The allies of the Members who introduced the Plan of Campaign have made it so. But I do not think right hon. Gentlemen opposite need be agitated about the result. Even in this particular Falcarragh district the worst times are over. The disorder, an unfortunate disorder, which has reached during the last few months almost the point of revolution, is in process of being brought to an end, although if anything could promote the continuation of that state of things, it is the openly-expressed sympathy which Members of this House give to an illegal conspiracy, by moving adjournments of this kind we have heard, and by supporting them by their speeches. Hon. Members may perhaps think that they are merely criticizing the action of the magistrates or of the policeman.

MR. MAC NEILL (Donegal, S.): No, your action.

Mr. A. J. Balfour

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I tell you that you are in fact throwing the whole weight of your political reputation and of your great name upon the side of disorder and upon the side of conspiracy. You are fostering it, and if you are not fostering it knowingly your ignorance, at all events, is culpable. I have often defended the police before, from what I deemed to be unjust attacks, but I say without hesitation on the present occasion, that while I do not believe the police of Ireland have ever been more unjustly accused, so they have never had a more difficult task to perform than has fallen to their lot during the last three months in this corner of Donegal. They have performed their task, I believe, with the greatest regard for law, with the greatest temper, and the greatest discretion. They have performed it under extreme difficulties, and I am grateful to the hon. and learned Member who opened the debate for this, if for no other cause—that he has given me an opportunity of publicly stating in this House my high opinion of their conduct.

SIR W. HARCOURT (Derby): The right hon. Gentleman seems to have been very much surprised that I should desire to want to hear what he had to say in defence of the Irish Government on this subject. I must admit that I never heard a speech from the Minister who was to pacify Ireland, except with admiration of the spirit which he brings to bear upon the task of pacification, and when the Minister who every month has pacified Ireland gets up and states in the House of Commons that it is in a condition of revolution—

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I noticed the note which the right hon. Gentleman was making of my statement, and I took occasion to correct it at the time. Perhaps he will allow me to correct it again. I did not say that.

SIR W. HARCOURT: Well, Sir, I will recite in the presence of the House what took place. The right hon. Gentleman stated that the country was in a condition of revolution, and when he saw that a note was being taken, he tried to get out of it and said it was in a corner of Donegal.

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: As the right hon. Gentleman has represented me as saying one thing with a particular meaning and immediately afterwards

pervverting that meaning, perhaps he will allow me to point out that, from the context of my observations, of which he took a note, that must have been my meaning. I was discussing and defending the conduct of the police in a particular barony of Donegal, and it was that barony alone to which I referred.

SIR W. HARCOURT: I shall be very happy to settle with the right hon. Gentleman whether I am to speak before him or to follow him, but I hope that we shall not pursue the inconvenient practice of both speaking together. I prefer now to refer to what the right hon. Gentleman said, and not to what he meant. The House has heard what the Chief Secretary said, but he has now got down to a revolution in a barony. Let us then proceed to consider who is the author of that revolution in a barony, and how far the barony is justified in the course it is taking. This is the line which it now appears the right hon. Gentleman is desirous of taking upon this subject. There was another reason why I waited, I did not expect the person who was going to answer my hon. and learned Friend the Member for Stockton (Sir H. Davey), would be the Chief Secretary for Ireland. There was another Gentleman sitting by him, the Solicitor General for England, who I thought would have been called upon to answer the legal portion of my hon. and learned friend's remarks. But the right hon. Gentleman, bold as brass, prompted by the Solicitor General, ventured, with that courtesy with which he usually treats the House, to speak of the blunders in law of the hon. and learned Member for Stockton. Now, Sir, we have had curious law laid down by the Solicitor General for England before now, and we have not found that his first-hand law is very good, but I venture to say, that his second-hand law, frittered through the Secretary for Ireland, is the most arrant nonsense. That is my reply to the statement of the Secretary for Ireland as to the blunders in law of my hon. and learned Friend, the Member for Stockton. If the Solicitor General for England is prepared to maintain the ridiculous proposition of law that we have heard from the mouth of the Secretary for Ireland, let him have the courage to get up himself and make the statement in the presence

of many hon. Members of the House who are in a position to refute it, and not prompt the Secretary for Ireland to make the extraordinary statements we have from him. Well, Sir, putting aside all this bluster of the right hon. Gentleman, and considering that the charge made against the hon. Member for the Camborne Division is one of illegality and outrage, the only answer the right hon. Gentleman has attempted has been couched in the language of insult and insolence. That is my opinion. An answer more insolent I have never heard. But we had a curious interlocutory address from the Leader of the House, who, although a little out of order as I thought, informed us that it has been the universal practice of the House never to refer to legal proceedings that were pending. The right hon. Gentleman's memory has failed him on this occasion. One of the most memorable debates which ever took place in the House of Commons—a debate in which its greatest members took part—was on a question of legal proceedings which were pending. In the great debate which occurred in 1844 Mr. Macaulay, Serjeant Wilde, (afterwards Lord Truro), and Lord J. Russell took part, and condemned the conduct of a Court of law in the O'Connell case while an appeal was pending in the House of Lords. We are now approaching a period when such rules of debate as may be necessary for the protection of the liberties of the people are growing narrower and narrower. I shall say nothing myself in regard to the legal proceedings pending in this case. I will only point out that what the right hon. Gentleman supposes to have been the practice in former days was exactly the opposite. What was the charge which the Secretary for Ireland was called on to meet, and how has he met it? It is said that the conduct of the police was oppressive, irregular, and illegal in this barony of Donegal. How has the right hon. Gentleman met that charge? What is it the police are said to have done? First of all an objection has been taken to the watching by the police of people upon insufficient grounds. What is the peculiar and ingenious defence offered by the Solicitor General for Ireland? He is a very careful man, and he laid down the law correctly. He said "If

you think it is likely that a man is going to commit an illegal act, why then you may watch him." That was the doctrine still more particularly laid down by the right hon. Gentleman the member for the Isle of Thanet (Mr. J. Lowther). If you think a man is likely under some circumstances to cheer for the Plan of Campaign, the police, according to my right hon. Friend, are justified in watching him and going into a house after him. Will the Solicitor General, will the Home Secretary say that these are the instructions to the police in England? There is going to be a public meeting about this day month somewhere near Epsom Heath and my right hon. Friend may be present. Other persons will be there who may reasonably be suspected of being likely to make illegal bets or to enter upon some gambling games prohibited by the law. Is it the doctrine of my right hon. Friend or of the Solicitor General that the police should begin to watch those men at once and to enter houses wherever they go? And yet that is the doctrine which is to cover the action of the police in Donegal. The doctrine is perfectly monstrous. Everybody knows that if the police were allowed to do such things in England the whole country would be in a state of revolution. That is the first allegation, and I venture to say that the answer which has been given to it is absurd. What was the case of Mr. Harrison? Mr. Harrison was arrested for giving food to certain people. The Secretary for Ireland, prompted by his adviser, says that these people were guilty of illegal acts. But the Solicitor-General for Ireland did not say that. These men had been evicted; they returned to their houses at night. They were in the position of a person taking illegal possession perhaps upon a claim of title. The men may have committed a trespass, but they were guilty of no criminal act at all. Why, then, should the supplying of them with food be treated as an act for which a man is to be arrested? Suppose that a man returns to an empty house from which he has been evicted, and that a publican sends him a mutton chop and a pot of beer, is the publican to be arrested for doing so? Such a proposition would be perfectly ridiculous when it came to be examined by the light of the facts.

Sir W. Harcourt

Would the Solicitor General for Ireland maintain for a moment that a publican who sent in meat and drink under such circumstances was guilty of an offence? Then, if there be no ground for the assumption that an offence had been committed, what becomes of the case? It is the fact, no doubt, that at this moment there exists in Donegal a reign of terror deliberately created by the Government. The method the Government have followed has been to tell the police to do what they like, and the Secretary for Ireland will defend them in this House—*per fas aut nefas*. That is enough to make a revolution in a corner of Donegal or anywhere else. That is a course which the English police would not be allowed to take for a day. What is the object with which this policy is pursued? There is a way in which peace may be made in Donegal as elsewhere, namely, the way in which it has been made already by the hon. and learned Member for Hackney. But is that the object of the Government? No, Sir, the object of the Government appears to be that which is described in the letters which we have read, and which I must say I read with indignation and disgust—from the hon. Gentleman the Member for South Tyrone (Mr. T. W. Russell), who is calling on the landlords to root out these tenants, and is calling on the Government and rich men in England to subsidize the landlords in Ireland in order that that may be accomplished. That is their policy. It is sought by these illegal and brutal acts on the part of the police to trample down the combinations by which the tenants seek to defend themselves, instead of looking to a policy of conciliation and to arbitration—which might have been had and which would be had if the Government desired it. On the contrary, they have determined, as between landlords and tenants, to encourage that war to the knife which the hon. Member for South Tyrone is always preaching between the two classes, and it is on that account that I say that in my opinion, by encouraging the police in Donegal, they have brought about in this barony that which the Secretary for Ireland has described as a revolution.

*MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): I am not a lawyer, but there is one point which I think has been over-

looked in this House in regard to the case that has been raised. The charge against the tenants was a charge of retaking forcible possession, and that, I apprehend, is a criminal proceeding, and therefore the police very properly held that Mr. Harrison was aiding and abetting a criminal action. No doubt Mr. Harrison was acquitted and these people were only declared to be in illegal possession, but that much, I think, may be said regarding the action of the police in the matter. I am not going to enter into the law, but I do know something of the common sense and the facts of the case. The Member for Derby has read my letters with indignation and disgust. Well, I am quite content that it should be so. I can inform the right hon. Member for Derby that a good many people read his speeches with indignation and disgust. Now, Sir, there is no use in hon. Members accusing me of going to Donegal as the agent of the landlords. It would be more becoming of them to refute my statements in the letters which have been referred to. What I venture to submit is that there is not a single paragraph in my letters to which a successful answer has been made in this House or in the Press. My case is simply this. The hon. Member for the Camborne Division talks about the police watching English visitors in Falcarragh. During the week I was there I met English tourists driving in every direction and speaking to tenants without any police interference whatever. On Sunday, April 14, the houses were taken possession of, and hon. Members should mark that the retaking of possession is part of the Plan of Campaign. Possession was not retaken by the tenants evicted in January, but on the 14th April the hon. Member for Camborne division and Mr. Harrison arrived, and the houses including those from which the tenants had been evicted in January were re-occupied. The hon. Member for Camborne and Mr. Harrison complained that they were viewed with suspicion. Well, did not their action constitute fair ground for suspicion on the part of the police that they were encouraging the Plan of Campaign? If they were going about the district cheering for the Plan of Campaign can they complain that the police regarded them with suspicion as associated

with the Plan? Did any one of the Gentlemen concerned, except the Member for Camborne, ever cross the landlord's threshold? Not one of them, except the hon. Member, made any attempt to get the facts from the landlord, to investigate what the rents were, what the valuation was, or any of the circumstances of the dispute. They were content to take the facts as they got them from the authors of the Plan of Campaign. If I was not followed I, at any rate, made no overtures to the police. They were at perfect liberty to follow me if they chose. I did nothing that I should object to have written on all the walls of every town in England. If the police did not follow me I suppose they came to the conclusion that they might be more usefully employed. It is also said that the emergency men insulted English visitors. When I attempted to go upon certain lands—those of Bernard M'Nulty—an emergency man stopped me, as he had a perfect right to do. I went off the land when I was ordered off, and an English tourist has no better right than myself to be on such lands. This district of Donegal has been for months in a state of agitation. I have done my best to get at the facts. I have gone to the landlord, to the tenant, to the authorities, and tried to find out where the equities lay. I should have been glad if the Motion for the Adjournment had been made, not upon the arrest of Mr. Harrison or the hon. Member for Camborne, but with the object of getting the whole of the facts out upon the floor of this House, and if that were done it could be proved conclusively that the equities are entirely with the landlord, and I could have shown that the tenants have in many instances been compelled to go into the Plan, that the rents are not only fair, but in some instances excessively low.

*MR. SPEAKER: The remark I have made to other hon. Members would apply to the observations the hon. Member is making as to the Plan of Campaign on a particular estate.

*MR. T. W. RUSSELL: I have just finished, Sir. I should have welcomed, I say, such an inquiry on the floor of this House instead of that which is now being made.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE (Mid Lothian): I do not perceive that

Her Majesty's Government have any intention to favour the House with their views of the law as affecting the questions that have been raised, but I confess I consider the subject so important that I have thought it absolutely necessary to take an accurate note of the circumstances of the case. I generally regard such Motions as this of the hon. Member for Durham with prejudice, but having listened to the speech of the hon. Member and to the debate which has followed, I thank him for having made the Motion, and I thank your, Sir, for having confined the discussion within its proper limits, so that we know the points we are discussing, and are not led to deal with far wider questions which undoubtedly it would have been within the prerogative and power of of this House to deal with. The case stands thus: The Secretary for Ireland has described not the whole of Ireland, but a particular portion of the country, as being practically in a state of revolution. I did not understand the right hon. Gentleman to apply these words to the whole of Ireland, but I did understand that the words were applied to something more than a particular barony—a contraction of limits which by degrees he ultimately achieved. But I beg to observe that the right hon. Gentleman did not take sufficient note of my industry in marking down expressions that I thought material—an industry which I have exerted on former occasions rather to the dissatisfaction of the right hon. Gentleman and the Government, and which I exerted this evening when the right hon. Gentleman said the Plan of Campaign had devastated not a particular barony, but the entire country side.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Hear, hear.

MR. GLADSTONE: That view is interesting when it is brought into comparison and contrast with the vaunting speeches made by organs of the Government, on all occasions when it appears convenient, with respect to the manner in which they have put down disorder in Ireland and re-established peace and comfort among its people. But now I go to what I deem a more important declaration of the right hon. Gentleman. The right hon. Gentleman has said that the police on this occasion did no more than their duty. But this is exactly what was said in the case of

Mitchelstown when the action of the police was illegal, and when nobody committed any illegality but the agents of the Government, and when that illegality of the Government resulted in the loss of three Irish lives. I must tell the right hon. Gentleman that there has begun to be perceptible in the action of the police on certain occasions in Ireland and in certain districts a tendency to excess and aggression and illegality which is deeply to be lamented, but can not be wondered at, because the police take their tone from the speeches of Members of the Government. The right hon. Gentleman has laid down the law for us all, he has expounded what is an offence and what is not an offence, has found fault with one, at least, of the most eminent lawyers in the House for gross blunders of law, and has given the House a still higher idea of the extravagant conception which the right hon. gentleman has formed of his own knowledge and ability in the department of law. Then the right hon. Gentleman was compassionate upon the youth of Mr. Harrison, and said that when Mr. Harrison grew older he would grow wiser, and indicated the point of age at which it might be expected that Mr. Harrison would exhibit the same kind of wisdom and the same kind of modesty which the right hon. Gentleman himself exhibits every time he speaks in the House. I will not taunt the right hon. gentleman as to the possibility—for it is a supposition so extravagant that I hardly dare venture to state it—the possibility that he, too, may grow a little wiser with age. It would be almost an insult to a man of his superhuman endowments to express such a hope, and I will pass on to the general case and to the doctrines which the right hon. gentleman has laid down. We have a right to look to the Executive Government as the guardians of our lives and liberties. In the first instance the Judicature of the country is the power to which we have recourse and in which we have confidence, but we have a right to look also to the Executive as the guardians of private personal right and liberty. I do not think that any impartial man can have listened to the debate to night without arriving sorrowfully at the conclusion that liberty in Ireland, as affected by the Government

and its immediate agents, does not enjoy the guarantees that belong to it in England. To talk of equality of rights is a mockery. To talk of the impartial administration of the law as between man and man is going in contravention of the plainest facts of the case, and the doctrines which are laid down by the Government as applicable to Ireland are doctrines which they dare not for one moment preach or attempt to enforce in England, in Scotland, or in Wales. With respect to Mr. Harrison, the hon. Member who last spoke ingeniously added a point to the defence made by the learned Solicitor-General for Ireland. Mr. Harrison did no act of force, and none is alleged against him. He did not enter the house of which the evicted tenant had retaken possession. The door of the house was opened to him, and he placed a loaf inside. For so doing, and after refusing to give his name, Mr. Harrison was arrested, and that arrest was justified by the Chief Secretary. Now I want to know whether this is the measure of British liberties or not. The Chief Secretary and the Government have been challenged to say under what law that arrest is justified. The right hon. Gentleman, I think, said, and the Member for South Tyrone undoubtedly said, that a criminal act had been committed by the tenants in retaking possession. The forcible retaking of possession would, under the Crimes Act of 1887, be a criminal act. The Member for Tyrone said that was the charge. But that was not the charge. The Solicitor General made no such charge, but said that possession was illegally retaken. The learned Gentleman did not say that possession was forcibly retaken. In that case the offence was a civil offence, and the giving of the loaf in aid of a civil offence was nothing more than a civil wrong. Thus, upon the issue of the Government themselves, this gentleman was arrested and treated as a prisoner because he had aided in the commission of a civil wrong, or done an act subsidiary to aiding and abetting a civil wrong. Would any man doing precisely the same thing in England be arrested? And, again, I ask under what statute or on what principal of law it is that a person doing an act which taken at the worst is but the aiding and abetting of a civil wrong is liable to be

laid hold of by the police and carried off in confinement before a magistrate. Sir, this is the doctrine of Her Majesty's Government as it stands before us. Of course, the right hon. Gentleman opposite has embraced the whole question and found no difficulty. He is always ready to lay down the law, whatever case may arise. From the stores of his legal learning the right hon. Gentleman can always produce declarations of principle which will cover everything. Then the hon. Member for Tyrone has taken the emergency men under his protection and made a complete answer to the charge against them, of which the Government took no notice. But the hon. Member has misstated the charge made against the emergency men. The charge was contained in the declaration of the emergency man himself that he turned visitors out of the lane and off the common footpath. That was deemed unworthy of consideration by Her Majesty's Government. Of course, they are not responsible for the conduct of emergency men; but these men are acting under the protection of the Government, and I should like to know the opinion of the Government on the conduct described by the emergency man himself. Then there is another case of which the right hon. Gentleman has not taken the smallest notice. It has been asked, what right had the four policemen to be in the cottage of the old woman? She had three emergency men to confront. Were they so desperately afraid of that old woman? She was the only force they had to face. The Government have given no answer to that question. The House is entitled to know whether the police were or were not justified in finding their way into that cottage when there was no probability of their meeting resistance. These events involve the revival of a controversy which was settled 50 years ago, in the time of Mr. Drummond. It had been the practice of the Irish police to execute civil process, and it was a constant occurrence unhappily—most common and habitual in Irish history—that the agents of the law in the course of their employment continually committed breaches of the law. In the time of Mr. Drummond it was determined that the police should take no part in evictions, except in the case of violence actual or immediately apprehended. This is a

recurrence to the old doctrine. An old woman, and nobody else, was found in the house, and if it is a recurrence to the old doctrine that it is the business of the police to be made the agents of evictions, then I can only say that we have gone back fifty years under the present Government in the application of administrative principles to the Government of Ireland. Now, one word with regard to watching, or "espionage" it was called, it appears to me most properly and most accurately. Those who defend the espionage by the police upon the hon. Member for Camborne have said—"Surely under such and such circumstances it was their duty to do watch." It is not a question of mere watching; it is a question of following up, of invading his privacy, of listening to his conversation, of taking down his words of conversation, of permitting no communication with any person except in the view of the police, who record all his words. Why was the term "espionage" invented if it was not to describe such a process as that? For that process the Government have no words except the words of praise. And all this is to be done, not under the authority of a responsible officer or Minister, but of a common policeman, who thinks, not that a crime has been committed, even in the sense of crime under the Crimes Act, but that a certain person is in the view of this policeman likely to commit a crime. Upon that presumption in the mind of the man this offensive process is established, with regard to which I can only say that such pranks could not be played by the police (except in Ireland) upon any Englishman of spirit, without considerable breaches of the law, and without summary punishment of such gross impertinence and such monstrous iniquity. I am taking these matters entirely as they occurred in debate; I do not pretend to pronounce a final judgment upon them. Inspector Herd—I rather think he was acting on his own authority—breaks open the house at five o'clock in the morning, and arrests the inhabitants of the house, or a portion of those inhabitants, without any warning. The right hon. Gentleman heard that statement, and he did not think it worthy of the smallest notice. It is covered by his declaration that the police have done no more than their

duty—that the police did no more than their duty in breaking open the house at five o'clock in the morning without a warrant, and arresting the parties inhabiting the house. Sir, I say it is time that the people of England began to look to their own liberties if doctrines such as these are to be practised. This we can say, that such doctrines will not be unnoticed, but shall be proclaimed before the world both in this House and out of this House. I have endeavoured to describe the position taken up by the right hon. Gentleman in regard to these points. I say we have a right to expect of the Government that in putting down illegality they shall use legal means. And I say this, that the speeches of right hon. Gentlemen, and the conduct of the Irish Government through its police, are marked by a sad indifference to private rights and to the liberties of the subject. They proclaim themselves the promoters of law and order, but they are themselves amongst the most dangerous foes to the tranquillity of the country as well as to the loyalty of the people.

*THE SOLICITOR GENERAL (Sir E. CLARKE, Plymouth): Mr. Speaker, the charge which the right hon. Gentleman brought against the Government in his closing sentences, is, and is meant to be, a grave and serious charge. He has charged the Government, in dealing with these affairs in Ireland, with not stopping at the use of illegal measures, and says that in disregard of public law and private right, it carries out the work which it has set before it. It is a grave charge, for which there is not the smallest shadow of foundation, and the defence which my right hon. Friend has made for himself and for the Government of Ireland this evening is a defence that rests upon the law, and is justified by the law. He did not go one single inch beyond the law of this country, as well as of Ireland, in the defence which he made of the action of the police in Ireland. The right hon. Gentleman has complained that no English lawyer from this Bench has spoken early in the debate, in reply to the speech of the hon. and learned Gentleman who represents Stockton. Well, Sir, I was responsible for the speech for the moment being left without answer. I confess that I did not think it worth while. I do not

think it worth while. The hon. and learned Member is not very familiar with the criminal law, although no doubt he is one of the greatest lawyers in this country in certain departments of jurisprudence. The honorable and learned Member for Stockton made a speech which was not directly referable in many of its parts to the Irish question.

With regard to the details of what has taken place in Donegal, I am not of course familiar, and I thought it was not desirable, so far as I was concerned, to speak at once in a debate which I hoped would come back into a more legitimate channel of discussion—the discussion of that which actually took place at Donegal. I noted that one part of the honorable and learned Member's speech was directed to the question of the law of conspiracy, and he proceeded to say that it was an outrageous thing that Mr. Harrison should be arrested and charged with conspiracy, and that there should be given in evidence against him the speeches of men whose names he did not know, and acts which were committed when he was not in the country. The conspiracy, far reaching in its mischief, has existed in Donegal for a long time. A man comes into it who has never known any of the actors in it before, who has heard nothing of its details, but if he has a knowledge of that conspiracy, and of the aims and objects to which it is directed, and of the history of its progress, and knowing the purposes of those who were the movers of the conspiracy, joins them in endeavouring to carry those purposes into effect, he is as much guilty as if he had been associated with the original foundation of the conspiracy. And the hon. and learned Member for Stockton knows that, I dare say. The only question that has to be dealt with is this. Did the person know the nature of the organization to which he was giving his co-operation, and knowing that was he taking part in that organization, and working towards its purpose? The other two points of the hon. and learned Member's speech referred, one to the giving of a loaf of bread, and the other to the police following about. Now, as to the giving the loaf of bread, it has been said in this House, that the giving of a loaf of bread is a criminal offence by the law of Ireland? My answer is that it is. The giving of

a loaf of bread as an act of charity to a person simply for the purpose of relieving that person's hunger is an act which nowhere would be a criminal offence; but a loaf of bread given to a man in order to enable him to carry out an illegal and a criminal purpose is in itself an illegality, and a crime according to the law of England; and according, so far as I am aware, the law of every civilized country—[Sir H. DAVEY: Would a jury convict?] Would a jury convict? Is that the way in which the hon. and learned Member for Stockton proposes to discuss legal questions in this House? To pretend to discuss it at first as if he were a lawyer dealing with a question of law, and then to turn round and say, "Well, if he were a criminal you could not get a conviction." It is elementary in criminal law that it is an offence to give food to a felon for the purpose of enabling him to escape from justice, after he has committed felony, and if you know that the felony has been committed. Here is a book, handed me by my hon. Friend—"Blackstone's Commentaries," in which it lays down that a man is accessory who gives food, shelter, or victuals for the relief of a felon; or gives the felon assistance, or furnishes a horse or the means of escape, or uses violence to assist his escape, makes him accessory [Sir H. DAVEY: A misdemeanour.]. There are no accessories in misdemeanours as is pretty well known. Everybody who takes part in a misdemeanour is himself a principle misdemeanant. And if it were an offence on the part of these people—[What people?] Hon. Gentlemen do not understand the form of my answer. If it were an offence on the part of these people to occupy these premises, then it was an offence on the part of any person to supply food to them for the purpose of enabling them to carry out that object. It would have been a misdemeanour, and it would have been aiding and abetting in that misdemeanour. The right hon. Gentleman (Sir William Harcourt) is very anxious to attract my attention. I will pay attention to him at once. He has chosen to make an observation in this House, and he repeats it in almost every speech he makes outside, with regard to the "Solicitor General's law." He is always mentioning the word "licens-

ing;" he is so proud upon the question of licensing, and he thinks the Solicitor General so wrong. I cannot go on to say that he thinks himself so right, because he did not venture to express any opinion. I have a very accurate recollection of an amusing incident on the occasion of the debate on the licensing laws. I hope I may be forgiven for mentioning it, but a case was pending with regard to licensing. ["Order."] Very well, I will keep that, and I am sure that some day I will have the opportunity of answering the hon. and learned Member. Now, the other matter was with regard to the following about. It has been said, is it conceivable that it is the atrocious principle of our law that any police-constable, because he imagines that a person may at some time or other commit some sort of an offence, may follow him about here, there, and everywhere. If there is a man whom those who are in charge of the public's peace and order believe to be upon a criminal errand, then it is not only their right but their duty to protect public interests against the crime which they have reason to apprehend. It is in every case a matter of degree. It is not because a man is going to commit some trifling misdemeanour that the police will follow him about everywhere. But if a man comes into a district such as we are dealing with in Donegal, whomsoever he may be, if the police have serious reasons for believing that his presence would light up the dying flame of mischief or disorder in that place, it is their right, and it would be their duty to watch where he went and what he did, and to make themselves acquainted with such exhortations as he gives to the people upon whom his influence may be exercised. One other point has reference to the cheering of of prisoners. I commend to his attention the suggestion of the Chief Secretary that he should try the experiment, when prisoners are being transferred from Bow Street Police Station to the police van, and when a crowd of the prisoners' friends and associates are about, of raising a cry in favour of one of those prisoners, and he would find that he would undoubtedly be seized by the nearest policeman and taken into custody and charged either with attempting a rescue, or with using language tend-

ing to provoke a breach of the peace. Now, there are other matters mentioned by the right hon. Gentleman with which I cannot pretend to deal. They are matters connected with the details of these affairs in Donegal. He wants an explanation with regard to Inspector Hurd; he wants an explanation of the statement as to emergency men having threatened people and turned them into the public road. He wants an explanation as to the four policemen being in the old woman's cottage. With regard to these statements I believe there is no information in the possession of my hon. Friend the Solicitor General for Ireland or of my right hon. Friend. I believe we have no information with regard to them at all. The hon. and learned Gentleman will see that I am speaking with regard to two matters of criminal offence—one the forcible retaking possession of this property, and the other was the conspiracy to defeat the action of the law and the jurisdiction of the Court by concerting action for the retaking of this property. That was the charge made, and whatever else may be said, there can be no doubt of this, that when Mr. Harrison was arrested for refusing to give his name and address, he was taking part, so far as anybody can see, in an action which was then believed, and alleged to be, a criminal action. Mr. Speaker, I have dealt as briefly as possible with these different points. The reason for my rising was that I did not desire at all to leave the matter without giving my best support to my right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary with regard to this subject. These questions of law that I have dealt with are the subject of doctrines, of rules and canons among us, which amply justify my right hon. Friend in the contention he has made to night. I repudiate the charge that the Government in Ireland or elsewhere has resorted to illegitimate means, or has in any respect strained the law, in order to carry out its purposes; but I do claim that it has used the law for the purpose of protecting the liberties and the interests, the true interests, of the people; and I think this House will agree that when it has courageously taken that course it is only doing right in defending here, as my right hon. Friend defended, the men who have loyally and faithfully served it.

The House divided :—Ayes 153 ; Noes 250.—(Division List No. 96).

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

NAVAL DEFENCE BILL.

SECOND READING.

Order for second reading read.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): Mr. Speaker, it is very refreshing after the heated excitement of an Irish debate to fall back into a discussion which only involves an expenditure of £10,000,000 and which is always conducted in a calm and quiet fashion. I respect those gentlemen who devote a great portion of their time and energy to inducing foreign countries to decide their differences by arbitration, and I trust that the seed they are sowing will produce, some time or other, a plentiful crop. But we must look on the actualities of the day. We have not yet reached the millennium. At the present moment the continent of Europe is one great armed camp, and I agree that we ought to provide for our safety by being ready to pay a fair and reasonable amount of what the Chancellor of the Exchequer the other day called fiscal insurance. But we ought to limit the burden of this fiscal insurance to what is sufficient for our safety, and not expend under the guise of fiscal insurance a large amount of money for offensive as well as defensive armaments. I have never known an armament proposed or a war undertaken which was not styled defensive; and in fact, to speak of the proposed increase in the Navy as defensive is as futile as the language of the Chief Secretary for Ireland when he spoke of his battering ram as a defensive weapon. The past history of the nation, which is a long record of meddling and annexation, justifies the people in placing no confidence in the declared defensive policy of a Government. In every war we have undertaken during the last three centuries we have meddled in matters which did not concern us, except in the case of the Spanish Armada, and then that was really a retaliatory attack upon us because of the depredations we at that time committed upon Spanish commerce. During the last forty years

the country has spent, irrespective of the normal Budgets, £100,000,000 in useless wars. I have no confidence in the present Prime Minister, who is not a man likely to rise above the traditional folly and wickedness which has characterized this country in its relations with others. I thoroughly distrust him. Many distrust him in his home policy. I assure them they would do well to distrust him equally in his foreign policy. Two years ago he was writing despatches all over Europe imploring the European powers to join in a crusade against Russia, and to put Alexander of Battenberg on the Throne of Bulgaria. Again, we find him indirectly assuring Italy that if she would join in what Prince Bismarck called the League of Peace we would, under certain circumstances, aid her. And at the present moment what is a portion of our fleet doing? It is, at the demand of Bismarck, nominally preventing slaves being introduced into a portion of Africa, but in reality it is protecting German arms while they are destroying the property of British citizens. Yesterday a great function took place in France to celebrate the centenary of the States General. Where was the British Ambassador? He was not there. When France makes a great effort to maintain the peace of the world, we withdraw our Ambassador, and we ask for augmentation of the Fleet. The *Times* is regarded as the official organ of the Government, and therefore it is important to see how the *Times* met this proposed augmentation of the fleet. What did the ally or confederate of the Government say? On the 7th of March it said :—

"The Protean Eastern Question has again assumed a disquieting aspect. It is idle to pretend that we may safely ignore the disturbances thus threatened. We may hug non-interventions as closely as we please; but whether we like it or not, our interest will be more or less directly involved in any struggle that may take place. Unless we are in a position to say "hands off" to all the world, these interests will be deliberately made a part of the prize of success in quarrels, with which we desire to have nothing to do."

According to the *Times* we are increasing our Navy in order to place Lord Salisbury and his colleagues in a position to interfere in the Eastern Question. The House should warily and cautiously look into the proposal put before it. For every single decade the country's

normal expenditure upon armaments has increased by leaps and bounds. In 1881, the Budget for armaments was, for the Army £14,680,000, and for the Navy £10,581,000. In 1888 the Budget for the Army was £18,429,000, and for the Navy £12,325,000. This year the House is asked for an addition of £1,500,000 in the normal Budget for the Army and Navy. The value of the Fleet is put down at £35,500,000, and for building a yearly sum of £2,650,000 is granted, while the annual depreciation of the Navy is £1,850,000. Therefore, as the expenditure for building and repairs is to continue until 1895, every year during the interval there will be an increase in the effective force of the Navy equal to £800,000—that is to say, that in 1895 the Fleet will be worth £39,500,000. The House is, however, asked for an expenditure of an additional £10,000,000, which will increase the prospective value of the Fleet to £49,500,000. Now, it is obvious that the amount of depreciation in the Fleet would increase proportionately with its value; and, to maintain the new standard, a much larger amount will have to be spent annually than is necessary at present. The first Lord of the Admiralty told the House that the new standard of the Fleet was that it should be equal to any two navies in the world. I was shocked when I heard a Minister of the Crown make such a declaration. I have no doubt the hon. and gallant Admiral (Admiral Field) would have supported the First Lord of the Admiralty if he had asked for double the amount. [Admiral Field: Hear, hear!] I thought so, but I am not a quarterdeck politician, and therefore I was shocked. This was really a gauntlet thrown down to Europe, threatening, in effect, that “whatever you spend we will spend double.” Perhaps some hon. Gentlemen opposite are acquainted with the game of poker. Great Britain is playing a game of poker with all Europe, ships of war being the stakes. It is perfectly avowed that we are throwing down the gauntlet. Lord Armstrong is an authority on this subject. Two or three days ago I was reading an article in the *Nineteenth Century*, written by Lord Armstrong, in which he suggests that, in order to frighten the world and show them what thorough devils we are, we should spend £20,000,000 instead of

£10,000,000. Is it not reasonable to suppose that foreign nations are likely to accept our challenge? We propose to build as much as France and Russia together. I think the only result will be that there will be some sort of alliance between France and Russia, and that they will build against us, or it is very possible that France will do so alone. The noble Lord the Member for Marylebone (Lord Charles Beresford) says we want a sufficient force to blockade every port of France, and to sweep the flag off France off the sea. I wonder whether France will say “We must increase the number of our ships to meet your threat.” If France does this, is this country to go on increasing its Fleet? If so, where is such a policy likely to end? In my judgment, estimates based on the power and the number of ships of other countries are always erroneous. Since the First Lord of the Admiralty propounded his scheme, the estimate he gave to the House has been found to be erroneous, because since then the *Sultan* has gone down. I expected the noble Lord to come forward and say “I must ask the House for an additional sum of money to replace the *Sultan*.” If any one wishes to see the absurdity of pitting our Navy against a combination of other countries, it will be seen in what the Continental Powers did with reference to their armies. Russia was supposed at one time by Austria to be increasing her army; Austria followed suit; Germany increased her army because of the action of Austria, but the final result of these tactics was that each Power remained in precisely the same position and as though no increase had been made. I therefore assert that in the present state of European politics it will be found absolutely impossible to maintain a numerical superiority over any two nations, and to declare that no matter what other Powers build, this country will build double the number. This standard of taking a number of ships equal to that of two Powers is a new one. In the last century we had many naval wars. Spain and France were the great naval Powers of Continental Europe then, but at no time was our navy equal to the navies of France and Spain united. We had always tried to have a navy equal to that of France. In 1859 we entertained the same views,

because in a pamphlet entitled, "Observations on Modern Systems of Fortification," I find that Sir Howard Douglas wrote :—

"The steam fleet of France has, during the last 10 years, been in a state of progressive augmentation, the Government of that country having steadily acted upon the recommendations proposed in the *Enquête Parlementaire* (1849), and is now equal, if not superior, to that of Great Britain."

Then, Sir Robert Peel said—

"What is the advantage of one Power greatly increasing its Army and Navy? Does it not seem that other Powers will follow its example? The consequence of this must be that no increase of relative strength will accrue to any Power, but there must be universal consumption of the resources of every country in military preparations."

I quote these views in order to show that at that time there was no idea of having a Fleet equal to two of the Great Powers, but only superior to the Fleet of France. And what Sir R. Peel said I and my friends are saying now. We hold to the traditions which governed the conduct of the best, wisest, and most Conservative statesmen of this country. But why do the Government limit the number to two Powers—why do they not say three? If Italy or Germany were to join France and Russia we might as well submit at once, and say that we were vanquished. It would be more logical for right hon. Gentlemen who proposed this doctrine of equal numbers to suggest that our Navy should be equal and superior to the Navies of the entire world. That is the logical outcome of their proposition. Sir Arthur Hood, First Naval Lord, told the Committee on Naval Estimates, "Our Navy is superior to any two navies."

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Lord G. HAMILTON, Middlesex, Ealing): Did he say any two nations?

MR. LABOUCHERE: I have quoted the words used by the noble Lord the Member for Marylebone (Lord C. Beresford).

LORD C. BERESFORD: I never said that.

MR. LABOUCHERE: Well, that is the report I have of the noble Lord's statement. Sir Anthony Hoskins said—

"I am an advocate for building in such a way as to establish a sufficient superiority to

any two nations when combined, and I think that we are doing this."

The Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Ashmead Bartlett), on April 25th, at Liverpool, said—

"He had stated more than once that the British Navy never in peace was better prepared for war than it was at present, and that numerically and in character we were superior to any other two nations. The lessons, however, of the manœuvres had shown that the extent of our superiority, in the minds of responsible naval officers, was not so great as to insure our supremacy so absolutely and unquestionably as it ought to be."

I take this extract from a *précis* in the *Times*, and I claim the hon. Gentleman as a supporter of the views I am now advocating—namely, that our Navy is strong enough. In reality, the scheme proposed is to make our Navy equal to four of the greatest navies in Europe. In the last Returns given by the Admiralty I find that there were 91 armoured and protected ships, exclusive of ships obsolete in type and speed. In 1894, taking the existing number of ships, ships building and projected, France would have 62 ships and Russia would have 31 ships—a total of 93. There is no deduction for ships obsolete in type and speed, but with that deduction our present Navy is equal and superior to the fleets that France and Russia will have in 1894. If deductions be made for obsolete ships the four great navies of Europe only equal unitedly the Navy which the House is asked to vote for, which is to come into existence in 1894. Really this policy of building a Navy to outnumber the four great navies of Europe is not only a recklessly expensive doctrine, but is the doctrine of a nation in its decadence. There have only been four great naval battles in history—Salamis, Actium, Lepanto, and Trafalgar. Probably the Civil Lord of the Admiralty never heard of them. I shall be glad to tell the Civil Lord privately, afterwards, when they were fought, but he may take it from me now that they did take place, and the victory was in every case on the side of the navy that was the smaller; therefore, it is not proved that mere weight of ships was to carry everything before it. Lord Brassey cited some observations of the French Deputy, M. Menard Dorien, on what constituted the supremacy of England:—

"Picture to yourselves the results of the first encounter between hostile fleets. It is probable that both sides will be ill-prepared to renew the engagement. With whom will then the supremacy of the seas remain? With the nation possessing the greatest industrial resources; with that Power which shall be the first to replace the fleet destroyed by the rapid construction of another fleet. Therefore it is that the true strength of England lies in her creative resources. Her yards occupy a position more secure from attack than ours. It is not in our power to create seaports like those of England, far up navigable rivers, combining facility of access from the sea with advantages for the purposes of defence of an inland station."

Now let us take a standard of our requirements which seems a more reasonable standard. What are those requirements said to be? To enable our Navy to protect our shores from invasion, and to protect our commerce. This danger of invasion is aired at every moment. We are asked to think what a terrible thing it would be, a foreign army in England, and we are asked, will you refuse to vote a sum of money to save us from this invasion. [Cries of "No."] Sir Arthur Hood says "No," but he said this on April 11th this year:—

"As to the statement that no organisation existed in preparation for war, he would merely point to the fact that, last July, 68 ships of war were assembled in all respects ready for service within five days of the order being issued from the Admiralty; and in the naval manœuvres this year the number of vessels would be largely increased. As to the suggestion of our fleets being crushingly defeated in the Channel and the country laid open to invasion, he failed to realise for a moment why our superior fleets should meet with a result so widely different from all their glorious traditions. As had been shown, we could in five days assemble a fleet of 68 vessels ready for service, and with such a fleet and our armoured coast defences, and with a large number of gunboats and torpedoes in reserve which could be maintained at any threatened point, he thought that the scare of invasion might be allowed to drop without further comment."

After that I do not think that any gentleman will contend that this great expenditure is asked for as necessary to defend our shores when we have from the first authority, that of Sir Arthur Hood, a clear and distinct statement only a few days ago that the present Navy is amply sufficient to defend our shores against such danger without withdrawing any ships from the numerous squadrons we have in all parts of the world. Then I come to the protection of our commerce. Now there is an idea entertained by some hon. Mem-

bers opposite, of making the ocean as safe as the county of Kent if we were engaged in war. It is a perfect chimera; it is an impossibility; it can never exist. Some days ago I was reading something said by Lord Wolseley, who, of course, is a little jealous of this augmentation of the Navy ["No, No."]—Yes, he holds that we might spend this, but we should also spend a great deal on the Army, in case we do have an enemy on our shores; and then Lord Wolseley wants to be there to defend us again. Lord Wolseley pointed out that our naval superiority after the battle of Trafalgar was unquestioned, and yet within a few weeks of that victory 20 ships of our mercantile marine were captured by French ships of war in the Channel. It is asserted that it is far more easy at the present time to defend our mercantile marine than it was in those days because of the difficulty of the enemy's cruisers getting coal. This has been asserted again and again by the advocates of increased naval expenditure. Now there is no greater illusion than this about coal supply. I am very sorry that hon. Gentlemen have not devoted some time to the International Law on the subject. It is no merit in me that I have done so, for I was brought up in the Diplomatic Service and was obliged to learn with a view to passing examinations. I will venture to give the House some of the results of my studies. I have seen it asserted again and again that, provided we blockade the ports of France or Russia, or any other country with whom we may happen to be at war, even if the enemy's cruisers escape, they could not get coal, and, therefore, could do us no damage. As a matter of fact, a belligerent ship may put into any neutral port to refit, but not to equip. In 1859, during the Franco-Austrian War, Her Majesty's Government forbade contraband of war, but declined specifically to say whether coal was contraband of war, but only asserted that the carriage of coal might be so in some cases, and, therefore, those who engaged in the carriage, must do so in view of the risk they undertook. In the House of Lords there was a debate upon it, and Lord Granville explained the case. If coal was sent to a port where there were war steamers with a view of supplying

them, the coal became contraband. But nobody ever asserted that coal *in situ* so to speak in a neutral port, may not be sold by a private individual to a belligerent ship. We had an exposition of what the law is laid down so recently as 1885, at the time of the war between France and China, in a despatch from Earl Granville to M. Waddington, in which the then Foreign Secretary said:—

“I have requested Her Majesty’s Secretary of the Colonies to inform the Governors of Her Majesty’s colonies of Hongkong, Ceylon, and the Straits Settlements that, while carrying out the provisions of the Foreign Enlistment Act as to equipment, they are not to interfere with any shipments of coal made in the way of trade, and having the character of a commercial transaction.”

Therefore, I hope I have distinctly shown that it is a delusion to suppose that we are in any better position now, owing to our having a steam fleet to protect our commercial marine, than we were when we had only sailing vessels. We have no more advantages, because the enemy’s cruisers can follow our mercantile marine and can obtain coal where they please. The question, however, is of no great importance, because, as a matter of fact, we should have no marine to defend within a couple of weeks after an outbreak of war with any of the great European Powers. That is owing to the Treaty of Paris, in which we assented to the doctrine that “free ships make free goods.” This simply means that neutrals may convey to the ports of a belligerent everything that is not contraband of war without chance of being captured by the other party, whereas the belligerent itself could not convey to its own ports anything, whether contraband or not, without the chance of capture. The effect of this would be that if we were at war, say, with France, the rate of insurance on British bottoms would be far higher than the rate on neutral bottoms, and the result would be that all our carrying trade to our own ports would be done by neutrals and not by us. It would not be the slightest use for us to blockade foreign ports, because the mere chance of the prospect of capture would be sufficient to send up the rate of insurance on British bottoms higher than that on neutral bottoms, and we should have a result similar to that of the

American Civil War. The Confederates had but one or two cruisers that managed to get on the sea from neutral ports, and the United States lost the whole of their carrying trade, which fell principally into our hands. It is asserted that belligerents in all probability would not hold to the Treaty, and that we are not forced to abide by it. [An hon. MEMBER: It is not a Treaty.] Call it an agreement or what you will—a Declaration, I think, is the term. It was in the course of the negotiation of the Treaty of Paris that the Declaration was made to which we, with other Governments adhered, that “free ships should make free goods.” Hon. Gentlemen have asserted that belligerents may not stand by the Declaration, and possibly, if it was not to their interest they would not; but do not hon. Gentlemen perceive that it may be impossible for the belligerent to avoid it, because they would immediately have the neutrals to deal with, for it would be for the interest of neutrals to maintain the principle of “free ships, free goods.” Suppose we had a war with France and Russia, our carrying trade would in that case be transferred to the United States, which would then become the great carrying power of the world. Do you suppose that in that case the United States would consent to France and Russia throwing over the principle of “free ships, free goods”? Not a bit of it; on the contrary, they would insist on free ships being able to go into any of the ports of the world without hindrance or capture; and if France or Russia were to try to capture any of the ships then sent abroad, depend upon it, the United States would very soon join us in opposing them. Hon. Gentlemen may say the United States were not parties to the Declaration of Paris. Well, Sir, it was not necessary that they should have been because they have always laid down the principle of “free ships, free goods”; and they have announced to both France and Russia that from their view of the matter, free ships are to be regarded as free goods. And why was it the United States would not sign the Declaration of Paris? It was because the United States had proposed that the provision should be extended, and that no private property at sea should be liable to capture at sea. That was called the Massy Amendment, and

while all other nations agreed to it there was only one which opposed it. What was that nation? It is England which has always been on the wrong side in such matters. We are the people who would reap more advantage from it than any other country, and yet it is entirely owing to our action that the principle thus recommended was not agreed to by the entire civilized world. So certain is it on these facts that we should have absolutely no sort of commerce if we went to war with any great naval power, that the facts have been met only by two arguments; and I will take the two arguments as used by the noble Lord the Member for Marylebone (Lord Charles Beresford). I would first say that I can assure the noble Lord, if this were a question of seamanship, and we were really about to be invaded, I should desire nothing better than that he should be at the head of our Fleets, as I am convinced that all which naval ability and knowledge could do the noble Lord would do to defend us; but at the same time I know that the noble Lord and his friends would have no confidence in me if I should be placed in such a position as that. The noble Lord may, therefore, understand what slight confidence I have and the House has in his legal powers. He will perhaps excuse me for saying that I regard him as what is called a "sea lawyer" in relation to these questions; as one, in fact, who does not know much about the law. The noble Lord told us that the total steam tonnage of the world is eleven millions; that of this we have seven millions, and that as it would be impossible to transfer any portion of our seven millions to neutrals in case of war, we should be obliged to provide for the defence of our own commerce, because the three millions or so of the rest of the world would not be enough to bring us food. The error of that is this—that any Englishman having a trading ship would have a perfect right, if we were at war with France or any other country, to transfer it to an American citizen, as absolutely as he now has the right to sell a pair of boots or anything else. Nowhere else but in this House could it be laid down that in case of war an individual citizen of a belligerent state has not a right to sell a mercantile ship to a neutral friend. The other point the noble Lord

attempted to make was that food is contraband of war. Where, I should like to know, did the noble Lord get that doctrine from?

LORD C. BERESFORD: I referred to the case of rice.

MR. LABOUCHERE: The noble Lord is entirely mistaken. Food is not contraband of war, unless destined for a besieged town or some place like Malta to victual the ships. It is true that we have tried to make food contraband of war, because when at one time we had the supremacy of the sea, we misused it in order to bully neutrals. In the year 1793 we nearly went to war with the United States who protested against this doctrine. During the Peninsular War, in our long war with Napoleon, the armed neutral Powers held their own against our making the food of foreign countries contraband of war. We have entered into many treaties with other countries, and I defy the noble Lord to show me any one of those treaties in which it is laid down that food is contraband of war. The noble Lord has just said he took his idea that food was contraband of war from the case of France, in regard to her war with China in 1885. Well, what was it that then happened? In that year France being at war with China declared rice to be contraband of war, in the case of ships sailing to the northern Chinese ports, on the ground of the Chinese armies there; but Lord Granville absolutely denied their right to enforce this doctrine. Ultimately France put her claim on this ground: that it was suggested that some of the shipments of rice intended for China were in the nature of a tribute or subsidy to the Court of Peking, and that under these circumstances rice ships must be stopped, leaving it for a Prize Court to decide whether the rice was public or private property; that is to say that France believed that the Court at Peking was obtaining certain tributes of rice, and claimed that her vessels might stop rice ships running to the northern ports in order that they might be taken to a Prize Court to decide whether the rice was public or private property. But that is hardly a declaration that food is contraband of war. To this Lord Granville replied that he protested against rice being treated generally as contraband of war, and he stated that Her

Majesty's Government would not consider itself bound by the decree of any Prize Court which should uphold a contrary doctrine. I think I have now conclusively shown certain facts. I have shown that at the present moment we have absolute security from invasion, and my witnesses have been Sir A. Hood and other men of weight and authority. I have also shown that our fleets are superior to those of any other naval Power, and my witness in this case has been the Secretary to the Admiralty. I have further shown that if we adopt the plan suggested by the Government, our naval force should not only be made superior to that of any two, but of any four, of the great naval Powers, and my witness to that has been the Government Returns. I have also shown, looking at International Law,—and on this point I could quote Grotius, and others, by the hour, if necessary,—that if we went to war we should have food and raw material brought to us in neutral ships, and that whether we blockade the ports of our enemy or not, we should absolutely, owing to the effect of a differential rate of insurance on our own and neutral bottoms, lose our carrying trade, and, therefore, have no commerce to defend. Now, Lord Salisbury admits all this, being, as he is, an exceedingly able Gentleman. A few days ago Lord Salisbury went down to Bristol and there he was defending this proposal for increasing our Navy. But how did he defend it? He pointed out that we are menaced by a new danger, inasmuch as there is a sort of powerful necromancer—William Ewart Gladstone—who may induce the country to consent to the pernicious plan of Home Rule. And what would be the effect of this? It would be, if we did not assent to the present scheme, that we should have to fight not only our foreign enemies, but Ireland also—that great fleets would be collected in the Irish ports; and consequently he urged the Bristol people to consent to an increase of the Navy, because, if they did not, Bristol might in a short time—you see, he evidently thinks that Home Rule will come—be attacked by an Irish Navy. I say there is no doubt that at the present moment our Navy is amply sufficient for our requirements. The Secretary to the Admiralty observed admirable good

sense by insisting on this last year. I should have been glad if he had insisted on it this year, and I only regret that he should have succumbed to the advice of certain distinguished Naval Officers who assert that our naval superiority is not so absolute and certain that it is not desirable to propose a great increase of our Navy. But even admitting for a moment that it is desirable that we should increase our Navy, there are still a great many objections to the present scheme for securing that increase. I will only enter upon a few of them. The mode of raising the money is in itself most objectionable, and enough to lead every reasonable man to vote against the proposal of the Government for binding future Parliaments; because it is thought that if this Bill should be passed the House of Commons of the future cannot refuse to carry the scheme out. We are dependent on the action of the House of Lords, in which, of course there will always be a permanent and safe majority in favour of any proposal of the present Government, and I object to anything that will pledge the future House of Commons to such an expenditure unless this measure is repealed. Another objection to this scheme is that it is far too large; in the present state of science armaments speedily become useless. In fact we are now in what I may call a transition stage. Sir Arthur Hood said in reply to a somewhat jingo speech made by the President of the Royal Academy last Saturday, that "it was desirable we should ensure that the vessels of the different classes to be built shall be decidedly superior in all respects to any vessels of similar types built or building abroad." Now, just see what the expense of that would be. Suppose we build ships larger than those abroad, other nations will in turn build vessels like them, and we shall then have to build others larger still. This idea is absurd, and, moreover, I think that if we are to spend money on a large increase of our Navy the present moment is badly chosen. We have had a great period of depression in the shipbuilding trade. In March, 1888, there were 380 ships building with a total capacity of 594,000 tons; there are now 528 building, with a total capacity of 920,000 tons—a far larger number than last year. It is probable that too many ships.

will be built and there will be a renewed depression in the trade. Would it not have been wiser to have waited a while? Past history shows us, and everything shows us, how little confidence we ought to have in these large expenditures which are periodically asked for. The House will remember the large amount Lord Palmerston asked for and expended in the fortification of the Channel Islands, and then there were £5,000,000 asked for by Lord Northbrook, as to which nobody has yet discovered where it went. [Cries of "Oh."] Hon. Gentlemen cry "Oh," but they should remember that I am speaking of a Liberal First Lord of the Admiralty. We have come to the conclusion that a great deal of that five millions was absolutely wasted. I will go even further. In 1885, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. Gladstone) asked for eleven millions for the Army and Navy. Of this, two-and-a-half millions were handed over to the Admiralty. Does any one know what became of that? [Cries of "Oh."] An hon. Gentleman again says "Oh"; I will enlighten him as to where a portion of it went. The Auditor General says he cannot make out where most of it went, but he finds that a considerable sum went in buying cables and selling them again for about one-third of what they cost; that some of the money went in decanters and some in stew pans for the officers' messes. I tried to find out where the money went, and that is all I did find; anyhow, the fact that the Auditor General could not find it out ought to make us exceedingly careful in granting these large sums. Let us remember what happened two years ago. At that time, the noble Lord the Member for Paddington, was Chancellor of the Exchequer and Leader of this House, but he found the extravagance and waste of the Admiralty so great, so scandalous and outrageous, that he honorably preferred to withdraw from the Government and cease to be the Leader of the House and Chancellor of the Exchequer, than accept the responsibility of that expenditure. Last year, a Committee was appointed to look into the Navy Estimates, and that Committee agreed with the noble Lord and found that the expenditure was gross, scandalous, and profligate. [Cries of

"No."] I maintain that it did, that being the conclusion I draw from the evidence and the opinion of everybody except my hon. Friend, who shakes his head; and when I say that he has been in the Admiralty I may add that, like others in a similar position, he has lost every vestige of independence in these matters. But, Sir, I say that Gentlemen who are not here to support either old or new Admiralty officials are the best judges; you know that your own Chancellor of the Exchequer accused you of waste and profligate expenditure, and when we have now a Royal Commission sitting to try and put an end to or check these monstrous and profligate demands, you certainly ought to check these profligate wasters of eleven-and-a-half millions sterling, at least until that Commission has presented its Report. There is another reason why we should wait, and it is that because by doing so we shall be able to increase the Navy, should it be necessary, from the normal Budget of the year. At the present moment we have 30,000 soldiers in Ireland. What for? Not to defend Ireland against foreign aggression, but to defend it against the Irish people—to defend landlords from their tenants. It will be admitted that it would not be necessary to keep those men there if the Irish people were not, as the Chief Secretary had said, in a state of revolt, but pacified, quiet, and contented. In case of war we could not withdraw a single one of those men, but might have to increase the British garrison there. We should absolutely neutralize the feeling which keeps those 30,000 men in Ireland if we only gave the Irish Home Rule. And when we Liberals come in we mean to give them Home Rule. As this would save three millions per annum on the Budget we ought to wait till the Liberals come in, when, if they think it necessary to increase the Navy, they can do so. What did Sir William Maitland say? Why, that when we were seeking everywhere for troops to fight Napoleon we had during the whole time 60,000 men in Ireland, and were obliged to keep them there because Ireland was so misgoverned that it was disaffected. I must refer to one more plea for this proposal, which seems to be the climax of absurdity. Let hon. Gentlemen on this side of the House who are devoted to

political economy hear what Lord Armstrong says on that subject. In defending this expenditure he says:—

“The money required for the purpose is nothing to a nation which like ours is possessed of superabundant means. All the money required would be spent in the country. None would be withdrawn from productive industry, seeing that the capital and labour are far in excess of our requirements. It is the working classes who would especially benefit by the expenditure, as the wage fund would thereby be increased, and this chiefly at the expense of the wealthy.”

The shipowners, of whom Lord Armstrong is one, would be benefited. I yield to no man in my desire for the safety of this country; I desire to see the country safe and respected. Why should an hon. Member shake his head at this? Does he suppose anyone in this House wishes to see a foreign army careering about this country? Or that, if we thought this expenditure necessary we should not readily vote it? But I tell the Government that what they ought to do to make the country secure should be to maintain the Navy at its present point of efficiency, which the Secretary to the Admiralty says is greater than at any previous time of peace, and not throw down the gauntlet to all Europe with the braggadocio of saying “If any other country builds one ship we will build two.” Also let them give up the habit of meddling with European policy, and of annexing every territory they can put their hands on. Our relations to our Colonies are most peculiar. They are willing to remain with us and to aid us in our defence if we should be really attacked; but I doubt whether they would remain with us and assist us if we plunged into a great European War through our own fault, as in the case of our going to war, as Lord Salisbury proposed, to put some German Prince on some throne in the Peninsula. We are told by the opposite Party that we ignore our position as an Imperial country; that our views with regard to our foreign relations are petty and paltry; but the fact is that we take a far larger view of our position than Gentlemen on the other side of the House. We on this side of the House believe that we are not merely a European Power, but that we are so strong that we can afford not to be frightened every moment at what is taking place in

Europe, and ought not to be making treaties and engagements to maintain the balance of power. We believe that these matters do not affect us, and that we ought to give up the idea that we are a mere European country, which is bound to mix itself up in all sorts of questions, because, if we do this, we shall inevitably lose our Colonies. I would suggest that Her Majesty's Government should call together a European Conference, and should propose to it three points—first, that private property at sea should be safe from capture unless it be contraband of war; secondly, that it should be defined by common consent what is contraband of war, and under what circumstances it is contraband of war; and thirdly, that it should settle the position as to belligerent warships when in neutral harbours. If these three points were settled, there would be exceedingly little chance of war; at any rate the chance would be minimized and the safety of the country would be far more assured than it is likely to be by the building of an excessive Navy, thereby exciting the distrust and jealousy of other European Powers. If we were to call together such a Conference as that, should we be listened to, having laid it down that we must have a Navy as great as those of any four Naval Powers of Europe? Why, that would prejudice the whole question. For my part, I should be sorry to see the absolute supremacy at sea which some desire. The European Powers would view such a supremacy with as great objection as the other Powers of Europe would view an absolute military supremacy on the part of any one of them. In the view of these enormous naval preparations, how could we urge other Powers to a general disarmament? The first thing they would say to us would be that we should begin the disarmament by reducing our own Navy. We should answer, “Not in the least; we have a right to a Navy as large as all your navies combined; Britannia rules the waves and ought always to rule the waves.” Naturally, then, foreign Powers would say, “Suit your precept to your example, and then we will listen to those perpetual suggestions you are making to us as to disarmament and the blessings of peace.” Look at the United States. They have a small Navy. [An hon.

MEMBER: They are 3,000 miles away.] But this country has voted money to protect the coasts of Australia, which are farther away than those of the United States. The reason the United States have no Navy is because they do not meddle with other people. They meddle with nobody, and nobody meddles with them. If anyone should meddle with them, Americans are rich and powerful enough to make them rue it. This country has a hard fight to maintain its position in the markets of the world; and in the keen commercial competition of modern times this additional burden of taxation will be a serious hindrance. I can only regret that the most powerful voice which has ever been heard in this House in favour of peace is now hushed, as I am sure that Mr. Bright would have protested in the strongest terms against this extravagant outlay on armaments. Far better would it be than all the eloquent tributes which have been paid to that great statesman if we were to profit by the lessons which he impressed with so much weight and wisdom upon his fellow-countrymen. I move that the Bill be read a second time this day six months.

Amendment proposed to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words, "upon this day six months."—(*Mr. Labouchere.*)

Question proposed "That the word 'now' should stand part of the Question."

SIR W. LAWSON (Cumberland, Cockermouth): I rise to second the proposal of the hon. Member. This Bill, as we all know, is a Bill for the granting to Her Majesty's Government of £21,000,000 for the building of seventy new ships; and the preamble of the Measure says that we shall grant the money cheerfully. Well I must say I shall grant it with the greatest reluctance, repugnance, and distrust; and I do not think those who are most enthusiastic in supporting the naval policy of the Government can feel cheerful when called on to vote this money. What is it for? Against whom is this proposed increase of our Navy directed? Avowedly against nations who are, we are told, most friendly to this country. It is most humiliating at this period of the world's history to find nations so

jealous of one another that whilst we are told they are on friendly terms we find them getting up these great armaments against each other. We all remember that the Queen said in her speech at the opening of Session: "Nothing has taken place to affect the cordial relations between myself and other Powers." Now on the introduction of the Bill I asked the first Lord of the Admiralty against which of the Powers of Europe these preparations are to be made. All the noble Lord said in reply was, "We have heard all this before." But can the noble Lord not bear to hear anything twice? Does he never go to church, where the same thing is said over and over again? The question is not whether I say anything new, but whether I say anything that is true. I say again that I oppose this proposal so persistently because I regard it as a preparation for war. This increase of the Navy is the best way of promoting bad feeling and danger instead of peace. The late Prime Minister only lately wrote one of the best and shortest letters he ever wrote in acknowledging Mr. Dymond's "Essay on War." It was as follows:—

"I thank you, and am glad that the advocates of peace are active, for militarism is the most conspicuous tyrant of the age, and it is the road to war."

If we could only get that into the heads of the people, we should do great good. I am not ashamed to say that I believe that all these great naval standing armaments are nothing more than standing nuisances. But I do not want to argue from that position. I do not wish to be regarded—as were Mr. Bright and Mr. Cobden very unjustly during the Crimean War—as an advocate of peace at any price. I desire to speak on the merits of the case as it stands at present, and on the real necessity of adequately protecting this country. No case has been made out for this extra expenditure, either in the changed circumstances of Europe or in the altered conditions of the Navy. I ask whether the evidence is not sufficient to prove that the Navy is sufficient for all that even Gentlemen opposite want to do. Lord Cross, speaking at Newbury on the 10th of April, said:—

"By our naval supremacy we shall be able to give effect to the policy which is ours to-day, and by which we are going to insure the peace of

Mr. Labouchere

Europe and the prosperity of the world, and of all civilization."

What an extraordinary idea! The noble Lord, who was responsible for the Government of 200 millions of people, appears to be a little off his head on this matter. Then the noble Lord the Member for Marylebone (Lord C. Beresford) said that our Navy ought to be as strong as any two navies in the world. But is it not so already? It was only two years ago, at the Royal Academy Banquet, that the First Lord of the Admiralty spoke of the Fleet which was about to engage in the Jubilee Review as the greatest which had ever been reviewed by a Sovereign in time of peace. I should like to enter a protest against these Naval Reviews. It is only a short time since the *Times'* Berlin correspondent wrote as follows:—

"A great impression has been made on the Emperor by the fact that the House of Commons has now in effect voted the addition of 70 ships of war to the British Navy, and His Majesty has followed the debates on the subject with the deepest interest. The Chauvinists—that is to say the Jingoos of Germany—were flattering themselves that their steadily increasing fleet, the wonderful creation of the last 18 years, was gradually beginning to bring Germany alongside of England as a naval Power. But the prospect of this sudden and enormous accession of strength to the British Navy has rather taken away their breath and make them pause in their calculations. The Emperor himself, too, is not unaffected by this feeling of surprise: but he is animated by an earnest ambition to emulate, to some extent the example of England, and doubtless the ambition will only be stimulated by the monster naval review at Spithead in July, to which His Majesty is looking forward as one of the greatest treats and compliments which are awaiting him in England."

We were getting up this Fleet for a naval review which the Emperor of Germany was to attend in order that he might pick up a hint as to how he could fight us if ever he wished to do so. It does not seem to me that that was a very sensible proceeding. In May, 1885, a glowing description of our navy was delivered by the hon. Member for Barrow (Mr. Caine). The hon. Member, speaking in Cheshire, said:—

"He would assume then that, so far as the Navy was concerned, it was not in the history of our country in a more efficient condition than it was to-day. Our Navy was stronger than that of any two Powers combined. When the ship-building programme of the Government was complete it would be as strong as that of any three Powers of Europe. We could take every ship in the French fleet and lay alongside her as strong a ship as hers, and find ourselves at the end with

a reserve fleet equal to that of every other Power. We had shown that at a week or two's notice we could sweep the seas with merchant cruisers, and could build more ships of war from an ironclad to a torpedo boat in a given time than all the nations of the world put together."

That is pretty good for an hon. Gentleman like the Member for Barrow, whom the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian put into Office in order to look after torpedoes. If that hon. Member votes to-night or to-morrow for the present proposal of the Government, either he must have given a misleading account of the condition of the Navy in 1885, or else by his vote he will condemn the present Government as utterly incompetent for having allowed the Navy to fall into such decay that it requires so much renovation. Even the Secretary to the Admiralty a few days after this scheme was announced made a speech at Liverpool at a meeting of the Constitutional Association, in which he said:—

"He noticed with satisfaction the allusion in the report to the proposed extension of the Navy. Liverpool, the premier shipbuilding port in the world, could thoroughly appreciate the importance and value of naval defence. He had stated more than once that the British Navy never in peace was better prepared for war than it was at present, and that numerically and in character we were superior to any other two nations. The lessons, however, of the manœuvres had shown that the extent of our superiority was not so great in the minds of responsible naval officers"—

by the way, was not the hon. Member a "responsible naval officer"?—

"as to insure our supremacy so absolutely and unquestionably as it ought to be if we are to secure the confidence in which alone enterprise can flourish."

Again, Sir Arthur Hood, Senior Naval Lord of the Admiralty, speaking on the 11th of April last at the dinner of the Institution of Civil Engineers, said:—

"It had been hinted that in the event of war our fleets might possibly meet with a crushing defeat in the Channel which would leave the country open to invasion. The men who had made these statements had deprecated entirely any idea of creating a scare: but he should like to ask them what surer course they could have taken to do so than this; He denied positively that the Navy was in an inefficient state; further, he asserted that the Navy was at this moment in a better state of preparation for war than it had been at any time for the past 20 years. By July at the latest they would have received the whole of their guns. As to the late manœuvres showing their feasibility in time of war of placing our commercial ports under ransom and destroying our commerce, the important point appeared to have been for-

gotten that in the late manœuvres both the attacking and defending forces were provided by our own Navy, and therefore in case of war our defending forces would be at the least double the strength they then were, and would be able to offer double the protection. As to the suggestion of our fleets being crushingly defeated in the Channel and the country laid open to an invasion, he failed to realise for a moment why our superior fleets should meet a result so widely different from all their glorious traditions."

I thought we were supposed to be the bravest and most gallant naval people in the world. Then what a lesson this speech is for the hobgoblin Party who sit on the other side. I have given evidence—strong and convincing evidence—to show that our Navy never was so strong as now; and, secondly, that we were never more friendly with foreign Powers. That being the case, I cannot make out why 21 millions more should be wanted. I cannot find out against whom preparation is to be made. Not France, I suppose. General Boulanger came over the other day without opposition. We allow Frenchmen to come in, and it is only French sugar we keep out. We are going to show our Fleet to the Emperor of Germany, and nobody is afraid of Italy, whose condition is a warning against extravagant expenditure on armaments. The scare-mongers have landed this country in a miserable and anomalous position. In days gone by one Englishman used to be reckoned equal to three Frenchmen and five Russians, but the noble Lord the Member for Marylebone now goes up and down the country whining and pining and saying, "I cannot fight unless I am two to one against the enemy." Where is British valour when it comes to that? I say all this is unworthy of this country, and will bring us into contempt. I wish I could get all hon. Members on the opposite side of the House to look on it in that light. I know there is one who does—the noble Lord the Member for Paddington. I appeal to the noble Lord, who has made personal sacrifices and is now boycotted by Birmingham, to respond to the appeal to "come over and help us" to initiate a policy of peace on true Conservative lines. What did Mr. Disraeli say 30 years ago? Why he said, "Let us terminate this disastrous system of wild expenditure by mutually agreeing, with no hypocrisy, but in a manner and under circum-

stances which admit of no doubt, by the reduction of armaments, that peace is really our policy." That is the policy of true Conservatives. At any rate it is my policy, and until some honest effort has been made by this or some other Government to reduce armaments, and to get other nations to join us in a sensible and peaceable course, whatever any one else does. I shall offer a most determined opposition to this mad and monstrous proposal for augmenting the burdens of the people by fostering that military spirit, which has been the bane of civilization, of Christianity, and of progress.

*THE CIVIL LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. ASHMEAD BARTLETT): I do not know whether it is owing to any infirmity of mine or to the remarkable prolixity of the preceding speeches, but I confess I was not able to make head or tail out of the remarks of the hon. Baronet the Member for Carlisle (Sir W. Lawson). With regard to the appeal the hon. Baronet addressed to the noble Lord the Member for Paddington (Lord R. Churchill) I would answer him in the words of the wife of Lord Fairfax at the trial of Charles the Second, that the noble Lord "is far too wise to be here." In spite of the labours, and sometimes the annoyance, which the hon. Member for Northampton inflicts upon the Government, I am disposed to think his presence and activity in this House are not without their advantages. The hon. Gentleman plays to this country the part which the Helot of Sparta served to the Lacedæmonian father in the education of his sons. He is a perpetual warning of the eccentric misfortunes which would befall this country if the Radical Party were to obtain control of its destinies. I do not think it necessary to deal in detail with the speech of the hon. Member for Northampton, though some of his arguments were remarkable; for instance, he thought it a misfortune that the British Navy should be put on such a footing of strength as would enable it to equal any two European Powers, and said "why not to any three?" He also drew this extraordinary conclusion, that if our Navy were equal to the Navies of any two other powers it would be in the power of a third nation to control the destinies of Europe. But he seemed to overlook the fact that if there was any-

thing in that argument, the state of things he seemed to desire—namely, that the British Navy should only be equal to that of any other Power, would far more easily control the destinies of England from a naval point of view. The hon. Gentleman also attacked the foreign policy of Lord Salisbury, which has failed to meet with his approbation. But the foreign policy of Lord Salisbury has at least given England an honourable peace, instead of the costly and disgraceful defeats and disasters which marked the administration of the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian. He also objected to our mode of raising the money, and urged that it would limit the power of Parliament to deal with and control policy in future—a point with which I shall deal presently. I would remind him, however, that it is always in the power of Parliament to reverse in the future any decision that may now be come to. What is needed, above all things, in our Naval policy, and in regard to the strength of our fleet, is definitiveness and fixity of purpose; and the object of Her Majesty's Government in placing this scheme in a Bill has been to make it difficult in the future to delay, or to frustrate that policy. Let me ask the House to consider the broad issues that come before it in regard to this great programme. Why have the Government submitted this programme to the country? They have done so, in the first place, to ensure the maritime supremacy of England, which the hon. Gentleman the Member for Northampton has ridiculed. We on this side of the House do not hold with the hon. Gentleman. We believe in the maritime supremacy of the country as necessary, not only for its greatness, but also the magnificence of the Empire, its commerce, and, indeed, for the national existence of our people. Our object has been to make the Naval Power of Great Britain equal, and indeed, superior to the combined forces of any two great Naval Powers. Why, it is asked, is the Naval supremacy of this country essential? I answer that it is needed, first, to secure the safety and prosperity of the people at home; secondly, to maintain the strength of our world-wide Empire; thirdly, to defend the commerce of the

country, is the value of which is almost immeasurable; and, fourthly, to protect the food supply of the people, which means our national existence. What are the arguments against the new programme? First, there are the peace at any price party, who say that no preparation is necessary, who would not defend our shores and our commerce till danger appears. That is to say, who knowing that it would take three and a-half years to build an ironclad and that guns take two years, and that other countries are well provided with both, would wait till a hostile fleet was in the Channel, bombarding our forts and sailing up the Thames before they began naval construction? The hon. Member for Shoreditch (Mr. Cremer), who moved the Amendment, has argued that we should undertake no measure of defence till danger is imminent.

*MR. CREMER (Shoreditch): I never used those words; what I did was to challenge the Government to point out what the danger is, and where it is to be found, or to show that it has any existence at all.

*MR. ASHMEAD BARTLETT: I have the hon. Member's words here. My noble Friend the Member for Marylebone (Charles Beresford) said he wanted to know whether the hon. Gentleman was prepared to say that our commerce, trade, and food supply were not to be defended, and the hon. Gentleman replied, "When in danger, not before."

*MR. CREMER: I am sorry to interrupt, but I would point out that in the observations I had previously made I, when moving the Amendment, over and over again challenged the Government to point out where the danger was to be found, and whether it was not entirely imaginary, and my answer to the noble Lord must be taken in conjunction with those remarks.

*MR. ASHMEAD BARTLETT: Well, my reply is that the present state of Europe and the state in which it is likely to be for some time to come, constitute the very greatest danger to every Power that is not fully prepared; and I, for one, am waiting until we see other Powers ready to attack us before we do anything to protect ourselves. But there is no use in labouring this question. The Party which used to be in the ascendancy—

those exaggerated descendants of the old "Manchester School"—are now weak enough in Parliament; they are weaker in the country. They were defeated the other night by a majority of 176, and have not the smallest chance of carrying their doctrines. I venture to say that those whom the hon. Gentleman and his friends call the democracy, but whom I prefer to call the working classes, understand this question better than he, and those who act with him. The people of this country, especially the intelligent artisan of England, fully understand the vital need that exists for naval supremacy. They regard expenditure on the Navy as an insurance, a prudent necessary insurance just as needful to safeguard their trade, their liberties, and their subsistence as the premiums paid by the householder to guard against loss by fire. There are the second class of opponents, the opposition cavillers, who hardly go to the length of resisting this measure openly because they know the country would hardly stand that, but who complain on one ground or another that this large expenditure is not needful. Some of them say the reasons are not clearly stated; others say that it is a mistake to put it in the form of a Bill and so to remove it from further Parliamentary control; others quote speeches of the present Board of Admiralty to show that in their opinion such an increase as we now propose was not needed a year or more ago. My colleagues are perfectly able to defend their own action and their own language. They have done so, and they will do so again if needs be. When any hon. Gentleman can quote any words of mine deprecating an increase in the Navy, I shall be ready to deal with him. But, Sir, I will go so far as this. If the Board of Admiralty have been mistaken—which I do not admit—in their views upon this great and crucial question, it would be no mistake for them to acknowledge and to repair such a mistake. [*Cheers.*] The Naval Manœuvres which took place last year on a scale of unprecedented magnitude, detail, and thoroughness, have taught not only the country and the Board of Admiralty, but even the sailors a great many lessons with which they were not

before perfectly familiar. This programme is not a sudden or a new discovery. It has been under consideration since the middle of last year. I believe it was on the 1st of July, 1888, that the First Naval Lord, Sir Arthur Hood, drew up his confidential memorandum which embodied most of the present programme. Among other lessons they taught was the extreme difficulty of blockading modern warships of high speed and great facilities for disguise and concealment. The manœuvres proved that the blockading Power must have a considerable superiority of force, and that in the case of England there ought always to be a large reserve squadron in the Channel. Then there were many questions connected with the structural type of ships, their speed, their disposition of armament, their guns, the effect of high explosives, the invention of quick-firing guns, all which render it impossible to submit a complete and finished programme at an earlier moment than has been done. These difficulties have been in the main surmounted, and the ships and guns and armaments proposed in the new programme have the highest naval sanction. The simple question for Parliament and the country is, is it necessary, is it of paramount importance that the naval supremacy of this country should be established; are the ships which we propose wanted or are they not wanted? To these questions I have not the slightest doubt that Parliament and the country will unhesitatingly answer, "Yes, the ships are wanted, and they must be built." Those who object to this programme being put into the form of a Bill, and who allege that it will thereby be removed from the conduct of Parliament, miss the whole object of the scheme of the Government. Parliament can always undo what it has decided to do. But this Bill will, of course, render it difficult that their programme will be reversed, injured or delayed. It will be secured either from the caprice of a snatch vote, or from the exigencies of a Ministry, or from the dissensions of experts, or the selfishness of parties. This programme is the result of much consideration, study, and experience. It has been carefully and deliberately thought and worked out in its size, its cost, and all

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its details. It is put fully and candidly before Parliament and the country to accept or reject it. The amplest discussion has taken place and is likely to take place upon it. I believe it will be accepted by an overwhelming majority in this House. When thus accepted, it will become law and will be carried out. Those who know how in past times the Navy Estimate have often been the happy hunting ground of greedy Chancellors of the Exchequer in search of a surplus and of a popular Budget, how peremptory orders have come from the Treasury to cut so much off this Vote and so much off that, so much off construction and repairing, or both—to the great detriment of shipbuilding—and so much off guns, will realize what a national boon this fixed programme must be to the Navy, and, therefore, to the country. The great need of naval policy in the past has been definiteness and continuity. This Bill supplies these requisites, and will enable the people to rest assured that their dominion over the seas will be made supreme. Then there is the class who fulminate vague, but none the less violent, charges against the Admiralty, both the permanent officials and the present Board, and who affirm that they are utterly unworthy of confidence. I wish hon. Gentlemen who make such charges would descend from reckless rhetoric and go a little into the sober region of practical details. The present Board has, in its own interest, not made enough public reference to the great and valuable reforms and economies which it has succeeded in making in expenditure and administration. It is now possible to build an ironclad in one of the dockyards at a speed at least 30 per cent quicker than formerly, and at a cost not exceeding that of private yards. Great economies have been effected. The naval members of the Board have been, and are among the ablest men in a great service that can boast a vast amount of brilliant ability, great experience, and unbounded devotion to duty. I should like to add my humble quota of regard and admiration to the well-deserved tribute which my noble Friend has bestowed upon Sir Arthur Hood, the First Naval Lord. Then there are our opponents who criticize the types and armaments of our new fighting ships.

Foremost among these is the hon. Member for Cardiff, whose views upon the naval question are of Protean variety. To such critics I need only say that the types that have been decided upon have been most carefully considered; that they have been submitted to the criticism of the highest practical sailors; that thy approval of them is in the proportion of more than six to one; and that the hon. Member for Cardiff found few, if any, naval experts to agree with him. Lastly, there is the class, represented by my noble Friend the Member for Marylebone, who think we are not doing enough, and who want £20,000,000 extra spent upon the Navy. My noble Friend has the courage of his opinions, and he is very candid. But does he really think the taxpayers of this country would be pleased in time of peace to undertake such an extra burden as that? I sympathize with the noble Lord in many of his feelings and in much that he has done and said. I do not think that his reasons for leaving the Board were adequate; but I do believe that my noble Friend since he has left has done yeoman service in arousing and stimulating public feeling upon this vital question. His conduct has been loyal and considerate to his former colleagues, who so much regretted to lose his aid. I think that my noble Friend will be disposed to admit that a very fair compromise has been come to. The increase in the Navy which the Government propose is by far the largest made in modern times, and it will, I believe, guard our maritime supremacy against all reasonable combinations and dangers. This programme, as compared with the expenditure of former years, shows an increase of £2,044,000, on the average expenditure of the 4 years ending 1889, and had on an average increased £4,500,000, in the 4 years ending 1879. The hon. Member for Northampton has quoted figures which made out that the Navy of this country would in the year 1894, under the present programme, be equal in strength to the combined fleets of four European Powers. That is, I regret to say, not likely to be the case. In the year 1894, according to the existing programmes of this and other countries, the armoured vessels of this country, including belted cruisers, will number 77; those of France 44, and

those of Russia 27; that is, we shall have 77 as against 71 Russian and French armed ships. As to protected cruisers of the first, second, and third class and torpedo gun-boats—our total number in 1894 will be 96. France would have 50, and Russia 29.

MR. LABOUCHERE: I am sorry to interrupt the hon. Gentleman, but perhaps he will explain from what source his figures are taken, seeing that they are different from the returns.

*MR. ASHMEAD BARTLETT: I may point out that the difference may be due to the fact that the programmes of foreign countries have been quite lately enlarged. There is also very possibly a difference of classification, as there is considerable vagueness in classifying the great variety of types among modern war vessels. At any rate, my contention is that we should be superior in order to secure our maritime supremacy. Now, Sir, I have referred *seriatim* to the different arguments which have been used in opposition to this Bill, and I venture to think that none of them are calculated to seriously influence either the House or the country. I believe that this Bill will become law, and that it will give the Empire a sense of peace and satisfaction with regard to its Naval strength, to which it has long been a stranger. I should like, in conclusion, to say one word with regard to the views of the masses of our people. The hon. Gentleman the Member for Bethnal Green, in a speech which he made on a previous stage of this Bill, said that the working classes would look on this as a wasteful and needless expenditure. I venture to differ from that view. We are told that the working classes will condemn this expenditure. In my humble judgment the working classes of this country have a much clearer insight into the needs of the country, and are inspired by a much purer patriotism than many of their flatterers and would-be leaders. The people of this country are not unmindful of the advantages they possess with their brethren among the other nations of Europe. They see the military armaments of other countries increasing by leaps and bounds. They see the flower of the youth and manhood of Continental countries taken off by the conscription, not by scores and hundreds of

thousands, but by millions. England alone is free from this terrible drain, and why? Because of her insular position. To preserve the value of that insular position, the maintenance of our Naval supremacy, of our secure command of the seas is essential. It is, therefore, the fact and most bounden duty of a Government, worthy of the name, to maintain that Naval supremacy. More than half our food supplies are now produced beyond these shores. The loss of a single great battle, one such disaster as befel France at the Nile, or Trafalgar, might deprive this country, perhaps for ever, of her maritime supremacy. These are the days of sudden and fatal blows; of short and decisive campaigns; a disaster once incurred is too often irreparable. Let this House, let the country reflect what panic, what cost, what ruin, the news of such a catastrophe would inflict upon these islands. If indeed, by great efforts, by great expenditure of treasure and human life, England were to succeed in retrieving such a defeat, how infinitesimal would the cost of timely preparation seem compared with the waste of blood and money that must follow a great naval reverse. It is the object of the present Government to guard against the possibility of such a dread catastrophe. They believe that the present naval programme will, when completed, place the British Navy in that position of strength and predominance which will enable it to guarantee our Imperial power to defend, so far as is possible, our immense and wealth-giving commerce, to uphold the honour of the flag and the repute of the Nation, and to safeguard the food supplies, and the independence of our people.

*MR. H. H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton): I must, in the first place, congratulate the hon. Gentleman who has just sat down, on having at last broken the long silence he has so rigidly maintained during all these years. Those hon. Members who remember his Imperial speeches between 1880 and 1885 will recognize that the hon. Gentleman still holds the same opinions. The greater part of his speech, however, has been devoted to a eulogy of the best of all possible Admiralties, in the

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best of all possible Governments, and the hon. Gentleman has even extended his benediction to the noble Lord the Member for Marylebone. Sir, I have no disposition to complain that the hon. Member has paid this tribute of admiration to his colleagues and himself. But I must ask the House to give some consideration to the Bill, which it is asked to read a second time. The object of the Bill is twofold. It proposes to make further provisions for the Naval defence of the country, and it proposes to defray the expenses of such provision. I submit that in both aspects the Bill is unprecedented. It is a new mode of voting supplies for the Navy, and a new mode of providing ways and means for meeting Supply. I do not think it is fair to charge hon. Members on either side of the House with want of patriotism. Surely we can afford to admit that both sides are desirous of maintaining the maritime supremacy of the country. The Liberal party—I may go further and say, the Radical party—has accepted during a long series of years Cobden's doctrine that the Navy is our first, second, and third line of defence. It has been, on principle, opposed to a large army. It weighs always in favour of a strong navy to protect our coasts, colonies, and commerce. We have objected to a large military expenditure on the ground that we have no desire nor justification for interfering in Continental politics, but we have supported a sufficient Navy. We are entitled to further explanation of the Government proposals as contrasted with their proposals in 1887-88. Now when they came into office the estimated naval expenditure for 1886-87 was $13\frac{1}{4}$ millions. What did the noble Lord do? Why in the next year, 1887-88, the noble Lord reduced it to $12\frac{1}{2}$ millions, and in the next year it was further reduced. After twelve months' experience of the Admiralty, what did the noble Lord say? He said that, owing to the exceptionally large outlay of the last three years, it would be possible for some years to come to associate the reduction of expenditure with an increase of naval efficiency and strength. That was the noble Lord's statement in 1887. The noble Lord the Member for Marylebone criticized that speech severely, and the noble Lord (Lord G. Hamilton) in his reply said

that, "The policy of the Government was opposed to any wholesale building of vessels." Now, the present policy is to lay down 70 vessels, of which a large number are to be put out to contract. But what did the First Lord of the Admiralty say twelve months ago? "Why, if the Admiralty were to lay down a large number of ships at one time, so rapid are the changes that probably in ten or fifteen years they would be obsolete." Let the House contrast the present financial proposal of the Government with the expenditure of previous years. In 1885-6 the sum spent in new construction was practically £3,750,000; in 1886-7 it was £3,500,000; and in 1887-8 it was £3,000,000; the average of the last three years being upwards of £3,000,000. Ten years ago the country was not spending, as the hon. Member for Sheffield has said, two-thirds as much as of late years; for during the four years ending 1879 the expenditure in new construction was £2,000,000. Now the figure is £3,000,000 per annum, and there is in existence a Navy, the prime cost of which has been something like £44,000,000, while the allowance for depreciation amounted to £1,849,000. With these figures before them, the Government are proposing to spend in shipbuilding and armaments during the next five years £21,500,000; but they do not propose to spend this sum in addition to the normal expenditure. It includes the expenditure which they would incur if the normal rate were continued, and that amount would be £16,250,000 during the five years. Will the noble Lord the Member for Marylebone, who has made speeches in the country maintaining that the Navy is in a state of unpreparedness, and that a large outlay is necessary, be satisfied with the additional expenditure proposed by the Government? Of this £16,250,000, in fairness to the Admiralty, there must be deducted the sum necessary to complete the ships already in progress, and that deduction brings the figures down to about £14,250,000. This leaves something like £7,000,000 for additional ships. Of the proposed expenditure, £11,500,000 is to be spent in the dockyards, and £10,000,000 on contracts during five years while being raised in seven years. The instalments

of the £10,000,000 are £1,428,000 each, and so what the Government propose to do is simply to add this sum to the Navy Estimates for the next seven years. Now, Sir, not being an expert, I will not debate the sufficiency or the insufficiency of this amount; but I want rather to deal with the financial aspect of the question. How do the Government deal with that? Assuming that it is a proper sum, by the Bill before the House the Government ask Parliament for authority to provide in the ordinary Estimates of the next five years for £3,000,000 more than they propose to spend, on the chance that some use for it may be discovered. No Government ought to be trusted with more financial power than is necessary, lest a premium should be put upon Governmental extravagance. The whole ten millions is to be spent before the end of the year 1894, and at that date only seven millions of it will have been raised. The first criticism is, then, why spread the expenditure over seven years instead of five, since it is to be spent and will be needed during the five years? The Admiralty is hardly the Department to be trusted with the largest amount of uncontrolled expenditure. The hon. Member who has just sat down stated that the object of the Bill was to make it as difficult as possible to weaken or delay the policy of the Admiralty in the future. That is exactly the point on which I join issue with the hon. Member. The principles of our finance are opposed to taking the expenditure of the year out of the control of the House of Commons. Those principles are, first, that the income of the year shall be paid into the Treasury; secondly, that the expenditure of the year shall be met out of the income of the year; and, thirdly, that all unexpended balances shall be repaid to the Treasury at the end of the financial year. There are three principles laid down for our guidance applicable to all departments, sound and sensible principles, the financial value of which is apparent. The charges for the year should be met by the income of the year, that is a great constitutional principle, though the noble Lord opposite calls it financial pedantry. In the Civil Service Estimates the House will be asked to vote to keep up a great establishment

called into existence because people do not appreciate the financial soundness of this doctrine, and so we have a huge bankruptcy system for those who will not live within their means. The principle we apply to individuals should be applied to the policy of nations. Lay by all you can, pay off debt if you can, but do not anticipate your income several years in advance. How do we work our national expenditure? We have three modes of dealing with the National expenditure. All our national expenditure is taken out of the Consolidated Fund. The first payments are permanent grants under certain Acts of Parliament, which, for constitutional reasons, are placed beyond the control of the House of Commons. In this category are included the Civil List of the Sovereign, the salaries of the Judges, and of certain High Officials. There is no precedent for any portion of naval or military expenditure being put upon the Consolidated Fund, and taken out of the control of this House by annual Votes. There is the second mode of meeting expenditure, by annual Votes in Committee of Supply, and this House has always been jealous of its control over the annual Votes for military and naval purposes, so jealous that there is a Standing Order that provides that if Parliament meets before Christmas, then before the 15th January the Military and Naval Estimates should be on the Table, or within ten days of the opening of Supply. Parliament insists that the whole of the Military and Naval expenditure shall be annually submitted, and there has been no variation from that in the financial history of this country. I need hardly say that this practice represents a vital principle not to be dispensed with in favour of the exigences of Party. The hon. Gentleman says that what Parliament has done Parliament can reverse, but that is exactly what we do not mean. Parliament does not control the annual expenditure but the House of Commons, the expression Parliament implies that the House of Lords has a voice in the matter, but this the House of Lords has not.

*MR. ASHMEAD BARTLETT: I used the terms convertibly; I meant the House of Commons.

Mr. H. H. Fowler.

*MR. H. H. FOWLER: I am glad to have that correction, because the hon. Gentleman's words implied a dangerous doctrine. What was the Resolution proposed by Lord Palmerston, as to the control of the House over Supply.

"That the right of granting Aids and Supplies to the Crown is in the Commons alone as an essential part of their Constitution, and the limitation of all such grants, as to matter, manner, measure, and time is only in them."

Now if this Bill passed, both the manner and the time would be transferred from the House of Commons, in whom it alone rests, to the united Legislature to whom it does not belong. Then there is a third mode of voting money, to which I have alluded, and which was mentioned in the speech of the Chancellor of the Exchequer as applied to works of a permanent defensive character, that Bills have been passed making these works a charge on the Consolidated Fund. But such Bills invariably contain a clause providing that the charges in question shall be defrayed out of the moneys to be voted by Parliament. The precedent relied upon is that of Lord Palmerston's proposals with reference to fortifications. The Chancellor of the Exchequer stated that it was a legacy, so to speak, from Lord Palmerston's policy. How did Lord Palmerston proceed? He regarded these fortifications as permanent additions to the defences of the country—very much as the Government now propose to regard this outlay. The original estimate, I think, was something like £6,000,000, but that amount was exceeded. Did Lord Palmerston bring in a Bill to vote £6,000,000 from the Consolidated Fund? No. In 1860 a Bill was brought in; the money was to be borrowed; but the Bill provided only for the sums to be expended between August 1, 1860, and August 1, 1861. Parliament provided only for the outlay of the year, although it did

so by raising terminable annuities. In 1862 Parliament had another Bill before it. The Government estimated that the cost of the works would be £6,860,000, and the House of Commons sanctioned an expenditure of £1,860,000 in the year. Again, in 1863, in 1864, in 1865, and in 1867 Parliament had Bills before it, and in 1869 the final scheme showed that the total cost was £7,460,000, and Parliament sanctioned a final expenditure of £1,500,000. No less than seven Acts of Parliament were passed to authorize the expenditure of these £7,000,000. Why? The financier would say why not authorize the Chancellor of the Exchequer at once to raise the whole amount by terminable annuities, and this—apart from constitutional reasons, or what the noble Lord calls the pedantry of finance—would have been the easiest and simplest way; and that is the way a Railway Company would have proceeded. But Parliament wished to keep control of the annual expenditure, and therefore Lord Palmerston proposed the voting year by year of the outlay for that year. I am not arguing the policy of the expenditure of these 21 millions; my argument is that the annual expenditure should year by year be brought under the notice of Parliament. But that is not my only precedent; I have another even more to the point. I do not know if the noble Lord has had it brought to his attention. In 1865 the Admiralty were anxious to construct certain dockyards by contract, and obtained an Act to empower them to do this; and the Act that was passed, declaring that it was expedient that the dockyards at Chatham and Portsmouth should be greatly extended and that it would conduce to economy if the Admiralty were authorized to give contracts over a series of years, provided that the moneys to meet it should be annually voted by Parliament. Here

is a direct precedent in regard to an expenditure of 2½ millions for the case now before us. The hon. Member says, in justification of the Government proposals, that it is intended to make it as difficult as possible for Parliament to alter them. He said, I think, something about the caprice of party. Well, but party caprice and party Government are the constitution of this country; and may I remind him of an historical fact, and that is that the House of Commons has never refused a shilling to the Admiralty that a Government has asked for. That should be remembered by hon. Members who complain of the parsimony of the House of Commons, and express the fear that the House of Commons will not do what is necessary. They must recollect that no responsible Minister ever asked for a vote to be expended on the Navy but he invariably got what he wanted. Now what are the reasons for this proposal? You escape party control, but I do not think that that is the real intention of the noble Lord. I think he has a more practical reason. I believe his real object is to get rid of the surrender of the balances at the end of the year. I admit at once that there is very good ground for complaint on this account. Suppose we vote in the house 12 millions to the Navy—of course that is upon the simple estimate that the executive believe that that amount will be needed, the executive cannot be certain that it will be spent within the year—and if on the 31st of March it is not spent, then the balance, be it half a million or whatever it is, not spent is not carried over for the next year, but very wisely, as I think, is surrendered, and goes to the Exchequer towards the reduction of the National Debt. The noble Lord may ask, for instance, one million; but suppose he is only able to pay away £600,000; well, shipbuilding to the extent of £400,000 is proceeding, and will in a short time be done, but owing to some technical difficulty upon which the engineer has to satisfy himself, he cannot send in his certificate before

the 31st of March, then the noble Lord may say I am compelled to surrender this £400,000 and the money will have to be re-voted next year. Thus the Estimates appear to be increased by £400,000, whereas really part of the money voted last year has been diverted towards the reduction of the National Debt. I admit that this is misleading and inconvenient, but I do not think it is necessary to alter our financial system and arrangements to meet a difficulty of that kind, I have a higher opinion of our officials at the Treasury and of their financial ability. I do not believe that they need be driven to such a remedy as this is, and I could myself suggest a scheme by which it could be avoided. That where Parliament is satisfied that the work has actually been performed, the money might be paid into the Bank of England under the joint superintendence of the Treasury, the Admiralty and the contractor and so a surrender of the balance be avoided. We have had no reason to depart from the principles of finance to meet a temporary difficulty of this sort. The noble Lord speaks of the services being hampered by the covert action of the Treasury of the day. Now what could he mean by that? I have watched with great admiration the noble Lord's political career, and I have always noticed that he has a great horror of the Treasury. He has never been at the Treasury himself and that is to be regretted, because he regards that branch of the public service with a strong aversion, entertaining the dread of some mysterious, autocratic, irresponsible, parsimonious, intolerant body, always endeavouring to hamper the public services. Well for the last 170 years and until we arrive at the present Government the First Lord of the Treasury has been Prime Minister. And whether we may think of the wisdom of the departure from this precedent we all entertain the greatest respect for the present First Lord, and I am sure that with his long official experience the First Lord has a firm determination to do justice to all branches of the Service. He is assisted by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, they acting together with two Secretaries to the Treasury, one permanent and the other political. So I think

the Treasury can certainly not be described as being hostile to any branch of the public Service. You are going to sanction an arrangement between the Treasury and the Admiralty. Why should not you carry that out towards other branches of the public Services? Why not have recourse to that dangerous invention of Continental Governments, the principle of Voting a Budget for two or three years in advance? It is because we wish to resist that tendency that we object to this change. There is no reason for departing from the procedure requiring Parliamentary control year by year. You have a majority in this House at the present time as you have in the House of Lords, and you may feel perfectly safe from reversal. Ten years ago there was a Party which had a majority in this and in the other House, but when they went to the country they found that they had not the support of the country behind them. Therefore, without indulging in any prophecy as to the result of a General Election we protest again against our withdrawing from Parliament not only the power over its own annual expenditure, but against interfering with the power of the next Parliament over its expenditure. Principle precedent and prudence alike justify strict adherence to the custom which has hitherto regulated the relations between Parliament and the Executive, securing on the one hand the efficiency of the public Service, and on the other hand maintaining the supreme and final control of this House over the national income and expenditure.

*COLONEL HILL (Bristol, S.): I will not occupy time with the points the right hon. Gentleman, who has just spoken, has raised. I take it for granted that the Navy is of the first importance to the Empire, nor am I careful to answer those who appear to think lightly of our naval supremacy, and are indisposed to favour any expenditure on the defensive forces of the country. I do not think it would be becoming or that it is necessary for me to attempt to make any defence of the criticism made upon the noble Lord (Lord G. Hamilton); he can very well answer them for himself. Nor do I think

the country is interested in knowing what he may have said in former days, or with the question of precedent or non-precedent for the manner in which it is now proposed to raise the amount to meet the Government proposal. What the country is interested in is knowing whether the Navy is adequate for the wants of the country, and how the Government propose to make it so if the insufficiency is admitted. I recently heard Lord Rosebery make this remark in a speech to a commercial assembly of considerable importance, that no party that deserves the name of a party would refuse money for an increase of the Navy, upon two conditions, first that a necessity is shown, and secondly that it is judiciously expended. I entirely agree with his Lordship's views on that matter. How are we to ascertain the necessity? The question of policy has to be decided by the Ministry, and they have declared it is necessary that our Navy should be equal to the Navies of any other two countries in the world. That appears to me to be a very moderate proposition, and one that will find favour with the country generally. Then to whom are we to apply for information as to what is required to put the Navy in this condition but to the distinguished naval officers who hold or have held commands in naval service? I know it is sometimes said that naval officers in approaching such matters are disposed to sink national considerations in the desire to advance the interest of the profession to which they belong, but I have faith in the honour and patriotism of naval officers and believe them to be worthy of and true to the great traditions of the British Navy. Well, although the First and Second Naval Lords spoke with a somewhat uncertain voice before the Naval Estimates Committee, there is among naval officers a consensus of opinion that our Navy is seriously

deficient in strength for the protection of our shores and commerce. If this be so, the necessity for an increase of strength requires the support of no further argument. It is scarcely necessary to consider the question of what might happen if our fleet were swept away, whether our land fortifications are strong enough to protect our sea-ports, whether our merchant vessels would be able to bring us sufficient food supplies, or whether if a hostile force were landed, we should be able to repel it. I am greatly mistaken if the British Nation feel otherwise than that none of these disasters must be possible so far as human prudence and human skill can prevent them. I am quite sure my countrymen would deem their rulers traitors to their sacred trust, did they not make such preparations as may be needful to protect them, not only against the actual occurrence of such evils, but also from the more probable, though scarcely less serious, consequences of panics caused by the mere fear of them. The inadequacy of our Navy is universally admitted. The noble Lord the Member for Paddington, notwithstanding his zeal for economy, admits that an increase is required, and my hon. Friend the Member for Cardiff, who certainly speaks with considerable authority on the subject, not only says we want more vessels, but he emphasizes that by saying that a great many of the vessels we have, are not fit for the purpose for which they were intended. It seems to me quite impossible for us to come to any other conclusion than that the first proposition laid down by Lord Rosebery, viz., necessity has been proved. The British Navy requires to be strengthened. This cannot be done without money, which the British taxpayers must furnish, and I believe the money will be cheerfully provided if the second proposition of Lord Rosebery can be sustained, that the expenditure

will be judicious. The question of judicious expenditure divides itself into two heads, first the nature of the additions, and secondly their cost. The first is by far the most important. If the addition is too great there is evidently much waste, and if the addition is too little, the object of expenditure is lost and the waste is greater, and this would also be the case if the additions were of the wrong kind. Now, the noble Lord the Member for Marylebone (Lord C. Beresford) who has done good service in calling the attention of the country to the necessity for strengthening the Navy, makes some objection to the Government scheme because it is not accompanied by detailed Plans of Campaign for meeting every emergency. Well, I do not hesitate to say that an Admiralty which would propose a great expenditure which they advise the Government is needful, and would suffice to bring the Navy up to its proper strength without having given such plans and calculations their most careful consideration would be unworthy of its position. But to publish these details to the world in a Parliamentary Paper would, in my opinion, be most unwise. Some hon. Members say they have no faith in the Admiralty, and I am not here to assert that all administrations in the past have been models of perfection and wisdom, the proof or disproof of such a proposition would serve no good purpose. But having had some opportunity while sitting on the Naval Committee of forming an opinion of the Members of the present Board of Admiralty who are immediately responsible to Parliament and of the chief Admiralty officials, I do say that I feel confidence in their business capacity. I do not at all agree with the hon. Member for Wolverhampton that they are profligate wasters. On the contrary, they have introduced considerable economies in the administration of the Navy, and introduced rules and regulations not only conducing to greater economy in the future, but preventing the

repetition of the errors of the past. As an indication of the careful manner in which the Admiralty Programme has been prepared, I would point to what my noble Friend (Lord C. Beresford) has characterized as a useful and business-like paper "Designs for Battle-ships." When so much care has been taken over the designs, I think it is only fair to suppose that similar care has been exercised in determining the quantity, and it is worthy of remark that the additions proposed by the First Lord came within 4 vessels of the number suggested by the noble Lord the Member for Marylebone (Lord C. Beresford). As to the designs of the contemplated vessels, of course, a man-of-war is such a complicated machine, that there will always be differences of opinion among Naval authorities, but I think the discussion which lately took place before the Society of Naval Architects shows that very great care was taken to come to a compromise among the different qualities that commend themselves to the minds of the different experts.

It being Midnight, the Debate stood adjourned; to be resumed to-morrow, at Two of the clock.

SUPPLY.—REPORT.

Resolution [3rd May] reported.

CIVIL SERVICES.

CLASS II.

"That a sum, not exceeding £35,286, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1890, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Department of Her Majesty's Secretary of State for the Colonies, including certain Expenses connected with Emigration."

Resolution read a second time.

*MR. DILLWYN (Swansea): I regret that this Order should be reached so late in the sitting, but I do not think that sufficient attention has been given to a circumstance in connection with the massacre on the Gold Coast, which was brought to the notice of the House by the hon. Member for Leicester on Friday last. The discussion then related prin-

cipally to what my hon. Friend described as a massacre of natives, but there was another point raised that did not receive the attention it deserves. Two natives were tried before a jury in a proper manner for conspiracy and murder of Mr. Dalrymple. The Judge summed up in their favour, and they were acquitted. There was another charge against them, but the Colonial Attorney General entered a *nolle prosequi*. So far, there is no complaint. But the Governor did not seem satisfied, and a Bill was passed by a subservient Legislative Council which enabled the Governors to keep these men prisoners notwithstanding their acquittal. That seems to me a proceeding so entirely contrary to all ideas of right and justice that I think we are justified in raising this point again, seeing that the Under Secretary on the last occasion did not deny or make any explanatory comment on this transaction. I trust some explanation may be forthcoming now, and to raise the question I formally move the reduction of the Vote by £50.

Amendment proposed, to leave out "£35,286," and insert "£35,236"—*(Mr. Dillwyn)*.

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That '£35,286' stand part of the Resolution."

THE UNDER SECRETARY FOR THE COLONIES (Baron H. de Worms, Liverpool, East Toxteth): If the hon. Member had given me notice that he was going to bring this on, I would have taken care to have had the means of full explanation with me.

*MR. DILLWYN: I ought to have done so.

BARON H. DE WORMS: I am afraid I can only repeat the information I gave the other night, when I think the hon. Member was present. [MR. DILLWYN: Yes]. I then explained that the persons against whom prosecutions were

withdrawn, the Government did not see fit to return to their district where they had been the means of raising a rebellion. The Governor had thought fit, not with a view to punishment, but in the interests of peace, to detain these men, and an Ordinance was passed by the Legislative Council for the purpose of preventing their return and a recurrence of those unfortunate events to which reference has been made.

*MR. PICTON (Leicester): I really think that the lives and liberties of Her Majesty's subjects ought to have a little more serious attention than they seem likely to get from the right hon. Gentleman. The right hon. Gentleman has not stated the whole facts as they are known at the Gold Coast, and reported in the Press there. In addition to the two men referred to, an old woman, Akoto Mamlay, is also detained, from whom surely no danger can be expected. The fact remains that these persons are committed to prison apparently for life, but at any rate, during the pleasure of the Crown, although they have been acquitted of the crime with which they were charged, and the Attorney General of the Colony has entered a *nolle prosequi* with respect to other charges. Why preserve the institution of trial by jury at all if the decision of juries is to go for nothing? Certainly after the practical admission of the Attorney General that he had no evidence to tender, these persons ought surely to be set at liberty. This Ordinance was practically the expression of the will of the Governor. [*Interruptions.*] It is all very well for hon. Members to exhibit impatience when they care nothing about the Dependencies of the Crown except as a source of wealth to themselves. These people have a just right and claim to our consideration. Late though the hour is, we are bound in duty to give some attention to this matter. We desire to know whether the Governor

Baron H. de Worms.

has this Constitutional power to pass an Ordinance and imprison people at his will after they have been acquitted by a jury of the offences alleged against them. I should like to know if the Constitution of the Colony recognises any such system of *lettres de cachet*. A grave wrong has been committed, and we demand some serious explanation.

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (MR. RITCHIE, Tower Hamlets, St. George's): The Government have always understood that this is a question which is not yet finally decided. The condition of affairs to which the hon. Member has referred could not remain without investigation, and my right hon. Friend gave an answer the other night to the effect that the Government were waiting for Despatches, and that when those Despatches are received the whole case will receive consideration at the hands of the Government.

*MR. CHILDERS (Edinburgh, S.): I think this matter ought to be put a little more positively by the Government. May we have a distinct assurance from the Government that the Papers will be laid on the Table after the decision of the Government has been arrived at?

*MR. RITCHIE: The Government could not absolutely undertake, until they had seen the Papers, to lay them on the Table of the House. They will, however, be presented to the House unless there is some impediment in the way of their production.

*MR. CHILDERS: I am quite aware of that technical rule, but I thought an assurance should be given that unless a clear reason of public policy prevented their presentation they would be laid upon the Table.

BARON H. DE WORMS: By the indulgence of the House I may be allowed to say that I stated last week that the Government are awaiting a Report from the Governor. When they receive the

Papers, if it is possible to present them to the House, we shall be happy to do so.

SIR W. LAWSON (Cumberland, Cockermouth): The logical course would be to postpone the Vote. The Papers that are coming may throw an entirely new light on the subject. I would therefore move the Adjournment of the Debate.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the debate be now adjourned."
—(Sir Wilfrid Lawson.)

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Sir M. HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): I hope that the hon. Baronet will not press that Motion. Members of the Government have spoken, and would not have an opportunity of speaking again if the debate were adjourned. When the Papers are presented, hon. Members can raise any question they desire.

MR. ILLINGWORTH (Bradford, W.): What opportunity have we?

*SIR MICHAEL HICKS BEACH: The ordinary opportunities open to every Member. Tuesdays and Fridays still remain for the purpose, and as we have seen to-night matters of urgency find other opportunities.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: If the Government will intimate that steps will be taken to secure the release of these innocent persons, we shall be satisfied, but short of that I do not think we ought to be.

*SIR R. FOWLER (London): Papers have been presented, and we have had an opportunity of discussing them. I do not see that the Government can give a more absolute promise in regard to other Papers they have not yet themselves received, and, moreover, I cannot see any reason for passing what would practically be a Vote of Censure on Lord Knutsford. I think hon. Members might accept the answer as given.

Question put, "That the debate be now adjourned."

The House divided:—Ayes 58; Noes 169. (Div. List No. 97.)

Question, "That £35,286 stand part of the Resolution," put, and agreed to.

Resolution agreed to.

FRIENDLY SOCIETIES ACT (1888)
AMENDMENT BILL. (No. 193.)

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1.

Amendments made.

Amendment proposed,

"In page 1, line 15, to leave out the words from 'a certificate,' inclusive, to the end of the Clause, and insert the words, 'Section 1 of 'The Friendly Societies Act, 1888,' shall be modified as follows:—

"(a) The words 'on being satisfied that the society has been so constituted solely on *bona fide* grounds of advantage or convenience to the members thereof' shall be repealed;

"(b) For the words 'transmitted to and received by the society affected thereby' shall be substituted the words 'advertized in the *London Gazette* and in some newspaper in general circulation in the county in which the registered office is situate, and also transmitted by a registered letter to the society at such registered office.'"
(Sir Herbert Maxwell).

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand a part of the Clause."

It being after midnight, and objection being taken to further proceeding, the Chairman left the Chair to make his report to the House.

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon Tuesday, 14th May.

PARTNERSHIP BILL. (No. 151.)
SECOND READING.

*MR. H. H. FOWLER: I wish to ask the Government how they mean to deal with this Bill, which affects millions of property in this country. I think we are entitled to ask that a Bill of this sort should not have any Government sanction unless the law officers of the Crown can assure the House of Commons that it involves no change in the law.

*SIR MICHAEL HICKS BEACH: I can only say that if the right hon. Gentleman can persuade hon. Members behind him to withdraw their objections to proceeding with this Bill, it may be possible for the Government to state their views upon it.

Second Reading deferred till Thursday.

SUBMARINE TELEGRAPH CONTRACT (HALIFAX AND BERMUDA).

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That the Contract, dated the 12th day of April, 1889, for the Construction of a Submarine Telegraph Line from Halifax, Nova Scotia, to the Island be approved."—(*Mr. Jackson*).

DR. CAMERON (Glasgow, College): I wish to ask the hon. Gentleman to postpone this Motion. Papers on the subject were only issued on Saturday last. I see that under the contract we are to give a subsidy of £8,000 a year for 20 years, but there is not the slightest explanation beyond that the cable is required for strategic reasons. I think that as guardians of the public purse we are bound to insist on having some explanation of the reasons for making this grant of £160,000. I think it undesirable that such important matters should be brought forward in so hurried a manner, and that an endeavour should be made to pass them through the House without hon. Members having had time to make themselves acquainted with the terms of the contracts. I will, therefore, ask the hon. Member to withdraw the Motion for the present, and if he does not do that, I shall feel compelled to move the Adjournment of the Debate. My object is to give the Government an opportunity of affording us full explanations on this subject.

*MR. CHILDERS (Edinburgh, S.): I rise to support the appeal of my hon. Friend, although my acquaintance with the subject since 1881 does not lead me to oppose the proposal. But the papers ought to have been circulated long ago, and I only received mine this morning.

I hope the Government will consent to the postponement of this matter.

*MR. W. H. SMITH: It is not necessary to move the Adjournment of the Debate. My hon. Friend proposes to give an explanation of the facts, and, under the circumstances, the Government will consent to the postponement of the consideration of this contract until an early day.

MR. CHILDERS: I hope that in similar cases in the future the issue of Papers will not be delayed until so closely upon the discussion of the subject, and that they will be circulated instead of being put on the short list.

*MR. W. L. JACKSON (Leeds): I laid the contract on the Table before the Recess, and I was under the impression that the Papers had been distributed at an earlier date. I found subsequently, however, that they were put on the short list for the purpose of giving hon. Members an opportunity of saying whether or not they required them. I at once gave instructions for a full circulation, but I am quite willing that the discussion shall be postponed, and will accordingly withdraw the Motion for the present.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS (INSPECTION).

Address for

"Return showing, for the years 1870, 1880, and 1889 respectively, (1) the number of Inspectors of Public Elementary Schools of each class employed; (2) the scale of Pay of each class of Inspectors; (3) the number of Children in average attendance at Inspected Schools; and (4) the cost per thousand Children of Inspection."—(*Mr. Mundella*).

COMMISSIONERS FOR OATHS

BILL—[*Lords*].

Read the first time; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 208.]

House adjourned at a Quarter before One o'clock.

HANSARD'S PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES.

No. 13.] THIRD VOLUME OF SESSION 1889.

[MAY 15.]

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Tuesday, 7th May, 1889.

The Lord Somers took the Oath.

COMMITTEE OF SELECTION FOR STANDING COMMITTEES.

Report from, that the Committee have added the Lord Balfour to the Standing Committee for Bills relating to Law, &c., for the consideration of the Town Police Clauses Act (1847) Amendment Bill, and the Lord Clifford of Chudleigh for the consideration of the Reformatory Schools Bill Read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) PROVISIONAL ORDERS BILL.

Read 3a (according to order), and passed.

SAINT GILES' RESTORATION (SCOTLAND) ACT AMENDMENT BILL (No. 40).

Read 2a (according to order), and committed to a Committee of the whole House on Tuesday next.

REMOVAL OF WRECKS ACT (1877), AMENDMENT BILL (No. 46).

SECOND READING.

THE EARL OF MILLTOWN: My Lords, this is an extremely short and simple Act, but it is one of considerable importance to our sea-faring population and to the men who man our lifeboats around our storm beaten coasts. By the Act of 1877, which it is proposed to amend, provision is made for the removal of wrecks from harbours and

fairways, which are an obstruction to navigation. It has been held, however, that the Act does not apply to the removal of such wrecks as are an obstruction to the lifeboats in their progress to save life and property. The proposal in this Bill is shortly to apply the Act to the latter class of cases as well as to the former. To show that the danger is no imaginary one, I will read to your Lordships a short statement of what took place a few years ago:—

“On the 21st of July, 1885, the crew of the Caistor lifeboat, hearing signals of distress, in order to save time, went out in a yawl. They had proceeded two miles when the yawl struck on a sunken wreck, and out of the crew of 15 men, 8 poor fellows were drowned. It was only the previous winter that these gallant men had saved the crew of the very vessel which thus caused their death.”

Since the year 1885, this station, with its two lifeboats, has saved 1,143 lives, and another station, Ramsgate, with its outlying sands, saved 898 lives since 1885. It is quite obvious therefore, that this danger should be at once removed from the way of these gallant men. I do not know that I need trouble your Lordships with any further observations on the Bill. It was received in another place with a unanimity which was wonderful, and it has I believe, received the assent of Her Majesty's Government.

Bill read 2a according to order.

THE EARL OF MILLTOWN moved that the Bill be referred to Committee of the whole House.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR: I am not quite certain that if those who are interested in the standing Committees were present, there would not be opposition to this proposal, because there seems no reason why the Bill should go to a Committee of the whole House

rather than to one of the standing Committees.

THE EARL OF MILLTOWN: I beg my noble and learned Friend's pardon: there is a reason. Dispatch is urgent in this matter. It is only during the summer months, when the days are long, and the sea is smooth, that these wrecks can be removed; and if the Bill be relegated to one of the Standing Committees, it is very problematical when it would emerge. It is really a very simple Bill, inserting two words in two clauses of the original Act, and I do not think there is any reason for its going to a Standing Committee.

LORD KNUTSFORD: Speaking on behalf of Her Majesty's Government, as the Bill is so simple, and the matter has been carefully gone into in the other House, I do not see any reason why it should not be considered by your Lordships in Committee of the whole House.

Bill committed to a Committee of the whole House on Thursday next.

SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND BILL. (No. 52.)

Bill read 2a (according to order) and committed to a Committee of the whole House until Tuesday next.

House adjourned at a quarter before
Five o'clock, until Thursday next,
at quarter past Four o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Tuesday, 7th May, 1889.

QUESTIONS.

IRELAND—THE ASHBOURNE ACT.

MR. LEA (Londonderry, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, whether his attention has been called to the result of the test case (referred to in his reply of 7th December) in which the Salters' Company endeavoured to enforce payment of promissory notes for arrears incurred before the sale of the estate under the Ashbourne Act; whether such case has been decided against the Salters' Company on the ground of illegality in the

form of the notes, and if another similar action is commenced against James Badger also for arrears due before November 1885, and supposed to be released by the deed of conveyance to each of the tenants; and, if such action on the part of the Salters' Company is contrary to the intentions of the Ashbourne Act, whether the Government have any power to prevent the Salters' Company from continuing such proceedings?

***THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND** (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): It appears that the test case of Thomas M'Kee, which is referred to in the first paragraph, was decided against the Salters' Company on the side issue that the promissory note had not been presented for payment at the time and place mentioned therein, thereby leaving untouched the general question whether the amounts of the promissory notes can be recovered consistently with the provisions of the Ashbourne Act. This general question will probably, however, be decided by the Queen's Bench Division of the High Court of Justice in connection with the test case of James Badger, which appears to have been listed for yesterday.

BOYCOTTING AT YOUGHAL.

MR. LEA asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if the boycotting of the Protestant shopkeepers at Youghal who refused to obey the dictation of the National League and put up their shutters once a week still continues; and if, among other hardships, an old woman of 70 years of age has been deprived of her means of living, and an important factory prevented from giving employment to a number of workpeople?

***MR. A. J. BALFOUR:** The Constabulary Authorities report that the boycotting at Youghal, which was commenced about three months ago, still continues, and that an old woman of 70 years of age is among those boycotted, and her means of living impaired. An important factory has also been seriously affected by the boycotting necessitating the discharge of about 40 workmen out of 100 who had been employed.

MR. MAC NEILL (Donegal, S.): Is this one of the districts of which the Chief Secretary described last night as being in a state of revolution?

Lord Halsbury

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: There is a great deal in the condition of Youghal to be complained of, but I do not think Youghal can be described as being in a state of revolution.

MR. JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.): May I ask if it is the fact that this form of intimidation has made many converts to Home Rule?

MR. CLANCY (Dublin County, N.): Is there any evidence for the suggestion that the boycotting has been prompted by religious motives?

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The only suggestion made in the question of the kind referred to by the hon. Gentleman is that the persons boycotted are Protestants and that the boycotters are Roman Catholics. I believe that is the fact.

MR. CLANCY: Does the right hon. Gentleman not know that two Protestant clergymen who have been appealing for aid have expressly relieved the Catholics of Youghal from the charge of religious intolerance?

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I make no statement with regard to it. I simply state the facts, which I understand the hon. Gentleman does not deny.

TITHE DISTRAINTS IN WALES.

MR. BOWEN ROWLANDS (Cardiganshire) asked the Under Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he had received any communication from the Chief Constables of Carmarthenshire and Cardiganshire in reply to the letters sent to them by him with reference to any attempts to come to an understanding with the tenants before bringing large bodies of police to the scene of tithe distraints and sales in those counties? He also wished to know whether the Chief Constable of Cardiganshire stated to the peasants and others attending tithe sales in the parish of Penbryn, on Wednesday the 1st May, that their presence at such sales was illegal, as constituting an unlawful assembly; whether such statement was translated into Welsh at the Chief Constable's request, by one of the persons so attending the sales, and repeated by him to the people in the Welsh language; and on what grounds was such a statement made by the Chief Constable?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (MR. STUART WORTLEY, Sheffield, Hallam): Yes, Sir, I am informed by the Chief Constable of Carmarthenshire that, as soon as Mr. Stevens informed him that he was going to levy distraints in the parish of Trelech, he wrote on the 3rd of March last to a leading County Councillor, who had influence in the district, asking if anything could be done to avoid the necessity of taking a large body of police to attend the sales. To this letter he received no reply. The Chief Constable of Cardiganshire informs me that since the 19th of March last (the date of the tithe riot at Penbryn) he has been in communication with some of the magistrates of the district, and has asked them to assist him in the preservation of the peace when next Mr. Stevens visited the parish. This they consented to do, and offered to accompany the Chief Constable without further escort; but Mr. Stevens, after the violence which had been shown, was unwilling to visit the parish of Penbryn without an escort of police. Accordingly, on the 1st of May, the Chief Constable, accompanied by two magistrates and 46 constables, went with Mr. Stevens to Penbryn. The crowd at first gave some trouble, but after a time, and with the help of the magistrates, who exerted their influence, the distraining party were allowed to proceed unmolested. On the 2nd of May there was comparative quiet, the Chief Constable going unattended by a magistrate and with a small escort of 18 constables. In reply to the second question of the hon. Member, I may say that the Chief Constable of Cardiganshire informs me that on the occasion in question he found a crowd assembled in one of the farmyards, where a large bell was being rung and a horn was being blown. He saw people armed with bludgeons joining the crowd, and one man was using threatening language. In these circumstances he informed the magistrates present and the people that he considered this an unlawful assembly, and he requested that his opinion might be stated in Welsh to the persons present, which was done. The opinion of the Chief Constable was shortly afterwards confirmed by the conduct of the crowd,

who commenced to throw stones at the distraining agent.

MR. BOWEN ROWLANDS: Am I to understand from the answer to the first question that it was the action of Mr. Stephens that rendered it necessary for the police to be present in such large numbers?

MR. STUART WORTLEY: Yes; that is substantially the answer that I have given.

IRELAND—THE FALCARRAGH BATTERING RAM.

MR. MAC NEILL, for Mr. JAMES STUART (Shoreditch, Hoxton) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether it is a fact that an Inspector and certain other members of the Royal Irish Constabulary were drilled for several days in the use of the battering ram previous to its removal to Falcarragh; whether it is intended to make use of the battering ram in the evictions, numbering about 150, about to commence at Glashercoo and other portions of the Olphert estate; and whether the local authorities have been instructed to exclude the Member of Parliament for the district and other Members of Parliament present, as well as the representatives of the Press and the clergy, from within the cordon of Police and Military at these evictions?

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The Constabulary Authorities report that the matter alleged in the first paragraph of the question is not a fact. The use or otherwise of the ram at the evictions mentioned will be entirely governed by the considerations which I have already indicated in reply to former questions on the general subject. The local authorities have not received any instructions as to the steps to be taken by them to secure the due carrying out of the law and the preservation of the peace at the evictions in question, they being obviously the best judges of the necessities of the case.

MR. MAC NEILL: Is it not a fact that Mr. Lawlor, a District Inspector of the Royal Irish Constabulary and a company of the Royal Irish Constabulary, were engaged for several days close to Falcarragh in this ram practice; and is it not a fact that I myself asked Mr. Lawlor with reference to the proficiency of his men, and he could not deny it.

Mr. Stuart Wortley

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have given the House all the information I have. If the hon. Gentleman desires further information he must put another question on the subject.

*MR. MAC NEILL: Will the right hon. Gentleman have any objection to allow me, or to direct the Chief Commissioner to allow me to get a model of the battering ram to show to English audiences?

MR. T. W. RUSSELL, (Tyrone, S.): May I ask whether there is any foundation for the statement that the evictions in the Glashercoo estate numbered 150; is it not the fact that there were only 25 tenants in that estate?

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: If my memory serves me, my hon. Friend is perfectly right. The number of 150 is grossly exaggerated.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE (Bradford, Central): Is it not a fact that Mr. Olphert stated in Court that he intended to evict 130 tenants?

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: If he did it would not bear out the suggestion in the question. I think his statement was in regard to his property as a whole.

MR. MAC NEILL: Would not 25 evictions probably include 150 individuals?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: The question refers not only to the Glashercoo estate, but to other portions of the Olphert estate, and I asked whether Mr. Olphert has not stated that he intended to evict 130 tenants.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: Is it not a fact that the only warrant in existence for evictions refers to the Glashercoo estate?

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I should like to have notice of the questions. I have not supplied myself with information necessary to answer them with accuracy, but my idea is that the suggestion of my hon. Friend (Mr. Russell) is correct.

THE OLPHERT EVICTIONS.

MR. MAC NEILL for Mr. JAMES STUART also asked the Chief Secretary what was the number of Police and Military engaged in carrying out the recent evictions on the Olphert estate, and at what cost; what has been the number of Police employed since the last day of these evictions on Saturday, 13th April, in the townlands of Bally-

connell, Drumnatty, Ballynass, Ardsbeg, and Ardsmore respectively; how many of these have been employed in the protection of emergency men in what is known as protection posts, and how many houses in each of the above townlands have been used either as protection posts or as temporary barracks; and, whether any of these were subsequently abandoned; and, if so, for what reason?

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The constabulary authorities report that 100 each of police and military were on duty in connection with the Olphert evictions. The extra pay and travelling expenses of the constabulary amounted to about £72 10s. There does not appear to have been any extra cost in regard to the military, they being quartered in the vicinity. For three days after the 13th of April, seven policemen were employed on protection duty in the townlands named. But in consequence of the retaking forcible possession of all the evicted houses, covering a tract of some 20 square miles, it became necessary to draft in 200 men, who, however, were sent back in detachments to their stations, as the condition of the district warranted, leaving a total now engaged on duty there of 38 men. Of these 10 men are employed in protecting caretakers. The number of houses used for protection posts was for a few days five, and subsequently four. The number of houses held as temporary barracks was four, one of which was surrendered after a few days, when it was found that the men could be more advantageously disposed for patrolling.

MR. MACNEILL: As regards the abandonment of the houses, is it not the fact that the hovels into which the police were put were so wretched, the accommodation so bad, and the hardships they were compelled to suffer so great, that the men were obliged to be removed?

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am not aware of that fact.

MR. CLANCY: The right hon. Gentleman states that there was no extra cost, and yet that there were engaged 100 police and 100 soldiers.

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Yes, I stated that 100 police and 100 military were engaged in connection with the evictions.

MR. CLANCY: The right hon. Gentleman said there was no extra cost because the men were stationed there.

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I said nothing of the kind, and it would have been as well if the hon. Gentleman had listened to the answer I gave. I said that there was an expenditure of £72 10s. for extra pay and travelling expenses of the constabulary, but that there did not appear to be any extra cost in regard to the military.

NYASSALAND.

DR. CAMERON (Glasgow College) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, whether it is true that the British Consul at Quillimane was imprisoned by the Portuguese authorities for complicity in importing war rockets for use in the hostilities at present being carried on by British subjects in Nyassaland against Arab slave traders; whether, before these war rockets were sent out any application was made to the Foreign Office to obtain from the Portuguese Government a permit passing them through the Customs at Quillimane; whether the Foreign Office officials had previously obtained permits from the Portuguese Government for the passage of cannon and ammunition for the same destination; whether, in the case of the war rockets, the Foreign Office applied for the permits desired; if not, whether they had any reason to believe that the intention to send out the war rockets was departed from; whether they were aware that the British Consul at Quillimane was agent for the company which was sending out the war rockets; and whether they made any communication to him on the subject?

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir J. FERGUSSON, Manchester, N.W.): It is not true that the Consul was imprisoned. Mr. Ross, an unpaid Vice-Consul, in the course of his private business, asked for clearance by the Custom House at Quillimané of some rockets sent out by the African Lakes Company. By direction of the authorities they were lodged in the Government magazine, and some days later Mr. Ross was summoned and then arrested on a charge of introducing dangerous explosives, but he was immediately released on bail. No previous

application had been made to the Foreign Office respecting these rockets, and consequently permits for them had not been asked from the Portuguese Government, but permits for some small cannon and ammunition had previously been obtained after some difficulty. It was known that the Vice-Consul was acting as agent for the Company. I should add that due representations are being addressed to the Portuguese Government with reference to this occurrence, and also to the refusal to permit the entrance of materials for the defence of the British settlers on Lake Nyassa.

THE ZAMBESI.

DR. CAMERON asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the Portuguese Minister for Foreign Affairs is correctly reported by Reuter's Agency to have stated in the Chamber of Deputies on Saturday that "Portugal maintained her right to control the navigation of the Zambesi, and also the right to extend her influence over the territories which lay inland from her coast possessions," and "that these rights had been acknowledged by the Berlin Conference, and in particular by two Powers"? Whether Her Majesty's Government admit the rights referred to to have been acknowledged by the Berlin Conference as stated, and whether they acknowledge the existence of either right on the part of the Portuguese Government?

*SIR. J. FERGUSSON: We have not as yet received any confirmation of the report mentioned, and I would rather not express an opinion upon an alleged statement which might not be accurately reported.

DR. CAMERON: I will repeat the question on Thursday.

CONFECTIONERY.

MR. BROOKFIELD (Sussex, Rye) asked the President of the Board of Trade whether he could state the actual amount of "confectionery" properly so-called, which was annually exported from Great Britain and Ireland, to foreign countries and to British Possessions, severally.

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (SIR M. HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): I am not able to state the actual amount of confectionery—properly so-called—which is annually exported,

because the exports of confectionery are entered under the same heading as those of pickles, vinegar, sauces, and condiments. The total value of the above exports for the year 1887, which is the last for which separate figures can be given, amounted to £1,193,727, of which £443,000 went to foreign countries, and £751,000 to British Possessions. Probably not more than one-fourth of the amount is for confectionery, properly so-called.

ARMENIA.

MR. CHANNING (Northamptonshire, E.) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, whether Her Majesty's Government have received any confirmation of the statement in the Press that the Kurdish Chief, Mussa Bey, has seized and burned alive some of the notables of an Armenian village. Whether he is aware that the Armenian Patriotic Association have stated that the worst forms of slavery prevail in Armenia, and that there are frequent abductions of Armenian girls, which are connived at by the Moslem judges, and have asked for the appointment of an International Commission to inquire into the state of Armenia; and, whether Her Majesty's Government propose to take steps, and if so, what steps, as to the alleged condition of Armenia?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: Her Majesty's Government have not received any confirmation of the statement in the first paragraph. I believe those in the second to be much exaggerated, and indeed, we have received no recent intelligence to support them. Her Majesty's Ambassador will not fail to represent at the Porte any occurrences of this kind which he knows to have taken place, whenever by doing so he can hope to benefit the sufferers.

MR. BUCHANAN (Edinburgh, W.): Is it not the fact that the statements contained in the question of my hon. Friend, are vouched for by the Patriarch of Armenia?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: We have not received any corroboration of the statements.

PRISON RULES.

MR. HAYDEN (Leitrim, S.) asked the Under Secretary of State for the Home Department, what is the rule in England in regard to the visits to

persons in prison in default of giving bail?

MR. STUART WORTLEY: They are permitted to receive a visit and also to write one letter in each week, and the Visiting Committee may, by permission in any special case, for special reasons, prolong the periods of the visits allowed to such prisoners, or accord additional visits or letters to such reasonable extent as they may deem advisable.

IRELAND—CASTLEBAR PRISON.

MR. HAYDEN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the Governor of Castlebar Prison has refused the application of their friends to see those in gaol in default of bail, unless they came to tender security; under what authority has the Governor so acted; and, if he is not justified in his refusal, will the Chief Secretary intimate the fact to him, in order to prevent the annoyance caused to parties going long distances to Castlebar from other counties, only to find themselves disappointed?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The General Prisons Board report that the Governor of Castlebar Prison appears to have been under a misapprehension in regard to the rule bearing on the subject. The Board have now pointed this out to him.

MR. HAYDEN: Then I am to understand that prisoners in default of bail may be visited by their friends?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: It would not be contrary to the prison rules.

VACCINATION.

MR. PICTON (Leicester) asked the President of the Local Government Board whether his attention had been called to a letter from Professor Crookshank, of King's College, London, in the *Times* of April 30; whether the statement there made is correct that the Medical Officer of the Local Government Board, at a meeting of the Pathological Society in December 1887, expressed his satisfaction that the outbreak of cowpox in Wiltshire would afford an opportunity of testing the effects of vaccine from that source on human beings, as had long been desired; whether the Vaccination Department has availed itself of this opportunity;

and, whether the results compared favourably with those from the French lymph; and, if so, why these results have not been published in the Report recently issued by the Medical Officer?

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (MR. RITCHIE, Tower Hamlets, St. George's): I am informed by the Medical Officer of the Local Government Board that the statement in the second paragraph of the question is incorrect.

THE WELSH SUNDAY CLOSING ACT.

MR. ARTHUR WILLIAMS (Glamorgan, S.) asked the Under Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he could now state the terms of reference to the Royal Commission on the Welsh Sunday Closing Act; and, whether he could give the names of the Commissioners and Secretary?

MR. STUART WORTLEY: The list of names of the Commissioners on the Act is not yet completely settled. The terms of reference will be substantially as follows:—"To inquire into the operation of the Sunday Closing (Wales) Act, 1881, into the effect of its enactments in regard to the diminution or increase of intemperance, and into the causes which have led to such diminution or increase, and to report thereon."

MR. MACLEAN (Oldham), who had a question on the Paper to a similar effect, asked if the Commission would sit in London or be a travelling Commission?

MR. STUART WORTLEY: It is not usual to limit the discretion of the Royal Commission on such a matter.

SIR W. LAWSON (Cumberland, Cockermouth): When will the Commission begin their labours?

MR. STUART WORTLEY: Very soon, I hope.

INTOXICATING LIQUORS (IRELAND) BILL.

MR. LEA asked the First Lord of the Treasury if he could now state what day the Government would give for the Second Reading of the Intoxicating Liquors (Ireland) Bill?

*THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (MR. W. H. SMITH, Strand): I cannot state now but I will take the earliest opportunity of doing so.

THE VIVISECTION DEBATE.

DR. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, whether, considering the great interest felt by many Members of the House in the Adjourned Debate on Supply, April, 29, he can now give an early and definite date for its resumption.

MR. J. ELLIS (Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe): If the right hon. Gentleman is not able to give a reply in regard to the word "early" will he do so in regard to the word "definite"?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: All I can say is that the Government will endeavour to come to an arrangement that will be satisfactory to the House generally.

DR. FARQUHARSON: Will the right hon. Gentleman kindly fix as early a day as possible, seeing that very serious accusations have been preferred by the hon. Member for Sheffield (Mr. Coleridge), and it would be unfair to the persons accused that they should be allowed to stand over.

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I fully realize the importance of the matter, and will do the best I can.

THE START BAY FISHERMEN.

MR. MILD MAY (Devon, Totnes) asked the President of the Board of Trade whether his attention has been called to the decision of the Queen's Bench Division in the case of *Coaker v. Hill*, in which it was decided that the prosecution must fail, as a party aggrieved had no power under the Sea Fisheries Act to institute proceedings; and whether, as this would practically leave the crab-pot fishermen, whose living depends upon this industry, without redress for interferences with their crab-pots and gear, the Board of Trade will consider the advisability of amending the law so as to enable an injured party to prosecute, and in the meantime would instruct their officers to take the necessary steps to protect the Start Bay fishermen from infringements of the Act?

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: My attention has been called to the case to which the hon. Member refers. It raises a question which is one of considerable difficulty. I do not think I can undertake to propose an amendment of the law on this point alone, but the question as to

what action it is advisable for the Board of Trade to take under the circumstances is receiving my careful consideration.

POST OFFICE SICK PAY.

MR. SCHWANN (Manchester, N.) asked the Postmaster General whether he is aware that an Order in Council of 1866 or 1869, with reference to sick pay, by which certain classes of persons employed in the Post Office who may happen to be absent from duty one year out of four shall cease to receive sick pay, has just been put in force in the Manchester Post Office in the cases of two telegraphists in that post office, whom the doctor cannot certify as being ill enough to be pensioned; and also that several other telegraphists in the same office, should they fall sick again, will be brought under the same regulation; and whether he will bring the Order in Council under the notice of the Lords of the Treasury with a view to its abrogation, as it has never been enforced in the Telegraph Department since that Department was taken over by the Post Office, certainly not in the Manchester Post Office.

*THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES, University of Cambridge): The regulation to which the hon. Member refers is laid down not by an Order in Council, but by a Treasury Minute. This Minute, though dated December 17, 1860, was not communicated to the Post Office until December, 1885, and since then it has been carefully observed. Its provisions appear to me to err, if they err at all, on the side of liberality, and I have no intention of suggesting that the Minute should be abrogated. If since 1885 the rule has not come into operation at the Manchester Post Office, it is because no case to which it would apply has occurred there.

MR. SCHWANN: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the two telegraphists to whom my question refers are supported at the present moment by contributions from their fellow *employés*?

*MR. RAIKES: I was not aware of that; but I think the most that the State can be expected to do is, that their places should be kept open for them, without giving further assistance. They have already been ill for twelve months, and have received sick pay during that period.

THE CROFTERS' COMMISSION.

MR. ANGUS SUTHERLAND (Sutherlandshire) asked the Lord Advocate whether the attention of the Secretary for Scotland has been called to numerous resolutions passed at public meetings throughout the Highlands of Scotland, condemning the recent appointment of Assessors to the Crofters' Commission; and what steps Her Majesty's Government intend to take in order to establish public confidence in the decisions of the Commission?

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. P. B. ROBERTSON, Buteshire): The Secretary for Scotland has received various resolutions of the nature mentioned in the first part of the question. It does not, however, appear that these complaints are well founded. As the hon. Member is no doubt aware, these Assessors are appointed by the Commissioners, who take the utmost pains to select impartial persons having local knowledge and experience. As regards the six Assessors at present employed in Skye, the appointment of three was largely supported by the Crofters, one was known to be on friendly terms with the Crofters, a fifth resided in the Island, and so had special knowledge of it, and the sixth had a special knowledge of the West Coast, and had already done satisfactory work for the Commission. These appointments only hold good for the Island of Skye, and the Commissioners are at liberty to make fresh appointments when they leave Skye, and no doubt they will again take every step to secure suitable persons. There is no reason whatever to suppose that public confidence in the Commission requires to be established.

SCOTCH LOCAL GOVERNMENT BILL.

DR. CAMERON: Can the First Lord of the Treasury inform the House when the Scotch Local Government Bill will be taken? I conclude that it will not be taken on Thursday?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: The Scotch Local Government Bill will not be taken on Thursday.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: Is the right hon. Gentleman able to say what will be taken on Thursday?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: In the event of the Naval Defence Bill being concluded,

probably the Report and Supply will be taken.

MR. CHANNING: Then are we to understand that Supply will not be taken?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: No, Sir; Supply will be taken, but I hope to take the Report of the Budget Resolutions in the first instance, and then to proceed with the Votes according to their order on the Paper, the Privy Council Vote being postponed.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—PRIVATE MEMBERS' NIGHTS.

MR. G. A. CAVENDISH BENTINCK (Whitehaven): A conversation occurred the other night in reference to the taking of private Members' nights by the Government. As they have now succeeded in doing that, may I ask the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury whether he will use his influence and his best endeavours to see that a reasonable number of Members of the Government who were in receipt of official salaries are in their places to assist in making a House at 9 o'clock?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I have no doubt that a reasonable number of Members of the Government who are in receipt of official salaries will be in attendance. But it must be remembered that their work begins at 10 o'clock in the morning, as the right hon. Gentleman is himself aware, having himself been an exceedingly hard worked Member of the Government. But I think it is also only reasonable that Members who have Motions on the Paper should exercise influence with their friends who take interest in such Motions, and induce them to be present. Some consideration should be had for Members of the Government whose duties are only partly discharged in this House, and who have heavy responsibilities in administration. I am aware that these Gentlemen are paid, but at the same time I must remind the House that there is a very deep interest in allowing Gentlemen engaged in the service of the Crown at least sufficient rest to enable them to discharge their duties of administration in the public affairs with satisfaction to the country.

MR. H. H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.): May I ask whether it has not always been laid down by Leaders of the

House that the Government are under no responsibility for making a House on Tuesday evenings, but that that duty entirely falls upon private Members?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I have always understood since I have been a Member of the House that that was the rule.

MR. G. A. CAVENDISH BENTINCK: No, no.

*MR. W. H. SMITH: The right hon. Gentleman differs. At any rate, it is the general feeling of the House that the responsibility does not rest with the Government.

MOTION.

CORPORATE ASSOCIATIONS (PROPERTY) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Howell, Bill for the better securing their property to Corporate Associations, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Howell, Mr. Pickersgill, Mr. James Rowlands, Mr. Cremer, Mr. James Stuart, Mr. Sidney Buxton, Mr. Causton, Mr. Montagu, and Mr. Octavius V. Morgan.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 209.]

TRUST FUNDS INVESTMENT BILL.

Ordered, that the Select Committee on the Trust Funds Investment Bill do consist of 17 Members.

The Committee was accordingly nominated of—Mr. Bartley, Mr. William Beckett, Mr. Biddulph, Mr. Bristowe, Mr. Clancy, Sir Edward Clarke, Mr. Cozens-Hardy, Sir Horace Davey, Mr. Maurice Healy, Mr. Samuel Hoare, Mr. James William Lowther, Mr. Francis Maclean, Mr. Montagu, Mr. Oldroyd, Sir William Plowden, Mr. Edward Stanhope, and Mr. Tomlinson.

Ordered, that the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, that five be the quorum.—*(Mr. Cozens-Hardy.)*

SIR G. CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy) asked whether the Government approved of the Committee?

*MR. W. H. SMITH said that the usual practice had been followed. Communications had passed between the two sides of the House. The hon. Member was responsible in the first place, but undoubtedly the Government and the Opposition had had the usual influence with regard to the nomination, and as far as he could see the Committee was specially well qualified for discharging the duty.

Mr. H. H. Fowler

ORDER OF THE DAY.

NAVAL DEFENCE BILL. (No. 186.)

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment proposed to Question [6th May], "That the Bill be now read a second time."

And which Amendment was, to leave out the word "now," and, at the end of the Question, to add the words "upon this day six months,"—*(Mr. Labouchere)* instead thereof.

Question again proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

COLONEL HILL (Bristol, S.): When my remarks were interrupted last night, I suggested, in reply to the remarks of the right hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. Fowler), that the House and the country were much more interested in the question of the increase and maintenance of the Navy than in any dissertation, however learned, upon constitutional practice. I had indicated that the highest authorities in the Navy had been consulted, and that there was a consensus of opinion as to the insufficiency of the Navy. I also asserted that naval experts were satisfied that the vessels proposed to be built were a judicious compromise of the various important but necessarily conflicting qualities required in a man-of-war. I added that the extent of the additions was satisfactory, and I expressed an opinion, which I formed while sitting last year upon the Naval Estimates Committee, that the present Board of Admiralty are not "profligate wasters," but clever business men, in whose hands we may safely trust the administration of the Navy and the expenditure of the money they asked for. If the questions of number and design be satisfactory, there only remains for consideration the economic cost of production; and upon this matter I think the public mind should be satisfied with the guarantee afforded by Her Majesty's dockyards being placed in direct competition with the private dockyards of the country, and that upon fairly equal terms, inasmuch as the vessels are to be built right off, and under this Bill they will not be subject to the increase of expense caused by delay and uncertainty. I

venture to say that nothing could be more fatal to economy than the present system of insisting that the whole of the sums voted should be spent within the financial year. That appears to me to be a direct encouragement to needless waste and extravagance. Work to be carried economically must be carried on with evenness and regularity. Frantic efforts to spend a certain sum of money within a given time can only lead to waste. If the dockyards are unhampered, I see no reason why they should not produce vessels as cheaply as in private yards, and so place the legitimate trade profits of the builder into the pockets of the British taxpayer. I think the First Lord has stated in a straightforward manner what is his standard of an efficient and sufficient Navy. He requires an increase of 70 vessels within a period of four and-a-half years, involving a total cost of £21,000,000, or an addition to ordinary shipbuilding outlay of £11,000,000. If this be not so much as some expected, I see no reason for dissatisfaction. This does not seem to me a large sum to pay for the insurance of our 680 millions of imports and exports and the 100 millions worth of ships in which this enormous business is carried. The maintenance of our food supply and the preservation of our national dignity and existence. My noble Friend the First Lord of the Admiralty properly pointed out, in his introductory speech, that the incomparable resources of the country will be brought into such prominence as to show foreign countries how impossible it is to compete with us. That, I think, is a fact which will tend to preserve and maintain that peace which we all desire to see maintained. I think that the two propositions put forward by Lord Rosebery at the banquet of the London Chamber of Commerce in February have been fulfilled; that the necessity for the increase of the Navy has been shown, and that we have an ample guarantee that the money will be judiciously expended. Therefore, to use his words, I hope no Party, worthy the name of a Party, will refuse to grant the money. I feel called upon to give Her Majesty's Government my best support, confident that in doing so I shall have the hearty support of my constituents, and especially of the work-

ing classes of which they are so largely composed.

*SIR W. PLOWDEN (Wolverhampton, W.): The hon. Member for Bristol seems to consider that the evidence given before the Committee on the Navy Estimates last year has satisfied all reasonable men that the Board of Admiralty and its dependents are not profligate wasters. Now, I have never gone so far as to say that they are. On the contrary, in their conduct of business during the last three years they have effected a marked improvement and a real reform in the administration of the Navy, which had previously been extremely lax. But I see no reason why still further reforms should not be made. I should like to know if the evidence taken by the Committee upstairs has satisfied my hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Bristol (Colonel Hill) that the statements now made by the responsible officers of the Admiralty are reconcileable with the remarkable statements which were then made by experts employed by the Admiralty. I did not gather from my hon. and gallant Friend, either last night or to-day, that the statements made by Admiral Sir Arthur Hood before the Committee, and the statements which he subsequently made to the Board, have sufficiently attracted his attention. At all events, I perceived no indication of that in the remarks with which he has favoured the House. I cannot help thinking that the debates which have taken place upon the Naval Defence Bill have brought out prominently two important points. First, the entire absence of argument or reasoning in favour of these proposals; second, the difficulty of accepting these proposals in face of the conflicting opinions previously expressed to us by responsible officials. The Chancellor of the Exchequer assured us the other night that it was the desire of the Government to take the House into their confidence, and yet I find that they have not taken us at all into their confidence. We have had no reason assigned for their extraordinary change of opinion, nor have we received any explanation of the causes which have brought it about. The remarkable statements which were made by the First Naval Lord before the Committee last year, contrasted with those which have been made quite recently, will be recollected by those who

have studied these questions. Some of the gallant Admiral's answers to the Committee were certainly given in an ungracious and discourteous manner, particularly answers which he gave to the noble Lord opposite. That was a matter which attracted our attention at the time, although no particular notice was taken of it; but I cannot allow a discussion of this kind to take place without expressing my views upon the matter. I wish to draw attention to the present and the former opinions on this matter—not of the noble Lord, those have been already adverted to—but of Sir A. Hood. On the 13th of June, nearly a year ago, Sir Arthur Hood expressed his opinion as to the adequacy and sufficiency of our ships. This was extracted from him, not without a difficulty, by the hon. Member for Preston. He was asked over and over again if he was satisfied with the number of ships, not in reference to peace, but war, and his opinion undoubtedly was that the country was adequately supplied with battle ships. That fact was specially brought out in Question 4,228 and subsequent questions, particularly 4,234, 4,326, 4,240, 4,241, and 4,242. When Sir Arthur Hood was asked last year whether he was satisfied with the adequacy of the Estimates, he said he was satisfied with everything except the provision made for fast cruisers. He also said he was satisfied with the relative number of armour-clad ships compared with those of other Powers on two conditions—namely, that we were to continue to build battle ships to take the place of those that become obsolete; and secondly, that in the event of other Powers laying down more ironclads, we should at the same time lay down vessels which should be more powerful and faster. Sir Arthur Hood is especially responsible, as the First Naval Lord of the Admiralty, for giving advice to the Government of the day. Well, Sir, we have since ascertained from him what was the worth of all this evidence. In a remarkable speech, made after dinner, on the 12th of April, and perhaps of a more frank character than his utterances upstairs before the Committee, he stated that so far back as the 1st of July last year,—that is less than three weeks from the time he was making those statements to the Committee—the scheme, which is now put before us for increasing the

strength of the Navy was in his mind and was absolutely in print. I noticed last night that the hon. Member for Eccleshall (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett) stated that it was nine months since this scheme, or rather the memorandum on which it was founded was absolutely brought out by the First Naval Lord. Well, all I can say is that it is a most disingenuous proceeding. If it is not the First Naval Lord must be a singularly foolish man, because within less than three weeks of the date he told us he was satisfied with the battleships of the Navy he came forward with a memorandum of his own, proposing that we should add eight battleships to the Navy. The Government, in these circumstances, have placed us in a most difficult position. I myself am not at all inclined to support the Amendment of my hon. Friend (Mr. Labouchere). I am inclined to consider that it is reasonable to suppose our fleet is not in a sufficiently strong position; and there is strong evidence to indicate that this is the opinion held by many Naval officers who are quite competent to form an opinion. What I protest against is the Government coming to us in this way, and asking us for an enormous sum of money without producing a single argument in support of their demand. I listened very carefully to what was said by the hon. Member for Eye, and he certainly never brought forward a single argument in favour of increasing our Navy drawn from the fact that there had been a change in the relative positions of the Powers of Europe and ourselves since the time those utterances of the First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord G. Hamilton) and the first Naval Lord were made last year. I contend that if we are justified in making this great addition to our Naval strength, it must be in consequence of something that has occurred in the position of foreign Powers or in the policy of foreign Powers. Or else those who are responsible for the adequacy of our Navy have been entirely behind hand up to the present time, if, we are to believe, they are even now able to understand what are the requirements of the country. When I take up the Return given to us in consequence of the application of the noble Lord the Member for Paddington (Lord R. Churchill), I find in it quite sufficient to induce me to believe that

the Government do not at all know what those requirements are or what they are doing; that they have not set before us at all a satisfactory programme, that they do not know what they will be called upon to do in case of war, and that they don't know what the requirements of the country are or in what position of inferiority or supremacy we may find ourselves with reference to foreign navies. When the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) referred to figures he was taken up by the Civil Lord of the Admiralty, who produced figures quite different from those contained in the Return printed for us subsequent to the 29th March last, and which must have been in the mind of the Admiralty if they have got such a thing as a mind, when they brought forward their programme. The hon. Member for Ecclestone says England is to have in 1894, 77 armoured vessels, including belted cruisers. That is the same number as is given in the Return; but he goes on to say that France will only have 44, and the Return gives 48. I can quite understand the number for France being understated. But how is it possible if the Admiralty is worth its salt they can have been overstated: and yet that is the Civil Lord's assertion. When, too, we look at the Return with a little more curious eye, we see that the position the Government have taken up is altogether unsatisfactory. This Return, which they say shows us what will be the position of our Navy in 1894 as compared with the positions of certain foreign Powers, contains a footnote which states that the list of ships for England and Germany includes the programmes projected up to 1894; but that the lists for France, Russia, and Italy include only the building programmes up to the present year. And yet this statement is brought before us to show us how, at the end of a certain time, after spending a large sum in a rather unconstitutional manner, we shall find ourselves with a sufficient force to confront any two naval Powers.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Lord G. HAMILTON, Middlesex, Ealing): I would point out that if we can build 50 per cent faster than other nations, our ships must be finished sooner than those of other nations.

*SIR W. PLOWDEN: But this is a proposal under which the country is to

be placed in a position of maritime supremacy. It is put before us as a complete programme, but is no more complete than any other which has been presented to Parliament. I hope that in Committee we may be able to prevent some of the proposed dangerous deviations from the usual practice of Parliament, which deviations are not at all necessary. The hon. and gallant Gentleman (Colonel Hill) said he was in favour of allowing the Admiralty liberty to refrain from necessarily spending the sums voted during the year. My right hon. colleague (Mr. Forster) has already indicated that this can be done without resorting to the Government proposal. It seems to me utterly absurd to suppose that we cannot enter into contracts for the building of the ships that may be required, or lay down the ships to be built in our dockyards, without altering the whole of our constitutional procedure with regard to the assignment of funds. I sincerely trust the Government will see their way to making some concession in this matter. I think they are bound to give us a certain amount of information in regard to the inquiries they have made, and which have satisfied them that they are now asking us for all that is necessary to bring the country to the naval position which it is desirable. I do not believe there are 20 Members who would protest against an expenditure on the naval defences of this country which the responsible officers of the Crown indicated as absolutely necessary. But the responsible officers of the Crown have held their hands in this matter and held their tongues too. They tell us it is necessary to spend this large sum, but they do not tell us why. That is, in my opinion, a childish way of dealing with the question, and we have a right to ask for the arguments which have satisfied them on the subject. I trust the noble Lord at the head of the Admiralty (Lord G. Hamilton), to whom I am willing to give every credit for his efforts to promote economy and to reform the administration of the Navy, will think better of the decision he has come to, and that he will agree to the appointment of a Select Committee to complete the work which was only half done by the Committee of last year, but which, nevertheless, as the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty intimated, has been of great use to him in his

efforts in the direction of economy and reform of administration.

*SIR J. PULESTON (Devonport): My hon. Friend opposite, whilst professing a desire to support the Admiralty in all their requirements, at the same time makes a speech which will render it as difficult as possible to carry the measures they propose. He says he does not think there are 20 Members who would refuse the money necessary to render the Navy efficient. All I can say is, that already 20 Gentlemen on the other side of the House have spoken in a sense very adverse indeed to the making of any addition to the Navy. And right hon. Gentlemen have protested against the way in which it is proposed to raise the money. I think, however, on reflection, it must be admitted that it is necessary to provide for a permanent policy, and that without such a permanent policy you cannot have efficient naval construction. Personally, I should have preferred that the amount necessary should have been raised by means of a loan. A loan of £50,000,000 would only have meant by a charge of the million and a-half sterling a-year, the saving arising from the Chancellor of the Exchequer's Conversion Scheme might very well have been devoted to this object. By appropriating a considerable sum of money to make our Navy as strong as it should be we are insuring the interests of the country, protecting our food supply, and ministering to the interests of commerce. The hon. Member for Haggerstone (Mr. Cremer) the other day demanded that members of the Services should not have seats in this House. Gentlemen opposite are always talking about the extension of the Franchise, but it is evident that when it suits them they desire to restrict the Franchise.

MR. CREMER (Shoreditch, Haggerstone): I did not say that because men were in the Services they should be excluded from this House. What I said was, that the time would probably arrive when the nation would object to Members sitting here and practically voting their own salaries.

*SIR J. PULESTON: Well, the hon. Member seemed to desire to exclude the Services from this House. The hon. Member went on to speak in favour of making a clean sweep of all the permanent officials of the Admiralty. I

would ask, how could the Admiralty, or any other Government Department, be administered without permanent officials? Then he said that the measure was unnecessary, because we had no foe. I think if the hon. Member had been here during previous Parliaments, he would probably have seen that the result then of not being prepared was the wasting of millions of money. To have a strong Army and Navy is the surest safeguard of peace. Some of us do not think this Bill goes far enough, but we recognize the fact that half a loaf is better than no bread. This is a movement in the right direction, and it would, I think, be very remarkable if the House did not pass the Bill with the greatest unanimity. One hon. Member said there was no justification for the measure, because the Queen's speech spoke of the maintenance of peace. We, however, ought to be prepared for every emergency, and soon Queen's speeches would cease to speak peace if our Navy was not strong. Most of those who have spoken from the opposite side of the House have protested not only against the form and character of this Bill, but against raising any money at all for strengthening and promoting the efficiency of the Navy. I am not going to take up the time of the House further, but I cannot help expressing an earnest hope that we may come to a conclusion shortly upon this measure. Every day's delay is a matter of considerable consequence, especially having regard to the season of the year at which it is desirable to place ships under contract. As we now know the views of hon. Members opposite, who object to strengthening the Navy in any shape or form, I think the sooner we go to a division the better.

*MR. J. SHAW-LEFEVRE (Central Bradford): Mr. Speaker, I was one of those who abstained from voting on the Resolution on which this Bill is founded, through unwillingness to oppose an absolute veto on any proposal that the Government might make. Even at this stage I frankly say that if the Government had contented themselves with the normal Estimates, providing at the same time means out of the ordinary taxation of the country to meet the increased expenditure, I should hesitate twice or thrice before voting against them. I have always felt that a good deal must

be left in such matters to the responsibility of the Government. After all, the best check on that responsibility, and the only check upon wasteful and extravagant expenditure, is the necessity of providing the means within the year—namely, by an increased taxation, if an increase be necessary. But if once that check is removed, and if you provide for increased expenditure out of the means of future years, and if you make up present expenditure by *post obits* upon the future, it appears to me that all check upon prudence is thrown away, and you are launched into unwise and unnecessary expenditure to an unlimited amount. Now, for my part, I object to the present proposals on two main grounds. The first has reference to finance, and the second to shipbuilding. I object to the financial scheme contained in this Bill, in part because I find that it spreads the expenditure over a few years, that it ties the hands of Parliament by making it a statutory obligation upon the Government to carry to completion the plan of building so large a number of vessels, and that it introduces into the financial arrangements of this country a wholly and totally new principle of a very dangerous character. It withdraws altogether from the control of Parliament the expenditure upon the shipbuilding Vote for the next four or five years. I principally rose for the purpose of pointing out my objection to this scheme from the shipbuilding point of view. That objection is mainly on this ground: it obliges the Admiralty to commence at once, or within a short time, not fewer than 70 vessels. That is what the noble Lord has frequently described as a spasmodic shipbuilding policy, and one which he has frequently denounced in this House as being of a dangerous character. I do not think any Naval Minister has so often, so fully, and so ably denounced that policy as the noble Lord himself. If I remind the House of his previous utterances, it is not, I can assure the House, for the purpose of convicting him of any inconsistency in the matter, but because I thoroughly agree with him in all that he said from that point of view in the past year. I have frequently got up and expressed my agreement with him, and I think the noble Lord will remember that last year he defended himself and his policy

against the attacks made upon both by the noble Lord the Member for Marylebone, and when he resisted the proposals of the noble Lord the Member for Marylebone, to commence at once the building of a large number of vessels, I got up immediately after the noble Lord and said I agreed with every single word he had spoken, and I endeavoured to enforce his arguments with some others that occurred to me. Therefore, I hope the noble Lord will acquit me of anything like Party feeling in the matter. I should be extremely glad if I could follow the noble Lord in his present proposals, but I assure him that I cannot conscientiously do so. So far as I know the Government have produced no facts whatever, no arguments whatever for their change of policy. Now the declarations of policy which the noble Lord made last year, or during 15 months, were not mere casual observations, the result of the "jog trot" policy which he had inherited from his predecessors; they were the deliberate expressions of a policy formed after careful consideration with his colleagues, and announced not merely once or twice, but on numerous occasions to this House. I have endeavoured to collect these various statements of the noble Lord into certain propositions of policy, taking, as far as I can, the actual words of the noble Lord on different occasions, and I have put them together in a form which indicates a definite policy on the whole subject, and I hope the noble Lord will not think I have done him injustice by the way in which I have put them together. It would take rather too long to quote all the speeches on the subject, and I therefore thought it better to put them together in the form of propositions. The first of these propositions is this. It has reference to what will be the actual state of the Navy under the programme which he laid before us last year, in April, 1890. The noble Lord (Hamilton) told us that—

"By April, 1890, when the ships building in our own Dockyards, and those of France are completed, our Navy in respect of ironclads and cruisers will show a very great superiority in force over those of France and will be superior to those of France and Russia combined, and France and Italy combined. He gave us also the tonnage of armoured vessels as follows: England, 311,000, France 184,000, Russia, 75,000, an excess for England, 54,000, or equal to seven large ironclads."

Then again with regard to fast cruisers, he told us that by 1890, taking vessels even 16 knots, England would have 41, and France 21. Now I will undertake to say without fear of contradiction, that never during the last 25 years has there been a superiority so great on the part of this country, as is indicated by those figures. The next question is assuming those figures to be correct, what is the normal rate of expenditure upon shipbuilding, and how far does it provide for an increase of this relative superiority? The noble Lord's proposition was this; that the normal expenditure on the construction of new ships should not exceed £3,200,000, at which rate we would continually improve our position as compared with other of the Powers. Then he went on further to say, and this is the third proposition:—

"That any sudden or spasmodic increase of the Navy by laying down by wholesale of a large number of vessels at any one time was most unwise, as—owing to the constant changes in design and the development of speed—these vessels would soon become obsolete. That, by maintaining our shipbuilding programme at a rate in excess of the annual depreciation by 40 per cent, and by maintaining this policy over a term of years, we should more judiciously and effectively raise the strength of the Navy than if we entered upon a hasty and spasmodic expenditure, with the certain knowledge that a portion of the expenditure would be wasted by the very haste requisite."

And, lastly, he laid down this most important proposition.

"That there was no single instance in the past in which ships laid down by the dozen have not shown defects common to all, which would have been avoided if they had been laid down gradually and continuously over a term of years."

I venture to say that the proposition is strictly accurate; in fact, it is borne out by experience, as I venture to say it will be borne out by experience in the future. The noble Lord, in all these utterances, was completely sustained by the Secretary to the Admiralty. And it would be impossible to make stronger speeches, both inside and out of this House, than those which condemned in the strongest possible manner the policy which we are now called upon to condemn. I do not want to convict the hon. Gentleman of inconsistency. I really point to the passages which I am about to quote because I could not better explain than they do my own views and my objections to the policy of

the Bill now before us. Speaking on the Estimates last year, the Secretary to the Admiralty said—

"An increase in the number of vessels to be laid down in excess of the normal yearly shipbuilding programme is fraught with danger. The progress of science in the construction of machinery and gunnery, and the increase in development of explosives is so rapid that vessels which this year may be far ahead of their possible competitors belonging to foreign nations, have in a brief period to be relegated to quite a secondary class."

Then, again, speaking at Liverpool on July 9th last year—though now we are told by Admiral Hood that this particular programme was in print and had been laid before his colleagues at that very time—the Secretary of the Admiralty said:—

"The only safe and sure policy was to ensure a steady, not a spasmodic, shipbuilding programme. This was attained; an expenditure on new construction of £3,200,000."

As I have said, I entirely agree with the noble Lord the head of the Admiralty, and the Secretary to the Admiralty, on these matters of policy. But we are now asked to entirely reverse this policy, and to vote for the policy which the noble Lord has so often condemned—namely, the spasmodic increase of the Navy. We are asked to do that which the noble Lord said was "imprudent and unwise," and the Secretary to the Admiralty said was "fraught with danger"—to lay down at once no fewer than 70 ships. Well, what has been the excuse given for this policy? As far as I am aware, the noble Lord has not given any definite reason for it, and the only argument for it was that of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, as involved in the somewhat vague generalities presented to this House. I may say that I should have considered what the right hon. Gentleman said as important if he were ready to back it by providing money for the payment of the cost, but inasmuch as he was content to give his authority for spreading the payment over future years, and refrained from giving any definite reason for the increase proposed, I regard his opinion as of no very great value. I will here frankly say that if we could be agreed that this spasmodic policy would not have the effect of stimulating further shipbuilding on the part of the Admiralty, I should not so much object to it, but I think the greatest objection to it

is that it will only stimulate other Powers to adopt the same course, and thus entail fresh expenditure on the part of this country. Indeed, this would appear to be the case from what has already been said in the German Parliament, and in other countries; and I have not the slightest doubt that this great increase in our Navy will involve a relative increase in that of France. Indeed, I will venture to point out that for the last 60 or 70 years, ever since the great Napoleonic war, it has been the deliberate policy of France to keep her Navy within a certain proportion of that of this country. This was pointed out by the late Mr. Cobden, in a pamphlet he published in 1859—namely, that it had been the policy of France for the previous fifty years, always to maintain her Navy in the proportion of two to three of the ships laid down by this country, and he quoted figures for the purpose of showing that for periods of five years during that time, taking the averages for each, that proportion was invariably kept up. Mr. Cobden said:—

“In comparing the expenditure of the two countries, it will be observed that they almost invariably rise and fall together. In the long run this must be the case, because it has always been the recognized policy of the two Governments to observe a certain relation to one another. Looking back for nearly a century, we shall find that in time of peace France has been accustomed to maintain a Naval force not greatly varying from the proportion of 2-3 of our own.”

If hon. Members will look at the amounts spent in the dockyards it will be seen that where England spent 31 millions in the 25 years before Mr. Cobden wrote, France spent 22 millions, which is almost the exact proportion, and if you take the last 25 years it will be seen that where the cost of new ships in England has been 41 millions, the expenditure in France has been 28 millions, showing a similar proportion of two to three. I have no doubt that it is the deliberate policy of France to keep her Navy up to that proportion, and that whatever we do in the way of increasing our Navy will be followed by France in a similar ratio. If, therefore, we now expend, by a spasmodic effort, the sum of ten millions on our Navy the French Government will in all probability spend six millions, in excess of their estimates, and at the end of the period over which this expenditure

is to run the relative proportions of our naval strength will be found to be the same, and it will be seen that our effort had been practically useless. The real fact of the matter is that France is much more afraid of the increase of this country's Navy than we are of the increase of the Navy of France. That country has during the last 25 years greatly extended her responsibilities in directions away from her own shores. She has greatly increased her empire, not only in Cochin China and Tonquin, but in Africa, and has extended her interests in other parts of the world, and in the event of a war with this country all these interests would be jeopardized, and in a very short time France might be cut off from communication with all her outlying dependencies in different parts of the world. We should also remember that the French Navy is to a large extent an artificial one, and is not based as is our Navy on her commercial strength. In the event of its being largely reduced by war the French Navy could not easily be renewed; but in our case the strength of the English Navy rests on a commercial basis. I need not refer to the strength which this country possesses in its ship-building yards—a strength so great that we are enabled to turn out more than one million tons a-year; while the exertions we might make in a case of necessity would be greater than has ever been known in the past. For my part I cannot conceive any motive that should induce France to enter into a naval war with this country. I have confidence, and I think this House may have confidence in our own strength, so that there is no occasion to give way to those unworthy fears and alarms which are to a large extent the cause of the present proposal of Her Majesty Government. There is another point of view with regard to this proposition on which I may be allowed to say a word and that is in reference to the question of the types of the vessels to be built. It is proposed to commit the Government to the construction of no less than 71 vessels of particular types. There are to be ten large ironclads, eight of which are to be larger than any yet laid down and two of a slightly smaller size, the ten together costing upwards of ten millions. It is also intended to lay down no fewer than 39 cruisers. I

would venture to ask hon. Members to look back and say when in the past did any Government propose to spend ten millions extra on ironclads? Would it have been thought wise to have spent ten millions on ships of the *Warrior* class, or the same sum on ships of the *Sultan* class. For that sum we might have had 20 ships of the *Warrior* type and 15 of the *Sultan* type. Moreover, would it have been wise to have built 11 or 12 vessels of the *Nile* or *Trafalgar* class. I venture to ask, if it would not have been wise then, why should it be considered wise now? Every reason that would have made such a course unwise in the past must equally make it unwise in the future. It is quite certain that we have not yet reached the limit of invention in regard to ships and armaments. Never at any time have the improvements been greater, whether in respect of ships or guns, than at the present moment; and therefore it seems to me to be unwise to spend a large sum of money in committing ourselves to vessels of one type. No man can say what the next few years may not bring forth, and that the vessels which it is now proposed to build will not, in their turn, be rendered as obsolete by vessels of the future as they will render vessels of the past. Take the *Nile* and *Trafalgar*; the vessels it is proposed to lay down are infinitely superior to them in size and speed and many other qualities, that they would supersede and render them obsolete. But in a few years the vessels now proposed to be laid down will in their turn be rendered obsolete, and be superseded by other and better vessels. I do not put this forward as an argument for doing nothing; on the contrary, I think the noble Lord would be wise to lay down one or two ironclads a year during the last three years. Two or three years ago I moved for a Commission of Enquiry in regard to types of vessels, and I then said it would be wise to lay down two ironclads year by year, but it would not be wise for us to commit ourselves to the spasmodic policy of laying down an enormous number of vessels at one and the same time. If this policy be sound as to ironclads, it is still more as regards cruisers; and I say that to lay down 39 cruisers at one time and of one class, is fraught with the same danger as to the future as to pursue the same policy with

regard to ships of the larger types, because they will as certainly be superseded in the future by vessels of greater speed and power as the vessels now proposed will supersede those of the past. Supposing we lay down these 10 ironclads and 39 cruisers during the present year, and some two years hence the French lay down five ironclads of a superior class to ours, namely, faster ships and with heavier armaments—and supposing they also lay down twenty cruisers of superior speed to our 35, which may be the case, where should we then be? Why we should only have to begin again. And then, I suppose, we are to go on, year after year, laying down vessels, and then when the French increase their Navy, we shall have to meet those French ships with others of the same type. I think this alone is an argument for prudence and caution in our ship-building policy, an argument against rushing headlong into building any one type of vessels. And I think also, this is a strong proof that the present policy of the Government is an unwise one. I have already pointed out, the noble Lord in one of his speeches last year, said there never had been a case in which vessels laid down by the dozen, had not proved to have most serious defects, which might have been avoided by greater thought, and by not laying down so many at the same time. Now, there is a very remarkable illustration of this. In 1859, there was an alarm about the Navy, and Sir John Packington came down to the House and recommended a considerable increase of the Navy. He proposed that 19 sailing line of battle sailing ships should be converted into steamers, and at the same time, he proposed the conversion of a large number of other vessels. I think the Naval Votes of that year were increased from £8,800,000 to £12,500,000, an increase of nearly four millions sterling, and no fewer than 67 vessels were in hand at the same time, either for conversion or new construction. That number bears a striking comparison with the present proposal of the Government. What was the result? I take the following account from an interesting article on the Navy in the “*Encyclopædia Britannica*”:—

“Unhappily all these wooden line-of-battle-ships and frigates were soon found to be no real

addition to the force of the Navy, and many of them were not even completed. The iron-plated ships building in France completely changed the position and superseded the wooden vessels."

Now, Sir, I say that that is evidence in the past of what comes of a spasmodic policy such as is now proposed by the present Board of Admiralty, and I think it shows the unwisdom of the course which we are proposing to take. Let me for one moment put this question to the House. Supposing it may be desirable to increase the Navy, is it wise to do it by a spasmodic effort of this kind, or would it not be wiser to add to the normal expenditure on the Navy under the Navy Votes, and spread that increase over a certain number of years. It is proposed to expend during the next four years £21,000,000 on new ships, and on ships now in hand something like £1,600,000 is required for their completion, making a total of £22,600,000, the expenditure of which will be spread four and a half years. Why not spread it over six years? If you did that would give you £3,700,000 yearly, and by adding a sum of £500,000 to the normal votes, and by voting £3,700,000 for six years instead of £3,200,000, you would at the end of six years have the same result as you are now proposing to achieve by spreading the expenditure over four and a half years. I cannot but think myself, that that would be the wiser course to adopt, and instead of laying down these seventy vessels at once, you might lay down a certain number immediately, and in two or three years the remainder. Thus you would avoid this spasmodic increase which the noble Lord himself has so often condemned. Now on the general point of the increase of naval expenditure, I should like in that connection to quote to the House, the opinion of one of the ablest and most wise and prudent statesmen that ever governed this country. I mean the late Sir Robert Peel, who in the last Session in which he was in this House, and in one of the very last speeches which he delivered, addressed himself specially to the inexpediency of the Government being guided by naval opinion only, in regard to public expenditure. He said:—

"In time of peace you must be content to incur some risks if you will have all our means of defence, naval and military, in a perfect

state. I venture to say that no amount of annual revenue would be sufficient to meet such demands, if you adopt the opinions of military and naval men, anxious for the complete security of every available point, and naturally anxious to throw upon you the whole responsibility for loss in the event of war suddenly breaking out, you would overwhelm this country with taxes in time of peace. We should best consult the true interests of our country by husbanding our resources in time of peace, and instead of a lavish expenditure on all means of defence by placing some trust in the latent and dormant energies of the nation, and acting upon the confidence that a just cause will rally a great and glorious nation round the national standard, and enable us to defy the menaces of any foreign Power."

That was said in 1850, a short time before the death of Sir Robert Peel, but These were words of wisdom coming from the lips of one of the greatest Ministers we ever had in this country, and also one of the best economists. If these words were wise then, I venture to say that they would be far wiser now. Remember that the naval and military expenditure of this country has more than doubled since then, and from figures which I have before me I gather that the relative increase in this country has been greater than that of Austria, France and Russia put together. In 1869 the expenditure by these three nations upon their armies and navies amounted to 50 millions; in 1888 it was 78 millions. In this country in 1869 it was 21 millions; in 1888 it was 32½ millions, and during the present year we are actually proposing to spend not less than 35½ millions. In my opinion the effect of this spasmodic increase of the Navy will be to stimulate other powers to increase their navies; it will widen the ever-increasing ranks of those who look at such questions from one point of view only and swell the number of panic mongers. It will stimulate still further the birth of inventions in warlike engines of all kinds which will supersede all that has gone before, and involve us in still further expenditure. In my opinion, it is equally unsound from a financial point of view, and from a ship-building point of view, and it is also impolitic and wasteful in the highest possible degree. I shall therefore vote against the Second Reading of the Bill.

*ADMIRAL MAYNE (Pembroke and Haverfordwest): I have listened with great care to what has been said by speakers on the other side of the House,

if there was any real valid objection made to the proposals of Her Majesty's Government, and I find that the objections to the Naval Defence Bill appear to be threefold. There are the objections of the hon. Members for Haggerston and Bethnal Green and of the hon. Baronet the Member for Cockermouth, who holds if there is any real meaning in their arguments, that the weaker Navy we have, the stronger we are, and that the real way to go into the councils of Europe with full weight is with an inefficient Navy; or better still, I presume, with no Navy at all. The second objection is on the financial question, which was raised by the hon. Member for South Edinburgh; and the third has reference to the designs of the ships proposed to be built, which have been touched on mainly by the hon. Member for Cardiff. I do not propose on the second reading of the Bill to deal with the subject of the designs which can be much better discussed in Committee, but I wish to say a few words on the other points. The right hon. gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton scouts the opinion that anybody on that side of the House would desire anything but a most efficient Navy. That remark is, I am glad to notice, cheered by hon. Members below the gangway opposite. But sir, what is the language made use of by the three hon. Members whose opinion I have quoted in stating the first ground of objection. The hon. Member for Haggerston and others have several times declared this increase to be wholly unnecessary, and that in their opinions we have got a Navy sufficiently strong for all our purposes. There is, however, only one solid and serious objection that can be taken to the Bill, and that is for any Hon. Member to get up in his place and show, not merely by quotations from speeches and vague statements, but by facts and figures, that we have now as strong a Navy as the country requires. There has been no attempt to show anything of the kind. No doubt hon. Members may prove to their own satisfaction that the utterances of the First Lord and the Secretary to the Admiralty last year were not quite consistent with those of this year, but however that may be, their utterances now are in accord with the whole professional opinion of this

country, except in so far as some think they do not go far enough. There is only one utterance of the First Lord's with which I think we have a right to find fault, and that was the hint that the money necessary for keeping the Fleet up to its proper mark might not be voted in future years. I do not think the House will allow that to occur, however. If the Fleet is to be kept up properly, an increased sum of money must be expended annually for the purpose; or else what has happened now will occur again a few years hence. The Navy will be allowed to run down, and another sum of 10 or 20 millions will have to be voted to put it in the state in which it ought to be. In a debate of this kind arguments of a very curious nature are often used. For instance, we have been told by more than one hon. Member that the strength of the Fleet depends upon the policy of the country. I do not assent to that; I maintain that the policy of the country very often depends much more upon the strength of the Fleet, and it is only by having a strong Fleet that a proper and bold foreign policy is possible. If the hon. Baronet the Member for Cockermouth and those who think with him are really serious in their views; the Amendment of the hon. Member for Shoreditch ought to have been moved on Vote 1, so as to refuse to grant men or money to the Navy at all. I have no doubt that the hon. Baronet would prefer—when the German Emperor comes over here—that instead of making a display of a vast number of ironclads, we should show him the beautiful anchorage at Spithead, empty of all vessels except a few colliers; and that, instead of a Naval Review, there should be a procession of punts up the Thames. This would be eminently peaceful, and highly economical, and I suppose the hon. Baronet would think more conducive to the dignity and power of England! But what would be the effect on the mind of the Teutonic Prince, if, when we went into the councils of Europe, we should say, "We have disbanded our Navy; we ask you to disband your armies," what would be thought of such a proposal? Hon. Gentlemen cannot be serious in such a policy, and yet that is the logical outcome of what they propose. One of the objections raised by the right hon. Gentleman

the Member for Bradford to increasing our fleet is that the French will follow our example and build up to the same mark. If we were to increase our Army so as to vie with Continental armies, there might be some force in that objection; but our Navy is our great reliance, and it is universally admitted that England should be preponderant as a Naval Power. The right hon. Gentleman quoted Mr. Cobden as having said that our Navy should be to the navy of France as three to two; but why did he not add that Mr. Cobden said that if France attempted to alter that proportion it would be the first to vote £100,000,000, if necessary, to maintain it. Why, Sir, France has already materially altered that ratio. And when the right hon. Gentleman speaks of what France may do, he might have gone farther and shown what is Continental opinion on this subject. Major Wachs, of the German army, gave this opinion of our naval strength. He wrote:—

“Foreigners may well doubt if England rules the sea; but England herself, despite her admirals and generals, and in utter misconception of facts which prove that the Empire's rule over the waves is a thing of the past, still places unlimited confidence in her fleet.”

If hon. Gentlemen had read the debates in the French Chamber they would see that Admiral Dompierre d'Hornoy said:—“The Mediterranean, too, ought to be a French lake.” I do not know whether hon. Gentlemen opposite assent to that proposition; if so, the sooner we give up Malta and Gibraltar, and disband our fleet, the better. Napoleon the First, as is well known, said that if he were master of the Channel for six hours, he would be master of the world. The Report of the French Budget Committee for 1888 says that the programme, if carried out at once, would assure to them “une supériorité maritime sur toutes les autres nations;” and yet we are told, because we are going to prevent that, we are inciting the French to build more ships. I listened attentively to the remarks of the hon. Member for Durham. Few Members are better qualified to express an opinion on these matters than he is. He is not likely to be in favour of Government proposals generally, yet he considers this is a wise and a moderate programme. I think his opinion should have some weight in this House. Of course, a debate of this

kind cannot be expected to take place without the usual attack upon the unfortunate Admirals. Hon. Gentlemen opposite claim to be the special representatives of democracy; but one of the great points in a democracy is that the people are to be free to elect whom they please to represent them. A sensible democracy would naturally think that, as millions are voted every year for the Navy, there ought to be in the House some men who know one end of a ship from the other. The paucity of our numbers may be pleaded as some palliation of our presence in the House at all. I am sorry that my Friend the hon. Member for Oldham, has in this matter, been led astray by hon. Members opposite; but that hon. Gentleman was rather roughly handled by a naval officer a short time ago, unjustly so, as I think, and he had a debt to pay. Having paid the debt, I hope the hon. Member will take a more just view of us poor people, who, at least, set a good example, never taking up the time of the House except on questions as to which they are supposed to have some slight knowledge! The democracy, whether classes or masses, always receive admirals in the same way, and admirals are never afraid of going among them, or in any doubt of the reception they will get. However much some gentlemen may desire to take away the very small stipend which a generous country gives her admirals for being ready to be killed whenever gentlemen opposite or those on this side chose to proclaim war, it is easy to know, when there is actual danger, in whom the country puts its trust. When we are taunted with forming “a syndicate of admirals,” and causing panic, my answer is that our object is to allay panic, and to prevent Ministers coming down, as they did a few years ago, and asking for £11,000,000 solely because everything had been allowed to run down to zero. Sir T. Brassey asked for £4,000,000 additional for the Navy in 1884, and yet that was the very year in which Lord Northbrook said he would not know what to do with £3,000,000 if they were given to him. I am not finding fault with Lord Northbrook; I am merely pointing out that this is no new thing, and when the hon. Members quote the opinion of the First Lord expressed some time ago that does not really in the least affect the matter.

The only question the country cares about is whether we have the number of ships we ought to have, and whether we should be likely to beat any enemy whom we should have to confront whenever and wherever the enemy may appear. That is the sum and substance of the whole matter. As to the financial part of scheme I will only say that I notice on the Front Opposition Bench a number of embryo First Lords. Many of those Gentlemen have been at the Admiralty for shorter or longer periods, but I defy any of them to say that the old method of voting money, that is to say, of returning the mispent money at the end of each year, has not been a source of waste and expenditure, in many instances utterly unnecessary. The argument of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. Fowler) last night, and of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Central Bradford (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) just now, merely amounts to this: we have had a turnpike on this road ever since we can remember, there is no precedent for removing it, so we must not remove it now. I say remove all obstacles to efficiency as soon as they are found to be so. I feel sure that when we come to the question of voting this money, those who have the real interest of England at heart, whether you call them the democracy, or the classes, or the masses, will vote for the Government proposal; and that by doing so they will not only go a long way to maintain the peace of their own country, but to maintain the peace of Europe, and, indeed, of the whole world.

*Mr. GOURLEY (Sunderland): The Bill provides for the expenditure of £21,500,000 in the next five years, normal and abnormal, and, therefore, I am not quite sure that if it is passed it will not be necessary to eliminate the moneys hitherto set aside for shipbuilding purposes from the annual Naval Estimates. In the first place I should like to know whether in settling this expenditure the Government have based their estimates on the current prices of material and labour or upon the prices current some 12 months ago. The Government are no doubt aware that during the last 12 months a very considerable advance has occurred in the price of all ship building material as well as in that of labour

But I object to the proposal of the Government on the grounds mentioned by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. Fowler) last night. I hold that this proposal is a new departure, and a new departure in an unconstitutional direction, inasmuch as the Bill will concede to the House of Lords in the future, or at all events for the next five years, control over the expenditure which has hitherto been confined or supposed to be confined to the House of Commons. Besides, before we can decide whether the proposals of the Government are adequate or inadequate, we ought to have some statement from the Government with regard to the foreign policy which is to be followed by them; and also some statement from the Leaders of the Opposition as to their views as to the lines of foreign policy which ought to be observed. Is our foreign policy to be a policy of intervention or one of non-intervention? If it is to be a policy of intervention in European affairs, the proposal of the Government is necessary, but if it is to be a policy of non-intervention, as I contend that it should be, the large increase of the Navy demanded by the Government is totally unnecessary. Supposing we can have a statement as to the line of foreign policy to be observed the next point to be arrived at is how the Admiralty intend to distribute the ships which they already have at their disposal. So far, we have not had placed before us anything in the shape of a grouping or a Plan of Campaign. The Government ought, in the first instance, to state what number and what designs of vessels they require for home defence, what they require for the defence of our Colonial Possessions, and what they require for foreign stations. Supposing the Government give us information upon these points, the next point to arrive at is whether the effective force now at the disposal of the country would be sufficient to carry out the policy of the Government with regard to the grouping of the vessels at the disposal of the Admiralty at home, abroad, and in the colonies. We have had placed before us two lists of ships; one is the list to be found in the Naval Estimates and the other is the list recently given in the shape of a Return granted upon

the Motion of the noble Lord the Member for Paddington (Lord R. Churchill). To my mind both lists are misleading with regard to the effective forces of the Navy. The number of ships set out in the Return granted to the noble Lord is 373, whereas the number set out in the list in the Naval Estimates is only 267. How do the Admiralty account for this discrepancy? But in order to arrive at the effective force at the disposal of the country, it is necessary to eliminate a very large number of non-combatant ships which appear annually in the Naval Estimates list. I find in the Estimates for this year that the number of non-combatant ships is 186. This leaves 81 fighting ships. To these are to be added 43 ships which are set out in the programme, and which are nearly ready, and seven first-class line of battle ships, six belted cruisers, and two vessels of the second class, 58 in all. When these vessels are completed we shall have, according to the Navy List, 139 ships, and not 373 as set out in the Return granted to the noble Lord the Member for Paddington. I understand that, by the Bill now under consideration, it is intended to add, during the next five years, to the 139 ships, 70 fighting ships of various classes at an increased abnormal cost of something like £12,500,000. But hon. Members must understand that the increased cost now set out represents a very small proportion of the annual increased cost which must eventually be attached to the commissioning of these ships. When completed, the ships will require coal, stores, boilers, and machinery, alterations, and repairs. There will be a large amount of depreciation every year, in fact, the depreciation account as set out in the Return granted to the noble Lord the Member for Paddington, is something like 10 per cent. If all these ships are to be placed in commission on a war footing, the annual increase to the Naval Estimates must be something very considerable, indeed almost intolerable. Is it, indeed, that all these ships shall be placed on a war footing, or are some of them to be maintained intact as new ships to be used only as reserves. I contend there would be no necessity to place all these new vessels in commission, inasmuch as they may be maintained in an efficient condition

by being utilized now and then for experimental purposes only. Now, Sir, if the policy of the Government is to be one of non-intervention in European affairs, I contend that there is no necessity to ask for this large increase in the number of our ships. There is no reason why there should not be some rearrangement of the disposition of our fleet. At the present moment we have the best of the squadrons stationed in the Mediterranean; we have 23 ships there. I believe these ships as a rule are used or manœuvred in the way of yachting excursions rather than in practical work. Why have we been keeping this large Fleet in the Mediterranean? I understand the main object is to uphold what is commonly known as the balance of power in Europe, but if there be any balance of power in Europe, I think it is now upheld by the German Emperor or by the Triple Alliance. If the policy of the Government is to be one of non-intervention, a very large portion of the Fleet we now have constantly sailing about the Mediterranean ought to be brought home to this country. If we retain the best portion of our Fleet in the Mediterranean, how in the event of war will we be able to guard our ports at home? Now one part of the programme of the Government provides for an increase of something like ten ironclads. At the present moment I only desire to say upon this point that I hold the building of these large ironclads to be nothing more nor less than a waste of money. It would be much better to have vessels of a smaller size, equally powerful of the same coal capacity, and armed with one or two instead of four guns which these ironclads have. The programme, too, provides for a very large number of cruisers. What is the object with which these cruisers are to be built? Ostensibly the object is that of protecting our commerce. If the Admiralty had told us some of these vessels were to be provided for ocean fighting, I should have been prepared to have agreed with them, but the conveying of commerce in time of war will be an utter impossibility. Suppose that half a-dozen cruisers were told off to convoy 200 ships of commerce from the United States, and that on their way across the Atlantic they met with

three or four of the enemy's cruisers, what would happen? The cruisers supposed to be protecting the merchant ships would immediately have to leave the vessels in order to keep back the enemy's cruisers, and in all probability before reaching home, the merchant vessels would meet with another force of the enemy's cruisers and be either captured or destroyed. As a matter of fact our merchants would not ship their goods in belligerent ships unless they had them insured, and our shipowners would not risk their ships at sea unless they could have them insured. The consequence would be that the shipowners would, as far as possible, transfer their property to neutral flags. Then, again, the supply of food and raw material necessary to the country would not all be sent to the ports of this country direct, but would be sent possibly to neighbouring neutral ports and forwarded from there. The very fact of having to pay largely increased insurance would compel our merchants and shipowners to divert the traffic from their own flag to that of neutral powers. Now, in the comparisons made between the strength of the Navy of this country and that of France and other countries, nothing whatever has been said with regard to men. If we are to have this large increase in the number of ships, we must also have a large increase in the number of men. Our effective force of seamen at the present is something like 19,000 or 20,000. Of these I believe 4,000 are petty officers, 3,000 boys, and only about 6,000 able seamen. Then we have to add to these 4,000 men in the coast-guard service, and about 4,000 pensioners, so that altogether we have for the manning of our Fleet something like 30,000 men. France has at the present moment 100,000 seamen and 23,000 marines.

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I rise to order Sir. The hon. Gentleman is now discussing the manning of the Navy. That is no part of the Bill which is now before the House, but is entirely excluded from it.

*MR. GOURLEY: I think the manning of the Navy was alluded to by the First Lord of the Admiralty when he introduced his Resolution, and with all respect to the right hon. Gentleman, I would point out that you cannot send ships to sea without men. However, I

will defer what I have to say upon that point until a later period. In conclusion let me add that I yield to no man in the belief that this country ought to be doubly as strong as any other nation in regard to its Navy. Our Navy is not only our first but our second and third line of defence. What I do object to in regard to this Bill is the new departure which is proposed by the Government from a financial point of view, and if I vote against the Bill it will simply be because I disapprove of this new departure, as well as of some of the designs.

*LORD CHARLES BERESFORD (Marylebone, E.): The statement made by my noble Friend (Lord George Hamilton in reference to this Bill has created a wrong impression, or wrong deductions have been drawn from what he has told the country through this House and I would like to correct this wrong impression while also pointing out some of the weak points in the Bill. To the Bill as a whole I do not think there will be serious opposition, but there are two points to which I would draw the attention of the House. In the first place the noble Lord has told the country and the country has believed him that the Bill will meet the full requirements of the country, that it is designed to make additions to the fleet which would run the fleet up to the given standard which as fixed by the noble Lord is that it shall be able to defend our shores, our commercial interests and secure our food supply against any two other fleets combined; and secondly that the additions will allow for the arrears of shipbuilding as well as the wastage that will occur year by year. Now, I need only take the return of the noble Lord the Member for Paddington (Lord Randolph Churchill) to prove that both these statements are incorrect. I take first the Government statement that in the year 1894 the fleet will be enabled to meet the combined fleets of France and Russia. On page 18 of my noble Friend's Return for 1890 you will find—I am only going to take the battle ships. I will not detain the House by going through the cruisers and in any engagement in which we may be concerned, the ultimate issue will be between the battle ships. If you add up the armoured battle ships of the first and second class

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with some others in the Return, we are credited with 65 in number. But in this Return, in the category of "others," we are liable to be misled by a number of coast defence vessels being included. Now, if we go to war, we must do so with a definite plan of campaign, and the Government have put forward a very good plan, "to watch for and if possible to destroy the fleets of all possible enemies." To carry out that plan you must not count on your coast defence vessels, though you must count on those of the enemy, because to watch for and destroy the enemy's fleet you must get at the enemy's harbours. Here the Return is misleading.—

LORD G. HAMILTON: It is not my Return. I did not prepare it.

*LORD CHARLES BERESFORD: Yes, but it is a most misleading Return for this reason. By ordinary civilians it would be thought that we have 65 armoured battle-ships. The noble Lord cannot contradict that, that if you add these ships up you find a total of 65 armoured battle ships, and the inference is that they are all ready to hand. The hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) described them as 68 ships in the Channel, but they would not be in the Channel if we went to war; they would be scattered to defend our interests all over the world. That is not so important as this question of the coast defence vessels. They are supposed to defend the coast of England, but it is nothing of the sort. We have six—the *Wivern*, which is at Hong Kong, the *Magdala*, the *Abyssinia*, the *Scorpion*, the *Viper*, the *Vixen*, at Bermuda or elsewhere, and the sooner these are put into the market and sold the better. But do not mislead the people by this Return. Will any hon. Member say that of these 65 vessels we can rely on the coast defence vessels that are not in England at the moment? You must in your comparison include the foreign coast defence vessels, but not those of England; for, in the first place, they are not in England; and, in the second place, if they went to sea, two days afterwards every officer and man on board would see the necessity of making his will. What is there then in the contents of this Bill to lead the country to believe that when these ships are added to the Fleet, we should be enabled to meet the combined French and Russian Fleets of the same class?

I would ask the noble Lord's particular attention to this. However in the name of fortune, when we look at the figures for 1894, and take out 13 coast defence vessels from the list of armoured battle ships leaving 52, are we to carry out the plan to watch and destroy combined fleets such as those of France and Russia, which added, make a total of 59 armoured battle ships? According to the Return, we should have only 52 vessels to carry out the plan. My noble Friend knows perfectly well that there is no Admiral but would tell him that there will be no possible chance of carrying out the plan of watching and destroying the enemy, unless you have at least a third more in strength to allow for contingencies that must occur when you are at sea and your enemy in harbour. I think that disposes of the Plan of Campaign my noble Friend has himself suggested. And now, let us see how these 52 ships are made up. But, first of all, I should like to correct the statement of my noble Friend that, according to what he has laid down as the wastage of the Fleet, the new programme will allow for this as well as the making up of arrears. As I make it out, the programme will be short of that result by three ships, for according to his own argument, my noble Friend has stated, and it is a sound theory that the ordinary life of a battle ship is 22 years. Accordingly, he makes allowance for four ships in making up his programme, but in addition to the four ships thus taken off, there are I find 14 ships that come within the principle laid down, and must be counted as beyond the age limit in 1894. The House will be astounded to learn the age of some of these ships which dating from the year of completion reach from 23 to 30 years, and in the case of the *Black Prince* to 32 years. These then should be struck off the list of effectives, and with the five vessels now on the point of completion, and the ten my noble Friend proposes by his programme, I make out that there will be three ships wanting to make up the ordinary wastage of the Fleet. I cannot, therefore, see how my noble Friend maintains his statement that his programme will make up both arrears and wastage. My own proposal is that we should expend some 20 millions over and above the ordinary wastage. The

First Sea Lord the other day made some remarks as to this programme having been in existence since last June, and as he endeavoured to make a point against me, I may say a word or two as to this. This programme of mine has been before the country for three years. I mentioned it in July, 1885, and explained it very much in the same way, and I was returned twice to Parliament upon that and nothing else, so I think my noble Friend is not more correct in this than in other matters I have mentioned. My proposal was to add 74 ships at the end of five years, taking the calculation of the First Lord that in addition, £1,800,000 is required for wastage each year. I will not pretend that the programme of my noble Friend is altogether wrong, he must have made it out upon some basis, but my proposal is based upon the capabilities of the country as to production, so far as I by careful inquiry and calculation can arrive at them. I do not think that my noble Friend can turn out more ships than he proposes. He puts down three millions to be expended sooner or later on new ships, but he leads the country to believe that his sum of 21 millions will run the Fleet up to standard during the next five years, by not laying down another ship at all. If that is not the noble Lord's intention I hope he will make it clear, for that is the idea all over the country. For a moment I will touch the financial question. The Chancellor of the Exchequer is not here, and if I attacked him I expect he would pulverize me, but I may say this. Speaking the other day about experts in a rather sarcastic way he made a somewhat extraordinary statement, that if experts had their way and a great number of ships were built, we should have these ships obsolete in three years, as had been the case before. Now, then, I join issue with the right hon. Gentleman. I know the name of every battleship in the world at this moment, and if he can give me the name of a single battle ship that has become obsolete in three years, or I will even go so far as 15 years, I should be glad of the information. The right hon. Gentleman opposite asks why, if the building is to occupy five years, the payment should extend over seven? Nor do I myself quite understand that, because I hold that the increase of the

Fleet will be for the advantage of posterity, and the expenditure should to some extent fall on posterity, or it is an assurance against an increase in the National Debt. The hon. Member for Northampton brought forward several interesting details, but I could not help thinking that he was rather laughing at us in some of them; but one point I will refer to, and that relates to the Declaration of Paris. The hon. Member says that directly we go to war all our raw material, all our food supplies, will be transferred to neutral bottoms. But does the hon. Member know that most of the Powers will not recognize the transfer of flag unless the captain and crew belong to the country whose flag is flying? How is this going to be accomplished in a short time? The only country we need fear anything from in mercantile transactions is France, and France has distinctly laid down she will not allow, and does not recognize, the change of flag after hostilities have commenced.

MR. LABOUCHERE: Will the noble Lord say where that is laid down?

*LORD C. BERESFORD: I learned the fact from reading a book upon International Law, and though I cannot at the moment give the hon. Member the reference I will do so at the first opportunity. Has the hon. Member tried to realize what the delay in the supply of raw material and food stuffs would mean, the panic, the disturbance of trade, the distress through men being thrown out of work. I confess to being no little surprised at the speech we had yesterday from the hon. Baronet the Member for Cumberland (Sir W. Lawson). I had always regarded the hon. Baronet as a sober minded peaceful man, but he fairly astonished me with his bellicose language as I saw him waving his arms over his head and heard him boasting that in his day one Englishman was equal to three Frenchmen and six Germans, and so on. I did not know that the hon. Baronet was given to swaggering in that way. But to take up the question where he dropped it I may remind him that in these days science has brought about pretty much an equality between ourselves and Frenchmen, Germans and Italians, when one head commands everything and an electric button does the whole trick. There is very little difference to be found and as I

have said, your chief efforts should be directed to knocking off the hostile captain's head, and thus demoralizing your enemy. In these days of high speed, the mere fact of the opposing captain losing his head may enable you to win the action. There is much merit in the Government Bill, and they could not well have done more than the Bill proposes to do; but I object to the Bill being represented to the country as in full satisfaction of its necessities. As a matter of fact, it only represents an instalment of the nation's requirements. With regard to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford's arguments, touching the capitalized value of the Fleet, surely it is necessary to compare the value of the Fleet with the work it has to do. The commerce which the Fleet has to defend increases by leaps and bounds every year, and the protection of our food supply becomes more and more necessary. If these calls are not met in a business-like way the end will be panic and disaster. I must refer to some remarks made by my late colleague the First Sea Lord (Sir Arthur Hood), and I should not do so but that he commenced the personal controversy I would rather have avoided. We have often been amused at things that have been said by the First Sea Lord, but we have never said anything against him. For myself, I am careless as to what he said in his references to "so-called experts;" but my brother officers who are concerned in the reproach of the First Sea Lord do not like it, and have no opportunity of replying, except through the mouth of a Member of the House. These so-called experts include among the seniors Admiral Hornby and Sir Thomas Symonds, Sir John Hay, and others, besides a large number of juniors, from whom I have received hundreds of letters on the subject, and they think it is a great pity the First Sea Lord should have allowed himself to use the language he had used; and, considering his peculiar position, it would have been much better if he had said nothing and retired into obscurity. But if people make attacks they must be prepared for counter-attack, as well as defence. I mention this with great regret, having no desire for a personal controversy. Passing away from this, I would put it to hon. Gentlemen opposite, who are opposing this Bill—do

they consider we require a Navy or not? If we want a Navy, and if we should hold, as everybody argues we should, supremacy on the sea, we must have a Navy equal to our requirements. Though I do not admit that the programme, by the proposed additions, does satisfy our full requirements, I think that it takes full advantage of the producing capacity of the country under the circumstances, and I heartily give the Bill my support.

***LORD G. HAMILTON:** I think the Government may congratulate themselves upon the somewhat meagre shape to which opposition to their proposals has been reduced. I freely admit that the reception of the Bill by the country is largely due to the labours of hon. Members who, inside and outside the House, have urged upon the country that an increase of its naval forces was necessary to fit the Navy to cope with its work. I admit this because I have differed with those hon. Gentlemen's utterances in the past, and possibly may have to do so again in the future. The objections to the actual proposals of the Bill are reduced to two forms. The hon. Member for Northampton thinks that the Government are asking too much, and the noble Lord the Member for Marylebone thinks that the Government are asking too little.

***LORD C. BERESFORD:** I said that I thought that the Government had asked for as much as they could utilize at present; but that this sum would not satisfy the full requirements of the country.

***LORD G. HAMILTON:** My noble Friend criticised our proposals in a somewhat hostile spirit and went on to point out that this is not his scheme. I assert at once that it is not the scheme of the noble Lord; but it is a scheme prepared by my naval advisers, of whom the noble Lord the Member for Marylebone is not one. I think that the noble Lord takes an exaggerated view of the wants of the country. For my own part, I see no advantage in depreciating the power of the British Navy and of exaggerating the power of foreign navies; and I am convinced that, if my noble Friend had scrutinized the list of foreign vessels with the same keenness as he has scrutinized those of Great Britain, at least half of them might have been knocked out of the list. In his estimate of

foreign strength he has included vessels with wooden hulls and gun boats carrying one gun, and he has ignored the fact that our battle ships are larger and more powerful than those of foreign nations. With the number of ships we purpose to build we shall have a Navy which will be a match for any two foreign fleets in combination. I regret very much that the noble Lord went out of his way to attack the First Naval Lord. No naval officer has been more persistently attacked than Sir Arthur Hood, and yet no man has done more to promote the efficiency of the service, or has shown a greater single-mindedness in devoting himself to his duty or has so much set his face against anything which savours of a job. He has never allowed any man to be put in a position unless in his judgment that man was the best qualified to perform that particular work. Sir A. Hood is a man of great scientific attainments, and I do not think there is a single naval officer of his standing who has the same general knowledge of his profession. I think it is much to be deprecated that one naval officer should use the House of Commons to attack another naval officer who has merely been defending himself against criticisms made upon him in the public Press and in public speeches. The hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) has contended that this proposal will encourage foreign nations to embark on a largely increased expenditure on their navies. There is not the slightest indication or evidence of that. We have just received the proposed expenditure of France for 1890, and I find that it is practically the same as for the year 1889. As far as we can learn from the foreign Press, the proposed increase of our Navy has met with the almost unanimous approval of the Governments and Sovereigns of other countries. (Opposition laughter.) I will state why. Hon. Gentlemen opposite who laugh will not deny that the greater weight and influence of England are in the councils of Europe, the greater will be the guarantee of peace, and that the more material force is behind England, the greater will be the chances of peace. The Monarchies and Governments of Europe are all at the present time profoundly anxious to maintain and prolong the state of European peace, and therefore they welcome this addition to

our Fleet as a guarantee that the force it will place at the disposal of this country will be used for maintaining the peace of Europe.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL (Paddington, S.): Are there any official dispatches to that effect?

*LORD G. HAMILTON: I have only stated that this is the case as far as we can judge from the utterances of the Press of foreign countries.

MR. ILLINGWORTH (Bradford, W.): Which countries?

*LORD G. HAMILTON: There is a general indication in the foreign Press that our action meets with approval. The hon. Member for Northampton went on to say that it is not possible for this country to compete with two foreign countries. I would rather reverse the proposition and say that it is not possible for any two countries to compete with us in the matter of ship-building. I do not believe that all the dockyards in Europe could compete, in the short time which we propose, the addition to the fleet which is contained in this Bill. Therefore, if any foreign nation should endeavour to compete with us, so far as naval supremacy is concerned, it would soon discover that it was engaged in a hopeless task. There is another class of objections made to this bill, leaving out the conscientious objections entertained by Gentlemen who belong to the Peace Society, against any expenditure on the Army or Navy. The right hon. Gentleman, the member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. Fowler), among others, appears to think there are some discrepancies between the present proposals and my previous utterances and actions; but that arises from a different conception of what constitutes naval progress on the part of the objectors to that which I entertain. I have always stated that I believe the only test is to take the number of ships annually added to the Navy, and that to take outlay irrespective of return was altogether misleading. An increase to the strength of the Navy is not necessarily an increase of expenditure. During the last three or four years there has been an enormous addition to the strength of the Navy. The number of ships added to the Navy in the last four years, estimated in money value, is equal to the amount added in the twelve preceding years. That is to say, as

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much work has been done in four years as was done in twelve years previously. And the difference between the expenditure of the past year and of the two preceding years is not due to any curtailment of the strength or efficiency of the Navy, but to two causes—first, to certain reductions in the dockyards, by which we cut down redundant establishments, but the main cause was the abnormal shipbuilding necessitated by Lord Northbrook's programme. The expenditure fell in a manner which had not been anticipated over a period of five years. It was expected that the expenditure of the first two years would be equivalent to the expenditure of the last two years: whereas, as a matter of fact, the expenditure of the first two years was about £1,500,000 more than that of the last two years. The right hon. Member for Wolverhampton will, therefore, see that in comparing the expenditure of the last two years with that of the first two, he arrived at an erroneous conclusion by asserting that I had cut down expenditure. If any hon. Member takes the difference between one item in one year and the same item in the previous year and assumes because the expenditure is less or in excess that, therefore, there has been a reduction or an increase of strength, he arrives at an erroneous conclusion. The first year I was at the Board of Admiralty there was a pressing want which required to be supplied immediately. That want had to be made good either by a supplementary estimate or by a provision in the next year. I took a supplementary estimate amounting to something like £200,000, and that simple transfer of expenditure of £200,000 made a difference in the expenditure of the two years of £400,000; but it did not mean a reduction of naval expenditure. What has happened during the past four years is that the abnormal programme has been completed much more rapidly than was anticipated, but the expenditure in regard to the normal programme is as high as it ever was. If hon. Members will look at one of the returns which have been laid on the table, they will see that the total addition proposed to be made between the 1st of June, 1889, and the 1st of April, 1894, is 113 ships, but 43 of those ships are independent of the programme we

are now discussing. Our great difficulty has been to try to keep up for the next three or four years the rate of progress of the last three years. We take the amount of our liability this year, add to it the amount of liability we propose to incur by laying down new ships, and we take care each year that the amount of expenditure asked for the year shall bear a fair proportion to the total liability of the year. The annual expenditure on the total liabilities of the Navy during the past four years has been as follows:—35 per cent in 1885-6, 51 per cent in 1886-7, 60 per cent in 1887-8, and 68 per cent in 1888-9. I venture to say that that one test was the gauge of good administration so far as shipbuilding was concerned. The present shipbuilding scheme is based upon a principle different from that of any scheme that has ever been presented to Parliament. We have made what we believe to be a full inquiry into the whole wants of the Naval service, and the scheme embodies the results of those investigations. A sum of money is asked for which is sufficient not only to build ships, but also to provide the guns and stores necessary to make the ships efficient. The right hon. Member for Wolverhampton objects to any departure from the practice which gives Parliament annual control over the naval expenditure; but the right hon. Gentleman did not show that that practice has worked well. No doubt it was designed for the purpose of securing economy and good management, but if it can be shown that it operated in an opposite direction, surely no pedantry or undue adherence to obsolete forms ought to prevent us from modifying our procedure according to the requirements of modern times. All who have been concerned in recent inquiries and Committees and commissions into the Admiralty administration will admit that three facts have been made clear. First, it is hopeless to attempt satisfactorily to manage, under modern conditions, great Government manufacturing establishments under the rules, traditions, and regulations of bygone days. Manufacturing and producing processes have been almost revolutionized during the past few years; and if the Admiralty are not

to be allowed hereafter to hold balances at the end of the financial year, but are to be compelled to surrender them at the end of it so that they can not apply them to a shipbuilding programme extending over a number of years, it will be absolutely impossible that the Admiralty can hold its own in efficiency and economy with the private yards. But the Admiralty can hold its own if it is allowed to retain the balances. This, then, is the first alteration that is made. It is proposed to give greater latitude to the Admiralty; the balances are not to be surrendered; and moreover, the proposed expenditure is to be put into an Act of Parliament, which is a check, not on the House of Commons, but on the Executive. If the House refuse to vote the money there will be no power to force it to do so; but the plan will do something to prevent a repetition of what has happened in the past. Someone has come into office who was anxious to keep down the Estimates, and some item has been struck off the Army or the Navy Estimates without the knowledge of any but one or two officials, and this reduction has had the effect of impairing the efficiency of a large scheme of expenditure. It is proposed for the future not that the House shall have no control, but that if the Government wish to make a departure from the policy which has been laid down by Act of Parliament, the Government shall be compelled to come to the House and make a public statement of the fact, so that the change will challenge attention and discussion. The second conclusion which is clearly established is that in the past it has not been the custom to lay before the House a shipbuilding scheme which was complete in itself—that is, not only as regards the ships which it comprises, but also as regards the proportion of one class of ships, to another, and also the expenditure necessary for building the ships has not included the outlay required for guns and ammunition. The third conclusion arrived at was that any scheme of shipbuilding which is laid before Parliament ought to be based on a full and comprehensive survey of the wants of the nation. The Government have entirely conformed to each one of these three conclusions as the principles of their policy, and I do not believe that we have materially interfered with

the control of the House of Commons over expenditure. And now let us see what our proposal is. The expenditure covered by the Bill is £21,500,000, which is divided under two heads—£10,000,000 which it is proposed to pay out of the Consolidated Fund, and £11,500,000 which is to be provided in the Navy Estimates of subsequent years. The question should be looked at from a practical and business point of view. The £10,000,000 is to defray certain contracts which are to be entered into at once. Why is the money to come from the Consolidated Fund instead of being provided by an ordinary Vote? I maintain that it is not in the power of the House to refuse to find money for the contract which has been authorized to be made, unless for some unfairness or irregularity. If it could adopt such a course the result would be detrimental to the national finances, because every contractor, knowing he would be subject to such a repudiation, would attempt to guard himself from risk by making much higher terms. If the contractors fail in their duty it will be in the power of any Member of the House to call attention to that failure on the Admiralty Vote. If the expenditure is placed on the ordinary Estimates it will be impossible to predict how much will be required in any one of the next three years. The failure of a sub-contractor to supply certain material might throw a contract back and so change the time at which hundreds of thousands of pounds might be actually required, and this would involve fluctuating demands upon the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and corresponding fluctuations in taxation which would have a detrimental effect upon commerce. Therefore, instead of raising the money by a loan, it is proposed to raise it by annuities and to spread the taxation necessary to meet this expenditure over seven years, whereas the expenditure will be compressed into about five years. We have brought in a Bill, which I admit is a departure from former precedents, in order to provide for the increase of the Navy which we admit to be necessary. We ask the House formally to endorse this principle so that it may become a guide and instruction for subsequent Parliaments. I believe this is the only plan on which

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the British Navy can be effectively administered, and its annually recurring wants satisfactorily and economically supplied. I trust that we may be allowed to take the second reading of the Bill at this sitting.

*MR. DUFF (Banffshire): I quite agree with the noble Lord that the Bill before the House has been opposed upon two different grounds. The hon. Member for Northampton has moved an Amendment because he objects altogether to an increase in the Fleet. I may say at once that with the object and speech of my hon. Friend I do not agree at all. But there is much greater force in the objections of my right hon. Friend the Member for Wolverhampton; and the arguments of my right hon. Friend have certainly not been met in the speech we have just listened to from the First Lord. I understood the noble Lord to say that the principal reason for the financial course proposed by the Admiralty, is one which applies to the surrender of the balances. But my right hon. Friend showed last night how that could be overcome. In the programme of Lord Northbrook no such proposal as that contained in the Bill was made. A remarkable omission in the speech of the First Lord is that he made no reference to the extraordinary and contradictory statements of the First Naval Lord, as to the evidence he gave before the Committee of last year. The First Naval Lord on the 15th June last, giving evidence before the Committee, expressed himself satisfied, for present purposes, with the state of the Navy, so far as ironclads were concerned. He told us since that the new programme was in print on 1st July, so at that time he must have had in his mind, if not in his pocket, the whole of the programme since proposed, and, I think, looking at the position of authority Sir A. Hood occupies, we are entitled to some explanation of his extraordinary statement.

LORD G. HAMILTON: The two matters have nothing to do with each other. What Sir A. Hood said before the Committee had reference to war with one country, not with war with any two countries, which is now recognized as the standard.

*MR. DUFF: He was referring to a combination which had been spoken of as between France and Russia.

LORD G. HAMILTON: His statement was as to France alone.

*MR. DUFF: Quotations much stronger than that I have given could be found I believe—and in this matter, I think, the noble Lord the Member for Marylebone (Lord C. Beresford) will bear me out. Now the First Lord has made no reference to the suggestion of my right hon. Friend the Member for Bradford (Mr. Shaw Lefevre). In many respects I take a different view as to the requirements of the Navy from that of my right hon. Friend, but I so far agree with him that I think the Admiralty are at present proceeding somewhat hurriedly in laying down the whole of these ships at once. I say that because I think there is other work which might be done at once with great advantage to the Navy. They have told us that they propose to re-arm and re-engine certain of the old vessels. This is an excellent scheme, and I have no doubt that these vessels, when thus re-armed and re-engined, will be most useful. In the possession of old vessels which can at once be rendered useful in this way we are undoubtedly in a much better position than France. We have many ships which were regarded as obsolete, which, if re-engined and re-armed, would prove very powerful. Having regard to the folly and general inadvisability of laying down many ships at once, I think, with my hon. Friend, it would be much better if, instead of laying down all the proposed new ships of the line immediately, this work of the old vessels were first proceeded with, and the new ships were only laid down after further experience has been obtained regarding the *Nile* and *Trafalgar*. If vessels of a certain class are proved by experience to be failures it will be an enormous evil to find ourselves in possession of a large number of them. With regard to these old vessels which it is proposed to re-arm, there is one point I should like to mention. Amongst the vessels it is proposed to re-arm I find the *Thunderer*, the *Devastation*, the *Rupert*, the *Alexandra*, and the *Hercules*. These require 24 guns, but in the Return (No. 110) only 18 are shown as being requisite, which is six short. But as an alternative policy to building all the new ships proposed at once, I think it would be desirable to press forward the re-arming

and re-engining of these older vessels. There are a large proportion of obsolete vessels now afloat—according to the Return No. 3—on our foreign stations. I do not say this to the fault of the present Admiralty for no doubt they found them in their present positions when they entered office. There are upwards of 20 vessels of the *Opal*, *Emerald*, and *Algerine* class, all obsolete. The programme of the Government is misleading because the Admiralty do not appear to have made allowance for the increase of obsolete ships by the time that the present programme is completed. By that time, instead of 30, as stated by the Government, there will be at least 41 obsolete ships. I regret many of the statements that have been made on this subject of the strength of the Navy by the First Lord and some of his naval colleagues, for it has been those statements which have furnished the opponents of the Admiralty with their most telling arguments against this scheme. I, however, do not believe in starving the Navy on account of blundering in the Admiralty, and as I consider that the case has been made out for strengthening the Navy I cannot support the Motion of the hon. Member for Northampton. On the other hand, I cannot vote for a Bill which contains the unconstitutional and objectionable financial proposals referred to by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton.

*CAPTAIN PRICE (Davenport): Before remarking on the principle of the Bill, I should like to notice one observation which fell from the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty, as to a point raised by the noble Lord the Member for Marylebone. I saw the noble Lord's point quite clearly, but I think the First Lord must have missed it in some way. I understood the noble Lord to say that he considered the proposals made by the Government amply sufficient to carry out the programme which had been laid down, and that he thought if any larger programme were proposed, the dockyards of the country would not be able to do the work. He said, however, that the proposals of the Government were not sufficient to bring the fleet up to that standard which the First Lord himself laid down, which was that our Navy should be in a position

of equality with the fleets of any other two Powers. The noble Lord has laid it down that we require 70 ships of certain kinds to bring us up to that standard, but what he obviously meant was, that if we had these ships now we should be in that position of equality. That we should be so in four and a-half years time, was quite a different thing. It does not seem to me that in the scheme of the Government sufficient allowance has been made for wastage and arrears nor for the building programme of other countries. At the end of these four-and-a-half years, we shall have a very fine Fleet, far finer than that of any other country, but as the years pass, other countries will be building ironclads and, no doubt, will complete a large number of cruisers. With regard to the charge of inconsistency which has been brought against the Government in relation to this matter, and which I was very much surprised to hear brought up as an argument, as I should have thought hon. Members have learnt from their own leaders that inconsistency is the very essence of modern politics. We are reminded of the First Lord of the Admiralty attending banquets at the Academy, and in the city, and declaring that our Navy is strong enough to meet those of any two countries, and then coming to this House and telling us an entirely different story. Well we have often heard speak of an appeal from Philip drunk to Philip sober, but it is left for the Chief Apostle of temperance in this House to appeal, in regard to these Naval matters, from Philip sober to Philip after dinner. The case of the present First Lord is not without precedent. In 1884 Lord Northbrook told us that not only was no more money required for the increase of the Navy, but that if he had another £2,000,000, he would not know how to spend it, and yet four or five months afterwards he came down and asked for £5,000,000, declaring that that amount was absolutely required to put the Navy into a proper condition. Then we have the case of the First Lord. He may have said on one occasion that the Navy was sufficient, but at all events now he has come to his sober senses, and tells us that this large sum is required. The lesson we have to

learn from this is that we must not credit all that we hear from First Lords of the Admiralty, but must look to the opinion of experts outside, and the country in general. Another argument has been used against the principle of the Bill. We are frequently asked "Against whom are you making these preparations?" Hon. Gentlemen below the gangway opposite say, "If you will tell us from what quarter you expect danger, we will, if your alarm is well grounded, consider your proposal for increasing the Fleet." That may be a very good argument, but it reminds me of a story told during the Franco-German war. After the battle of Sedan a French General asked a German statesman, "Now that you have thoroughly beaten us against whom are you continuing this war?" And the reply of the German was, "Against Louis Quatorze." His meaning was obvious. I do not suppose he thought that Louis the Fourteenth had risen from the dead, but that they were fighting against that spirit of aggression, and military aggrandizement which had sprung into life during the time of the "Grande Monarque" which had culminated in the days of Napoleon, and which now appeared to be undergoing a period of *Renaissance* under the Third Empire. And when the hon. Gentleman opposite asked against whom these naval preparations are being made, the answer is, against the warlike spirit of the age, against Europe armed to the teeth, against that spirit of aggression which always has actuated the peoples of the continent, and will I suppose continue to actuate them so long as human nature remains what it is. We were told the other night by the Member for Carlisle (Sir W. Lawson) that these great armaments are a temptation to aggression. This Bill, however, is one of defence, not of defiance. It is for the people of the country to say whether we shall use our armaments for the purposes of aggression, but it is not in the power of the country to declare when we may be called upon to use them for purposes of defence. A great deal has been said about protecting the food supply. During the last great war that question never arose at all. England at that time was self-contained, and could get her food supply within

her coasts. One Gentleman says he does not believe much harm would be done to our commerce by vessels of the *Alabama* type, because of the difficulty they would have in getting coal. But the *Alabama* did not have much difficulty in supplying her needs, and coal depôts have been multiplied all over the world since then. It may be said that the Federals had very few ships to send out to catch the Confederate cruiser, but they were in infinitely greater proportion as compared with the *Alabama* than the ships would be which we could send out to catch the cruisers of France and Russia. A very large part of this money is to be spent in building ships by contract. I understood one hon. Gentleman opposite to say that the proposal comes late in the day, because, although a few years ago there was great depression in the shipbuilding trade, at the present moment things are different. The shipbuilding trade has increased, and the hon. Gentleman has very much doubted whether these ten millions could be expended on ships put out to contract. I do not know if the First Lord has looked into the question, but it seems to me that if we cannot get a healthy competition amongst the private yards, the obvious thing to do is to increase the programme in the Royal dockyards. When we consider the enormous capital sunk in these Royal Dockyards, and also the extent to which the First Lord is increasing the expense of supervision in them, I say it is our duty to employ them to the fullest extent before putting anything out to contract. And now one word as to the designs for the large ships. I do hope that the Admiralty will look thoroughly into that matter. We are going to spend upwards of £8,000,000 on eight enormous ships. I cannot for the life of me understand why we are going to put so many eggs into one basket. We could build 12 ships for the same amount of money, carrying the same armament and the same thickness of armour, capable of discharging the same number of torpedoes, and having the same ramming power. In one respect only would they be inferior, namely, in the matter of speed, and I must say I fail to see the absolute necessity of a high rate of speed in a line-of-battle ship. You could not take a large

ship into action at full speed; you would not steam more than six or seven knots. Suppose, while we were building these eight ships, a foreign power were to spend the same amount of money on 12 vessels such as I have described. If our eight were to be opposed to their 12, we should be put at a great disadvantage. Then, if one of our ships were to strike on a rock, or were to be sunk by a torpedo or by a ram, and one of the enemy's vessels were to disappear in the same way, the odds against us would be even worse—11 to 7. I do hope the Admiralty will go thoroughly into this matter, for I must confess I fail to see the advantage of these enormous ships when we can get all we want from vessels of a smaller size. I support the Bill before the House, not because I think it is altogether sufficient, but because I look on it as an instalment—a necessary instalment—to bring the Fleet of this country up to what it should be.

MR. STEPHEN WILLIAMSON (Kilmarnock): On the first occasion when the noble Lord the Member for Marylebone spoke on these proposals he appealed to the popular feelings that might be raised on them; and he proceeded to set forth the popular arguments for the Government proposals. One ground was the increase of our tonnage and of our commerce. Now I think the noble Lord gave us erroneous statistics on that occasion. He spoke of the increase in our trade during the last twenty years, and put the increase in the combined import and export trade at from £350,000,000 to £650,000,000 between 1868 and 1888. The actual increase was from £522,000,000 to £645,000,000—not a very large increase. A more serious mistake was that in regard to our tonnage. The noble Lord said our tonnage had increased from 4,500,000 to about 7,000,000 tons between 1868 and 1888. Well, in 1868 we had 7,300 sailing vessels and 862 steam vessels—I speak of vessels employed in the foreign trade—giving a tonnage of 4,265,000. In 1887, for which year I have the printed Return, we had 2,717 sailing ships and 3,063 steam ships—a total of 5,780—giving a tonnage of 6,000,000 tons. In 1888 there was a large increase,

Captain Price

but I have only got the printed figures for 1887. Now we have an actual falling off in the number of vessels of about 30 per cent, taking the combined sailing and steam tonnage. Nobody knows better than the noble Lord that it is quite as easy to protect a vessel of 2,000 tons as a ship of 1,000 tons. Moreover, the decrease in our sailing tonnage is astonishing. It has fallen from 7,300 to 2,700; and as the increase has been in the number of steamers, they are far better able to protect themselves than sailing ships. Many of them could outrun our cruisers. So far as the noble Lords's argument goes, as based upon our tonnage and our commerce, I think it falls to the ground. My reason for voting against this Bill, is simply that the necessity for it is not shown. What is the case? By these proposals we are simply stimulating continental countries to emulate our example. Why should we not be content with our Navy as it is, with the usual annual Votes? You are going to build enormous vessels costing about a million sterling each. How do we know that any one of them may not at any moment be shattered to pieces by a dynamite torpedo? On all grounds, but especially because the ground brought forward by the noble Lord the Member for Marylebone is insufficient, I feel bound to vote against the Bill.

The House divided: Ayes, 277; noes 136.—(Div. List No. 98)

Main Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed for Monday next.

DEPUTY SHERIFF CLERKS (SCOTLAND)

Return ordered, "showing—

1. The names of the Depute Sheriff Clerks with the amount of salaries paid them as at this date;
 2. The length of service of each Depute Clerk, and each Clerk, including the Accountant, Statistician, and Inspector of District Offices."
- (Mr. Cunningham Graham.)

Notice taken that 40 Members were not present; House counted, and 40 Members not being present,—

House adjourned at Five Minutes
after Nine o'clock.

HANSARD'S PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES.

No. 14.]

THIRD VOLUME OF SESSION 1889.

[MAY 16.]

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Wednesday, 8th May, 1889.

QUESTIONS.

THE CASE OF THOMAS BERESFORD.

DR. CAMERON (Glasgow, College) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention had been called to the case of Thomas Beresford, who, in 1876, when 13 years of age, was sentenced to two months' imprisonment for an assault, but did not undergo the punishment, in consequence of the magistrate stopping its execution on Beresford giving a promise of good behaviour, and who had now been arrested and sent to York Castle to undergo the sentence passed upon him 13 years ago? And, whether, during the 13 years which have elapsed since the sentence was passed, Beresford's conduct has given any cause for complaint; and, if not, whether he will take steps to secure his immediate liberation?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. MATTHEWS, Birmingham, E.): I have communicated with the Justices, and, with their concurrence, have ordered this man's immediate discharge.

COUNTY RATES (SCOTLAND).

Ordered—

"Return for each county of Scotland (excluding burghs in which the Commissioners of Supply do not levy the County General Assessment) showing for the last year available the rate per pound of valuation for the following rates:—

1. (a) The following rates levied by the Commissioners of Supply; (1) The County General Assessment; (2) Police Assessment; (3) Lunatic Asylums Assessment.
- (b) All rates levied by Commissioners of Supply, including the above.
2. Average Road Assessments, distinguishing Special Rates for Bridges and Debt.
3. Average Education Rate.
4. All Rates, including the above but excepting Poor Rates."

—(Mr. Donald Crawford.)

CORRECTION.

*MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton): I wish, Sir, to make a correction in a statement made by myself in Committee in the discussion upon the Vote for the Home Department with reference to Mr. Rickards the Factory Inspector of Leeds. That gentleman considers that I did not deal fairly with him. He states that he is only just over 70 years of age, and not between 73 and 74 as I intimated in my statement, and, as an evidence that he is able to do his work efficiently, he informs me that he was up at a quarter to 6 o'clock on the morning of the day on which I was speaking and that he visited seventeen Jewish workshops in order to obtain evidence for the Royal Commission on Sweating. As he is unable to make that statement here I thought it only justice to him that I should make it.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

THEATRES (COUNTY OF LONDON)
BILL.—[BILL 8.]

Order for Second Reading, read.

*MR. DIXON-HARTLAND (Middlesex, Uxbridge): In moving the Second Reading of this Bill I wish to say that there are in London 65 theatres and

about 500 music-halls. They provide entertainment for 325,000 persons every night, or 1,750,000 a week, or nearly one hundred millions in the course of the year. I think these figures show the importance of the subject I wish to bring before the attention of the House, and give the House a reason for investigating the manner in which these places of amusement are governed, and how the safety of the public is provided for. At the present moment there are at least six or seven jurisdictions over theatres; the Crown has jurisdiction over two patent theatres, the Lord Chamberlain has jurisdiction over 58, and the Middlesex and Surrey magistrates and the late Metropolitan Board of Works had jurisdiction over others. These jurisdictions are constantly overlapping and are so contradictory that no theatre manager knows exactly how he stands, and it is frequently possible to set one authority against another. The Local Government Bill of last year brought the London County Council into existence. The powers of the London County Council with regard to theatres and music-halls are not greater than those which the Metropolitan Board of Works possessed, and that Board admitted during the last two Sessions that their powers were insufficient, as they applied to Parliament for greater powers. What the public want is proper supervision; that the supervision shall be continuous, always on the same line, above corruption, and not open to fads. How are we to get that continuous supervision in the London County Council? It is a varying body subject to re-election every three years, and if at one time there are a body of gentlemen on the Theatre Committee holding strong views, they may be followed in three years by others who hold entirely opposite views. The consequence may be that the order of one Committee may be entirely upset by the next Committee, each Committee being conscientiously of opinion that they are performing their duty. After what has lately taken place in the London County Council, I object to hand over the jurisdiction in regard to theatres entirely to them. We have already seen members get up there and say that all theatres ought to be put down. If that is one of the "fads" of the County Council it is impossible to say how soon the whole Council may be drawn into

it. It is a question which the Government ought to take up and deal with as they deal with mines and factories. If there were permanent Inspectors appointed in whom theatrical managers had confidence the nation need be put to no expense in connection with the matter. Theatrical managers would be quite willing to pay the whole of the expense. I am told that the Home Office is very much overworked and has no staff available for the purpose. I would be perfectly satisfied with the Board of Works or any other Government Department, provided there is continuous supervision. Everybody says that something ought to be done for the safety of the public. But what is everybody's business is nobody's business, and we are no better off now than we were in 1878, when power was first given in this matter to the Metropolitan Board of Works. Since the dreadful accident at the Ring Theatre in Vienna, at the Opera at Nice, at the Opera Comique in Paris, and at the theatre in Exeter, public attention has been strongly directed to the question. There is no doubt, however, that we are no more forward now than we were then, and that an accident may occur before we have put our house in order. The Metropolitan Board of Works neglected its duties with regard to theatres; a deputation which I had the honour to introduce to the Home Secretary concerning theatres brought out the whole question of the corruption of that body, and I believe they got their death in consequence of their neglect of their duties in connection with theatres. After my Bill was brought in several theatres were closed and not allowed to be opened until certain alterations were made; but the point to be considered is whether theatres were safe now. There are not two theatres in London constructed so as to be safe to the public. There is one underground theatre, the Criterion. Could anything in the world make that theatre safe? If a fire broke out above that theatre every one in the house would be stifled as if in a wasps' nest. Captain Shaw's report has never been published. If it had, very few people would have gone to theatres since. The safety of the public is the point to which my Bill is directed. I do not care one straw as to the safety of the structures themselves; I leave that to the managers.

What we ought to do is to see that the public can escape in the event of fire. We have to provide, not only against fire, but against panic, which is always of a selfish character. There ought to be rules that all doors should open outwards, that the exits should be always available to the public and should be used every night so that people were habituated to their use, that no two parts of the house should be served with the same stairs and door, and that all theatres should be closed where these conditions are not complied with. These are the rules in Rome, St. Petersburg, Paris, Marseilles, Vienna and various other cities on the Continent and in New York; while in Australia the regulations are remarkably in advance of any which exist in England. But we have to look to the safety not only of the public, but of the actors and actresses, the provision for whose security is still worse. The Savoy is said to be as safe a theatre as any in London; it is lighted by electricity; but if there is electricity before the curtain, there is gas behind. The means of exit for the actors and actresses is by a small staircase, which leads to a little hall which would hold about eight people, where the door opens outwards; but on the other side of the hall is a door which opens inwards, so that it forms a regular death trap. All these are examples which show how necessary it is for the safety of the public that some regular supervision should take place; that it should be supervision that would be above all question and such as the public could depend upon. In 1888 there were 25 theatres burnt, and the average life of a theatre is only 23 years. We have been fortunate in London, but people who go to theatres should not forget that one of the largest of the London theatres has been burnt down three times, and one no less than four times. I am told that the Government mean to oppose the Bill. I can hardly believe that they can be indifferent to the possibility of accident to more than 325,000 people who are to be found in theatres and music halls in London every night, and if the Home Secretary would only go round and visit them as I myself have done he would be horrified at the carelessness which is manifested on all sides. The managers give instructions to the best of their ability, but they cannot look after every

individual in their employment. I know of one case in which the protection against gas was removed in order that a scene shifter might be able to read the newspaper. I have seen the scenery so close to the gas that a breath of wind would set it all in a blaze. The utmost carelessness is displayed on all sides; and things are now done which, if an Inspector would go round and take a note of, would at once be put a stop to. It was formerly said that sufficient powers already existed, but that assertion can no longer be made, seeing that the Metropolitan Board of Works themselves admitted that they did not possess the necessary authority and adequate powers. The Second Reading of the Bill will be opposed by an hon. Member opposite (Mr. J. Rowlands) who claims to represent the working classes. Well, I would point out to him that the working classes go in great numbers to the theatres, that they occupy the worst places, and that the parts of the houses they frequent are the most difficult to escape from. They are the people who deserve the greatest consideration in connection with this or any other Bill on the subject, and I am sure that the hon. Gentleman will not wish to see their interests neglected. There is another point in connection with the matter which is of the utmost importance to the working classes. There are between 100,000 and 200,000 employed, directly or indirectly, at theatres, and every fire that occurs at one of these places of amusement greatly reduces the incomes of a large number of poor people. This is not a political question; it is one at our doors. The Bill is proposed for the benefit of hundreds of thousands of people. Duty, the first watchword of Englishmen, requires that something should be done in this matter, and done at once, not six or 12 months or two years hence. I hope the Government will rise to that occasion and enable the House to legislate upon this question, so that we may not some morning be horrified to learn that some terrible catastrophe has occurred at one of our London theatres, destroying hundreds of our fellow citizens. I beg to move the Second Reading of the Bill, and I leave the responsibility of dealing with it on the shoulders of the Government and the House.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

*SIR A. ROLLIT (Islington, South): I desire to say only one or two words in seconding the Motion for the Second Reading of this Bill. The Measure seems to me to deal with a practical and pressing danger which is sometimes brought under our notice by terrible calamities in this and other countries—dangers which are forgotten as soon as the flames die out—and in respect to which little or nothing is done, notwithstanding all the teaching which these accidents give us. The object of the Bill is to provide remedies and to prevent the recurrence of these accidents in the future. I may say that I personally take interest in this question as representing a constituency in the midst of which one of these calamities occurred recently. I allude to the destruction by fire of the Grand Theatre in Islington. That occurrence caused great alarm in the public's mind, and serious injury to the managers, but it had also a most serious effect upon a large class to whom the hon. Member who moved the Second Reading has referred. The public we can protect, managers can protect themselves, but the *employés* are not persons who usually have the means of protecting themselves by insurance, and, in earning their daily bread, they have to subject themselves to risks from which they should be freed by legislative regulations. My experience in Islington in connection with their Relief Committee has shown me that when a disaster occurs at a theatre the suffering caused amongst the *employés* is intense. The musicians, for instance, lose their musical instruments, and, as these are essential to their earning a livelihood, they are for a long period out of employment and have, with their families, to endure great misfortune. Fortunately, generosity is the complement of misfortune in this country, and ultimately, thanks to the large subscriptions received from the public, the misfortunes of the *employés* in the case of the Grand Theatre were mitigated. Great effect was produced on my mind by coming into contact with these people, and it was my experience amongst them which made me resolve to support this measure and do my best to get their interests protected. As examples of

what has been done abroad to minimise the danger of accidents in theatres I would refer hon. Members to the State Theatre at Munich, and the Opera House at Frankfurt. At these places it is clearly perceptible even from the exterior of the buildings that the greatest precautions have been taken. No theatre in London can be said to be absolutely safe, and if a conflagration occurs in one of them the loss of life may be terrible. The position of the law in relation to the matter is clear. It is beyond question that at present there are not sufficient and adequate regulations for the purpose of preventing accidents. The Metropolitan Board of Works, which had long experience of these matters, thought it necessary to bring in a Bill to give themselves further powers, and as that Bill did not pass it is clear that the London County Council, the successors of the Metropolitan Board, have not adequate powers. And speaking of the County Council I may say that the question, as to the authority who should be entrusted with the powers of a Bill of this kind, is to myself a secondary consideration. It is a matter that may be dealt with in Committee, and provided the authority be central and possess proper powers, and be prepared to carry them into effect by adequate inspection, I should have no objection to the provisions of the Bill being made to apply to the County Council. As to the proposal in the Bill, that the Home Office should be the authority, the Commission of 1866 recommended that the Central Authority should be the Lord Chamberlain with an appeal to the Home Office. I certainly prefer the proposal of the Bill. If there be a new authority constituted it should be the Home Office directly, without any appeal whatever. For this matter of taking precautions against fire is one which will not admit of delay. Speedy action is necessary, and I therefore think that to introduce a principle, such as that recommended in some quarters, would be an unwise proceeding. If some portion of the Executive is to deal with the question it should be either the Home Office or the Lord Chamberlain, with more ample power. Still, as the powers possessed by the Metropolitan Board of Works are already transferred to the County Council, and if the House is prepared

to increase these powers and make them effective in Committee, as I hope it will, I, as a Metropolitan Member, should be the last to detract from the powers of the County Council. What I desire is that the House should grasp the great fact that something ought to be done; that the law is defective; and that the responsibility rests to some extent with the Home Office, but also with the House itself. I trust the House will read the Bill a second time.

MR. J. ROWLANDS (Finsbury, East): I rise to move the rejection of the Bill, and I do not do so without having considered the scope of the measure as it has been brought before the House. When Bills are presented and circulated we must, of course, take them as they stand and form our opinions on them; but I am pleased to see that the hon. Gentleman the Member for South Islington has admitted that he at least would be prepared to accept some other authority in place of the Home Office. I may say that the gravamen of the whole of the opposition to the Bill on the part of Members on this side is as to the proposal to give the Home Office control of the theatres. We endorse everything that has been said by the two previous speakers as to the necessity for making the theatres as safe as they possibly can be made. We agree to anything necessary for the protection of the lives of the people who frequent theatres, and the people employed in them. We do not for a moment allow ourselves to be considered as at all behind the supporters of the Bill in our desire to render theatres safe, but we object to the proposal to hand over the authority to the Home Office in place of the County Council. The hon. Member for the Uxbridge division of Middlesex has drawn attention to a case in a theatre where, the protectors being taken from the gas burners, the flames rose up very near the scenery. Well, a thing of that kind would not have been less likely to occur if the theatres had been under the Home Office than if they had been under the County Council. It was gross negligence on the part of some *employé*, and I sincerely trust the hon. Member complained to the manager and brought about the instant dismissal of the offender as an example to his fellows. It has been pointed out by the

hon. Member for Middlesex that at the present moment we have in London more than one authority, namely, the Crown in the person of the Lord Chamberlain, and the County Council as the successors of the Metropolitan Board of Works. Now, I am as strongly opposed to having these various authorities as the hon. Member is. I consider it a serious mistake to keep up the old farce of Crown theatres. We know that they stand on the same footing as all others since the patent houses have been done away with, and they have all been put, so far as the public are concerned, in the same position. We hardly think it comes within the duties of the Lord Chamberlain to be responsible for the safety of the exits of a theatre. We are at one with the hon. Member in this matter, but what we do object to is the machinery by which he proposes to carry out his proposal. He proposes in Clauses 6 and 7 to vest the control of the theatres in the Home Office, leaving them to appoint a series of Inspectors. He says he proposes this as he desires to place the theatres under a power where the control will be continuous and not varied—and he considers that the control under the County Council would be varied, as the Council has to be re-elected every three years, and will be open to changes of policy. I ask hon. Members of this House whether, with their acquaintance with representative bodies, they are prepared to say that any one of them responsible for the protection of life and limb, and having a staff of Inspectors under it, has ever been known to sweep away a policy because a new election has taken place? I know that one County Councillor suggested that all the theatres in London should be shut up, but I venture to say that that gentleman could not possibly have adopted a more efficacious mode of rendering himself unpopular with his constituency. I am sure, whatever his general views, I should not vote for him if he were to be a candidate for a place in which I had a vote. I maintain that the whole condition of London has changed since the passing of the Local Government Act of last year. Up to that time you had the control of the theatres vested in two non-representative bodies, one of them being the Metropolitan Board of Works. I was one of those who never had any

confidence in the Metropolitan Board, and events proved that we were not far wrong in our view. You had then a body which could not be got at, but you now have in its place a directly elected body, and you may depend upon it that the moment it is pointed out that a certain theatre is not safe, the person to whose knowledge the fact is brought will communicate with his representative on the Council, and the evil will be remedied, so far, at any rate, as the power of the Council will admit of the application of a remedy. It is said that the Council have not sufficient power. Then, I am in favour of conferring upon them the powers contained in this Bill. I have every confidence in the Council. The hon. Member opposite says the present condition of theatres is bad, and he says that if we will not pass this Bill, we must accept the responsibility for what may happen. But if there is any force in the arguments of the hon. Member, he should extend his Bill to the whole country. Will he say that the theatres in Manchester, Liverpool, and Birmingham, and still more in the smaller places throughout the country, are in a perfect state? If not, why is this Bill limited to London? I maintain that by so limiting it, he has shown the weakness of the whole of his case. He has not proposed that, because he knows that it would have provoked the strongest opposition throughout the country. I object to hon. Members coming down here and saying, "We are going to deal with you in London, in an exceptional manner, because you cannot take care of yourselves." I thought we should have had some reference made to the system of "tips" which existed under the old Metropolitan Board of Works. We are all of us conversant with the case of Mr. Hebb, which was brought out at the Inquiry into the proceedings of the Metropolitan Board of Works, but as the best antidote to a recurrence of such a case as that, we should pass the Bill of the noble Lord the Member for Paddington (Lord R. Churchill). Under that Bill any of the Council Officials, if they should deviate from the path of honesty and integrity in the discharge of their duty, could be punished for it. As to the Home Office, it has too much to do at the present time, and the Bill would simply increase its

responsibilities, and lead to endless discussions in this House on theatre management and kindred subjects when the Vote for the Home Secretary's salary is proposed in Committee of Supply. We, in London, object to be made exceptional any longer—as we are in regard to the police—and if the hon. Member will substitute the County Council for the Home Office the Bill may go into Committee without delay. I beg, however, seeing the way in which the Bill is framed, to move that it be read a second time this day six months.

Amendment proposed,

"To leave out the word 'Now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'Upon this day six months.'"—(Mr. W. Rowlands.)

Question proposed, "That the word 'Now' stand part of the Question."

*MR. CAUSTON (Southwark, W.): I second with pleasure my hon. Friend's Amendment, and I think we are justified in passing it, especially after the speech of the Mover of the Bill. We all agree that there must be a proper inspection of theatres in the interest both of actors and actresses and of the public at large. The hon. Member for the Uxbridge Division of Middlesex (Mr. Dixon-Hartland) says that the County Council is a varying body and cannot be entrusted with these powers. That observation would, however, apply to any powers with which the Council is entrusted, and it would also apply to the Home Secretary, who is certainly not a permanent official. What we are determined to have is Home Rule for London. We think that we in London are as competent to manage our own affairs as people in any other parts of the country are to manage theirs. It is true we have had a Metropolitan Board of Works, but they have been found out and disposed of, and if the Members of our present County Council cannot discharge their work efficiently they will be found out and disposed of also. But the sooner we learn to conduct our own business the better. It seems that we are to be treated in London just as the Government treat Ireland. We are not allowed the control of the police or the control of the open spaces for public meetings, and I am told that it is only in London and Ireland where you can-

not get copies of the police instructions. That is a state of things which I hope will not be allowed to exist much longer, and I think the London Members—Tories as well as Liberals—will be wise, whenever they perceive any disposition to say that London is not competent to manage its own affairs, to enter a vigorous protest.

*MR. WHITMORE (Chelsea): I shall support the Amendment. We have just created local representative governing bodies for London and the counties, and one of our principal objects in doing so was that we might free from some of its work the overburdened Government Departments, and the overburdened House of Commons. It seems to me an extraordinary proposal that we should at this moment take away some of the functions local bodies have been performing and give the additional work to the Home Office, and consequently to the House of Commons. We are asked to make this change, not because the new London County Council has in any way shown itself to be incapable of carrying out this work, but partly because another body, very differently constituted, did not properly carry it out, and partly because it is said the existing law does not give the Local Authorities sufficient powers to insure the safety of those who go to theatres. Every Member would support legislation that would make our theatres as safe as possible. But the essential provision of this Bill is that the authority which is to control the matter should not be the County Council, but the Home Office, and I cannot conceive anybody voting for the measure on the understanding that the authority should be decided in Committee. If the London County Council is not able to discharge these duties, the County Councils in the country cannot be trusted to discharge them. Of course, there must to some extent be in the *personel* of elected bodies a lack of continuity, but we may certainly suppose that in the main outlines of their action they will be guided by general principles of policy, just as the Home Office is, although the principal tenant of that office varies from time to time. Even if I did not most strongly object to the taking away from the London County Council of functions which it has not shown itself incompetent to perform, I should object

to entrusting them to the Home Office. Every hon. Member is sufficiently aware how multitudinous are the duties which the Home Office has to perform. The whole tendency of modern legislation will be to increase its duties of supervising and inspecting the conditions under which trades are carried on in this country, and under which the working classes work and live. That may be very right and proper, but I confess I do shrink from recklessly and unnecessarily adding a new and not cognate class of work to the Home Office. As at present constituted, I do not think there is any department of the Home Office competent to undertake the duties which would be thrown upon it by this Bill. A new staff of Inspectors would have to be established, which would mean additional cost to the country. It is all very well to say that the managers of theatres would supply the funds, but a State Department could not be carried on by means of voluntary subscriptions. You could not compel managers in the future to subscribe. Obviously, then, the adoption of the proposal of the hon. Member would mean an increased burden upon the taxpayer. For these reasons, therefore, I trust that we shall not read the Bill a second time. I hope it will not be said that we who oppose the measure are not as sensible as its promoters of the very great dangers to which the hon. Gentleman the Member for Middlesex has alluded. I, equally with him, wish to give security to the hundreds of thousands of Londoners who go to theatres, and at an early date shall be glad to vote for an extension of the powers of the London County Council in regard to the inspection of theatres.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (MR. MATTHEWS, Birmingham, East): I think the House is very much indebted to the hon. Gentleman for having brought this subject under its notice, for it is one of the utmost importance, concerning as it does the safety of the large number of people who visit theatres, music-halls, and places of public entertainment of that kind. There are two different sets of conditions which have to be considered. It is clear that there should be some authority which should have power to review and control the structure of the place of enter-

tainment, the manner in which the audience is disposed in the building, the means of ingress and egress that are provided. That is one set of conditions extremely essential to be properly observed and extremely delicate and difficult to enforce in the old theatres. The Metropolitan Board of Works were conscious of that, and in the legislative powers with which they clothed themselves only took powers to make alterations, if they could be made at moderate cost. I suppose some little concession would have to be made to lessees and proprietors of existing theatres. It would be extremely hard if they were compelled to pull down and rebuild because such matters as ingress and egress have been better attended to in new theatres. There is another class of regulations equally necessary for the safety of the public, and which, I think, are very insufficiently dealt with by existing legislation—namely, regulations regarding the mode of management. Supposing means of ingress and egress are provided, but the doors are kept locked, the means of ingress and egress might as well not exist; or, if means of lighting are not supplied in case of the gas being cut off, in the event of a fire the people have to grope their way out in the dark. These are matters which do not depend on the original structure of the building, but on the way in which the place of entertainment is managed from day to day. The same remarks apply to the way in which the doors are closed, the number of persons admitted, and the appliances for the extinction of fire. These things are all liable to be carelessly dealt with, or get out of order after long immunity from accident, if there is no inspection. It seems to me that with regard to these matters existing legislation is very imperfect. The Metropolitan Board of Works had power to make regulations, but they had no power to enter a theatre from day to day to see that they were observed, nor had they power to impose penalties if their regulations were disregarded. These powers the County Council now possess, and they should continue. Gross and wilful neglect such as has been mentioned by the hon. Member for Middlesex, I am afraid cannot be dealt with by legislation. They can only be dealt with by way of punishment. Having

said that much, I hope I shall not be charged with being insensible to the importance of the subject. I have felt its importance so much that, about the time the hon. Member brought his deputation before me, I had in preparation a Bill for the purpose of remedying these defects of legislation which have been pointed out, but the difficulty as to the body to whom the powers should be intrusted, prevented the Bill being proceeded with. It was in an advanced state of preparation though not printed. I entirely share the views of those who regard this as a matter of local interest. I am not insensible to the argument of my hon. Friend that it would perhaps be more agreeable to the managers of theatres to deal with one Government department than with a committee of a fluctuating body. It may be that the Government departments are more easy and less vigilant than a committee of an energetic and critical governing body. Although that is an intelligible view for the managers of theatres to take, I can not think it is a view that the House will admit. With regard to the Home Office, I entirely agree with what has been said as to the want of a suitable staff to carry out the duties proposed to be conferred on it by the Bill. There are no experienced architects and surveyors under my control. The Board of Works no doubt has such a staff; but I entirely agree that the matter is one for local management and administration. I agree also that a distinction can not be drawn between London and the provinces in this matter, and any Government Department which undertakes to control the management of theatres throughout the country will be undertaking a task which will be extremely difficult and expensive, and which is already perfectly well performed by the local authorities. I should certainly have pressed forward even a provisional Bill if it had not been for the difficulty of the authority to whom the powers should be intrusted. The Local Government Act had not then been passed, and the powers could only have been entrusted to the Quarter Sessions. The existing Act, in which justices are entrusted with certain powers as to theatres, has never proved a satisfactory Act. Now that local bodies have been constituted in whom the House and the country have confi-

dence, I think the House should lose no time in providing means for insuring the safety of the public in theatres, music-halls—I am not quite sure that I ought not to add churches—but at any rate in all places open for the entertainment of the public for profit. Is the Local Authority to be trusted? I have stated the conclusive objections to the Home Office undertaking these duties, and although I can conceive the Board of Works performing them with satisfaction, I can hardly conceive that we should be willing to do so. I understand that the County Council are willing to undertake the duties; indeed from what we hear from day to day, there is nothing the London County Council are not willing to undertake. Then, are they competent? My hon. Friend suggests that they are not. His argument is that no body which is not permanent can be safely trusted to discharge duties of that kind. I must say I cannot assent to that argument. It is true there may be changes in the constitution of the London County Council every three years, and that they may produce some instability in its management, but still I believe that variations will always be in the direction of progress, and if anything new is required it will be because we have better knowledge, or because the opinion of constituents has been expressed in a decided manner. Therefore, although it is possible that some additional expense may be imposed upon theatres by the fact that the London County Council is not a permanent body, I feel that that is not a reason for withholding from them functions which they have been created to perform. For these reasons I must decline to assent to the leading principle of the Bill, which is the transference to a Government Department of the superintendence of the construction of theatres and of the appliances for the safety of the audiences attending them. The London County Council already have large but insufficient powers, and if they ask for additional powers I shall be happy to give them all the assistance I can to make the control of public buildings, in the interests of public safety, as complete and efficient as possible. Valuable materials will be found in the Bill prepared by the Metropolitan Board of Works, which, however did not go

far enough, particularly in the matter of daily inspection with reference to details of management. It is quite possible that a structure in itself imperfect may, by excellent management, by always having everything ready for an emergency or a panic, be more safe than a building perfect in structure but negligently managed so that the appliances, in case of fire or panic, are not ready for immediate use. I have felt the anxiety and responsibility of the existing state of things very strongly indeed, and I repeat that nothing would have prevented the Government from legislating last year but the passing of the Local Government Act, in view of which we did not feel able to make a satisfactory proposal. These, however, are the views we have uniformly taken on the subject, and, holding these views, I feel it necessary to go with those who oppose the Bill.

*SIR WALTER FOSTER (Derby, Ilkeston): I, for one, am glad to hear the satisfactory statement which has fallen from the right hon. Gentleman. I feel that in this matter a certain amount of responsibility rests with the Government, for, seeing that the London County Council is now established, it clearly would be showing a bad example to the country, if the Government were not to trust the new Local Authority. The Government has refused to the County Council the management of the police, although I think that in this, as well as in other respects, the community generally is in favour of a large extension of the powers of the Council. It seems to me there is no reason why the London County Council should not undertake duties that are efficiently discharged by the Watch Committees of Municipal Corporations with regard to theatres and public buildings, except that the Town Councils have the advantage of controlling the police, a most useful force for this purpose, while London is yet subject to a dualism, in this respect, which involves a weakening division of responsibility. Why should not the Council which governs the most intelligent centre in the United Kingdom enjoy the same privileges as the small municipalities? Why should London be placed in a secondary position? The way to make Local Government strong and useful is to throw upon it all possible

responsibility. The more responsible it is, the more care will its individual members take of the interests of their constituents, and the better will they do their work. I think that the County Council of London should not only have control over the theatres, and other places of amusement in the metropolis, but also over places of public worship and every public building in which people assemble in large numbers and run risks from fire and panic. It cannot but be an advantage to have one system of supervision exercised over a whole district. Such a system would be easily worked, and in the case of London it would be much better to have the County Council responsible for all buildings, than to have it responsible for only one class, and the Home Office responsible for another class. I object to a Government Department interfering in this matter when the Local Authority is perfectly capable of exercising supervision. I also protest against depriving London of the control of its police—a control which I feel convinced popular opinion will ere long force from a reluctant Government. In the meantime I trust that after the satisfactory statements we have heard from the Home Secretary, the hon. Member for Middlesex will see fit to withdraw his Bill.

Mr. R. G. WEBSTER (St. Pancras, East): All the Members who have addressed the House on this Bill have expressed the opinion that it is desirable that some measure should be passed for the better regulation of the theatres and public buildings of London, and I cannot help saying that had it not been for the hon. Members for South and East Finsbury we might have passed the Bill of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Cheshire last session, which would have given to the London County Council powers which it would be very desirable for it to possess. The hon. Member for Uxbridge then opposed that Bill pretty much on the lines he now advances in support of his own measure. To my mind it does not follow, because Mr. Hebb failed in his duty some years ago, that the Metropolitan Board did not, apart from his failure, do its duty to the public as far as its powers went. If anything, the Board was rather too strict. The County Council has only the same powers, and having inspected plans

and granted a certificate, cannot interfere with the placing of chairs in gangways, which is a frightful source of mischief, or with the slightly lesser evil "Room for standing," miscalled "Standing-room." Another source of danger is appropriating one or two public doorways to Royal or distinguished visitors. If there are to be separate entrances they ought to be quite separate and distinct from those ordinarily used by the public. I think that the lighting arrangements for the stage should be completely apart from the lighting of the auditorium; and that the carpenters' shop should, if possible, be located outside the theatre. He seeks to take power from the County Council to give to the Home Office. Has he no confidence in the electors, when he wishes to bring in a Bill which seems to be a theatrical management Bill as opposed to a Bill which would throw the power into the hands of the local Body? I think it desirable, in the interests of County Councils and of the Government of London, that this Bill should be rejected. I cannot think that my hon. Friend the Member for Uxbridge (Mr. Dixon-Hartland) seriously intends to press this Bill to a Division. If he does, I do not think there are many who will go into the Division Lobby with him. At the same time, I do think that this question is one of great importance to London and to a great number of Londoners who go to theatres night after night; and in the interests of those who form the theatrical audiences, and in the general interests of the Metropolis, I sincerely trust that the County Council, aided by my right hon. Friend the Home Secretary, will speedily bring forward a measure for the better protection of theatres from fires, and that that measure will be passed at an early date.

*MR. DIXON-HARTLAND: I think, Sir, that the interest taken in this debate will have shown that it has not been useless, and in the hope that a Bill will soon be brought in dealing thoroughly with the whole matter, I will not put the House to the trouble of a Division.

Question put and negatived.

Words added.

Main Question as amended put, and agreed to.

Second Reading put off for six months.

CORPORAL PUNISHMENT BILL.

(NO. 1).

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

MR. T. MILVAIN (Durham): In moving the Second Reading of this Bill, I wish to point out to the House that there are certain offences to which this punishment ought to be extended, and which, in my opinion, and in the opinion of the public generally throughout the country, can only be deterred by the administration of the lash. But when I began to inquire into the law upon the subject, I found that it was distributed over several Acts of Parliament, and that it required some work thoroughly to understand what the law really was. I, therefore, determined to bring in a Bill to consolidate as well as to amend, the law relating to corporal punishment. Now, Sir, with regard to the consolidation of the law, the House will derive some knowledge, first of all, from the fact that it proposes wholly and entirely to repeal three Acts of Parliament, as well as portions of six others, and while at the same time incorporating provisions, in the interests of humanity, for the protection of the subject flogged, it will also restrict the jurisdiction to direct whipping to this and the Summary Jurisdiction Act. It proposes to amend the law, in the first instance, by abolishing the punishment of flogging in the case of incorrigible rogues. My reason for seeking to abolish this punishment is that, these offenders are found guilty by a Court of Summary Jurisdiction, and are sent on from that Court to the Court of Quarter Sessions, to inquire into the nature of the offence and to pass sentence of flogging upon them. It has always struck me that the law is not in this respect quite as it ought to be, because, in the first instance, the incorrigible rogue has not the advantage of a trial by his Peers, or trial by jury, and, in the second instance, because the offence does not come within the category of those brutal or violent offences to which I hope to make the law applicable. I have said "brutal or violent offences," but there is one exception to that designation in the case of offences committed by juvenile offenders. Now, the cases with which I propose to deal in regard to this

punishment are two—first, as to juvenile offenders; and secondly, as to adult offenders. The law regarding the whipping of juvenile offenders may be largely but not entirely collected from the Criminal Law Consolidation Acts of 1861, and I think the Courts of Quarter Session or Assize have jurisdiction to whip offenders for the commission of a very great number of offences, though they have not universal jurisdiction. The effect is, of course, that when an offender comes before the Court the first inquiry is as to his age, and then there is a general search among the Consolidation Acts to discover whether his is one of the offences for which the juvenile offender may be flogged, or whether it is only one for the infliction of a fine, or for his friends to find sureties for his good behaviour. Now, Sir, I cannot help thinking that if the juvenile offender is fined the punishment really falls upon the parents, and that, if they have to find sureties, the punishment falls upon the wrong persons. Again, if an offender under 15 years of age is sent to gaol public opinion is against the punishment, so that, practically, an offender of that age enjoys immunity from all punishment. Now, I propose by this Bill that offenders under the age of 16, lawfully punishable by imprisonment with hard labour, may be punished by whipping, but that the whipping shall be administered by the birch rod only. With regard to adults, I propose to extend the provisions of this Bill to three classes of offences. The first class of offenders to which I propose to extend the punishment is that of burglars who, while engaged in the offence, are armed with dangerous or offensive weapons. I do not, however, think it will be necessary for me to prove in this House the necessity of extending corporal punishment to such cases, and in saying this I am supported by the fact that at the present moment there are before the Legislature three Bills having for their object the administration of this form of punishment to these offenders. The second class of offences to which I propose to extend the punishment provided by this Bill is rape. Of course, Sir, I am aware of the argument that will be used against the infliction of this severe punishment for such offences; and I will say,

at the outset, that I am one of those who do not believe that a rape can be committed by one man, but that when the allegation is made in such a case it is generally made with an ulterior object. But I may state that I have endeavoured so to qualify the nature of the offence as to render it impossible in the last degree that where there has been consent the prisoner shall be flogged. The qualification I propose to place on the offence is when, in the opinion of the Court the offence has been accompanied before, at the time, or afterwards, with aggravated violence. I also propose to flog for the same offence when it has been committed by two or more persons. I have always been unable to discern the distinction made between two or more persons knocking a woman down and stealing from her pocket a few pence, for which offence the law now permits the culprit to be flogged, and the same men knocking a woman down and, instead of stealing money from her pocket, robbing her of her chastity. To my mind the latter offence is the more serious of the two. I also propose, in the category of the second class of offence, to extend this punishment to offenders under the Criminal Law Amendment Act. Confining myself to my own experience on the North-Eastern circuit, I can assure the House of this, that the cases which within the last three years have come before the Courts of Quarter Sessions, and before the Courts of Assize in Northumberland, Durham, and Yorkshire, are absolutely revolting. They have been committed or attempted on poor little children, absolutely ignorant of the nature of the crime, and who are incapable of defending themselves, or of protesting. I have some knowledge of the gravity of the epidemic in the north of England—and I speak only in regard to that part of the country—and I say that during the last three years there has been on an average close upon 90 cases per year, and of these I believe that about two-thirds have resulted in convictions. I am supported in my contention with regard to this state of crime in that part of the kingdom by a letter I have recently received from a clergyman to the effect that not all, nor nearly all, the actual cases came before the Courts, and that, in nearly all the cases which came before the public,

the offences were committed by vagrant classes of the population, who are here to-day and gone to-morrow, and with regard to whom the difficulty is to establish their identity. I am encouraged in this matter by the presentments that have been made by Grand Juries and other bodies to the Home Office, asking for the extension of corporal punishment to this class of offence. I may say, generally, that during the last three years there have been presentments made from the whole of the North of England—from Yorkshire, Northumberland, Durham and Westmoreland—and I understand, from further information, that similar presentments are coming from other parts of the country—from Hampshire, Glamorganshire, Essex, and also from the Central Criminal Court. Upon this point I say fearlessly that the amount of feeling in favour of corporal punishment, being extended to this class of offences is absolutely overwhelming. Now, Sir, another class of cases to which I propose to extend this mode of punishment is that which is mentioned in books as one not to be named among Christians—the offences of bestiality and sodomy. I do not think it necessary for me to say a single word on this subject beyond what is necessary to bring out what I may call the economic feature of the Bill. In the present state of the law, when a person is accused of an offence of such a nature, the jury frequently do not convict because the minimum punishment is one of penal servitude for no less than 10 years. What is maintained in regard to this class of offence is that the punishment does not fall so much on the man who is convicted and sentenced as it does upon the ratepayer; and as I propose by this Bill (in the 5th Section) that when the punishment of flogging is administered, it may be in substitution for *any part* of the said punishment. I take the punishment off the backs of those who ought not to bear it, and place it on the back of him who ought to bear it. Now, Sir, that is the whole of the Bill, and I suppose I may answer, by anticipation, the arguments that are likely to be brought against it. First, in regard to rape and offences under the Criminal Law Amendment Act, the argument is certain to be raised that it will be a prolific source of black-mailing. This argument was used successfully

when the Criminal Law Amendment Act was before this House in 1885. It was then argued that this House ought to hesitate before inflicting the punishment of flogging for such offences. I do not suppose that the argument can now be seriously urged, and if it be I do not think the House will entertain it for a single moment—or that this House—elected on an extended suffrage, will allow itself to be in any way biased by the Resolutions of 1885. But when the proposal to inflict corporal punishment was before the House in connection with that measure and in relation to the question of rape, provisions for the protection of the subject were not incorporated in the Bill. Upon that amendment the argument as to black-mailing was raised successfully. It was then said that men would be convicted by persons who were endeavouring to extort money from them. For the protection of the person charged provision was made that the testimony of the person making the accusation must be supported and corroborated by independent evidence, and there was still further protection that the man against whom the accusation was made was himself constituted an available witness who could go into the witness box and deny upon oath the allegations made against him. And, Sir, I am glad to know that there is before this House a Bill which is likely still further to protect the person charged—the Criminal Law Amendment Bill—which, with certain qualifications, I hope may become law and made applicable to the whole of the United Kingdom. By that Bill—and I hope I am not irregular in alluding to it—a man may be able to call his wife—if he have one—and it will also be inadmissible for him to be cross-examined as to any previous conviction or with regard to his past history. Such being the provisions for the protection of the subject charged, I feel perfectly convinced of this, that he will be fenced about and fully protected against any chance of being found guilty of an offence he has not really committed. Perhaps, on this subject, I may be allowed to appeal to the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary and to ask him whether in his experience of the office he has the honour to hold there has been any case in which a man has been found guilty of any of these

classes of offence and has been discharged in consequence of any miscarriage of justice? But in this Bill there is a still further protection. It does not propose to make the punishment obligatory. It leaves it to the discretion of the Judge who tries the case, and if that Judge has any doubt in his own mind as to the guilt of the person who stands convicted he certainly will hesitate before inflicting the sentence of the lash upon him. Another argument used is as to the inequality of the punishment. I cannot help thinking that this is a most ridiculous argument. It is impossible to devise a code of punishment which will fall equally upon all classes of persons. Persons are differently constituted, and are of different nervous temperament. But that is a matter which must be left entirely to the discretion of the Judge, who ought to be able, with a Judge's eye, to discern whether the prisoner who is convicted is able to sustain the sentence, which he deems it necessary to pass as a punishment for the offence. As to the argument about the punishment being brutalizing, in my opinion you cannot brutalize a person who has already brutalized himself by the commission of any of these offences. I cannot help thinking that the class who commit the kind of offences which I incorporate in this Bill, are entirely lost to all moral sense, and I maintain that the only way to get at them is by appealing to their animal feelings. Now, Sir, I do not move this Bill in any vindictive spirit. I believe that its provisions will prove a deterrent to the commission of such offences. I know there is a great conflict, and there has been a conflict going on for some time, as to whether garrotting was put down by the infliction of the lash. I do not say I have come to any conclusion as to whether it was, or was not, but this I will say, that those who argue that garrotting was not put down by the lash, but by passing sentence of long terms of penal servitude, might ask themselves—“How is it that the offence stopped almost immediately?” I maintain that all classes of crime are infectious; that if they are not treated immediately, and with vigour, they are certain to spread and spread into that state of crime which I have already described as an epidemic. But

apart from that fact I should like to say that there is independent testimony to the effect that if garrotting is not satisfactorily proved to have been put down by the operation of the lash, robbery with violence and such offences for which flogging is now a punishment, are being put down by the lash in districts where it has been administered. Let me draw the attention of the House to the fact that only the other day a correspondence appeared in the newspapers upon this subject from a gentleman who is a Clerk of Assize upon the South Wales Circuit, and he describes how, in the early part of last year at the Assizes, there were 22 offences of robbery with violence in Glamorgan-shire. They were treated by short terms of imprisonment. At the following Assizes there were as many cases of robbery with violence. Some were treated with short terms of imprisonment, and others were treated with the punishment of the lash. At the following Assizes again, there were no cases of robbery with violence at all. I maintain, Sir, upon these statements of facts that the infliction of the lash is a deterrent from the committing of such offences. Sir, I may say that I submitted this Bill to the Howard Association for the opinion of that very praiseworthy body upon its merits, and although faults have been found with some of its details, which I have endeavoured to answer in laying it before the House, they were unanimous in their general approval of the principle of the Bill. They believe that this Bill, if put into operation, would be an act of mercy to defenceless women and children, and in that spirit I beg to move the Second Reading of the Bill.

Motion made, and Question proposed,
"That the Bill be now read a second time."

*MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton): In the absence of the hon. and learned Member who had given notice to move the rejection of this Bill, and in utter ignorance of the course which the Government may think right to take upon it, I take upon myself to move, "That this Bill be read a second time this day six months." I regretted very much to hear the concluding words of the hon. and learned Gentleman who has moved the Second Reading of this

Bill, because I am one of those who attach the very highest importance to any view expressed by the Howard Society, and I think that Society owes a great debt to Mr. Tullock personally for what he has done in lessening the crime of this country. Without knowing the precise opinion which the Howard Society has expressed, it would be impertinent in me to put anything against it, and I only refer to it because the hon. and learned Gentlemen used it in support of this Bill. We have not the opinion before us, except in that vague way, and I should ask the House to consider this Bill on what really is the proper ground of objection, namely, that it is a step backward in the direction of brutal punishment, and we have reason, therefore, to reject it. The tendency has been as far as possible to make punishment act rather as a deterrent to crime than as vengeance for crime past; and the whole of the history of the criminal jurisprudence of this country shows that as severe punishment has lessened so has crime lessened. I know the hon. and learned Gentleman does not quite accept that, but he has only to go back eighty years in the history of this country to see the character of the punishment inflicted, and how numerous the crimes were, and how often the crimes were committed almost within sight of those who were inflicting punishment. He will see that the proposition which I put is thoroughly justified. Now, I brought the case before this House the other day of three little boys—one of them of very tender years, the eldest, I think, only fourteen—I am speaking roughly—the youngest seven, and I think the middle one nine years of age, at any rate they were somewhere about those ages. The case which happened in Edinburgh was very carefully inquired into by the Lord Advocate. The three boys were flogged for offering newspapers for sale in the North British Railway Station. Instead of encouraging magistrates to the infliction of whipping upon youthful offenders, we should try to prevent the magistrates having any such power, which I think ought not to be entrusted to them. If this Bill only affected punishments inflicted by Judges in the High Court, or Judges of Assize, I could agree that in the bulk of instances they would be very careful

in directing the infliction of any such punishment. But I do not think we can say that for the magistrates generally, and I put it that there would be a disposition on the part of magistrates to inflict this punishment of flogging, though I think the tendency of public feeling is against it, and rightly against it. I do not intend to occupy the House with any long speech upon this subject. I intended to have given a silent vote in opposition to-day, thinking the rejection of it would have been moved by the hon. Member who has given notice in his name. I am utterly against all barbarous punishments. I am utterly against any kind of punishments which are intended in any kind of fashion as a penalty and vengeance for past crime rather than as a deterrent from future crime. Unfortunately or fortunately I spent three years of my life at a time when flogging was a legitimate punishment, as a private soldier in the army, and nothing could be more shocking, both in its effect upon the person punished and its effect upon everybody witnessing, than to see the lash used. It was degrading and brutalizing in the extreme; and I appeal to the Government not to consent to this Bill. I appeal to the House not to give sanction to it. Reference has been made to garrotting. But really what often happens inside this House as well as outside was this, that in a period of panic, when public opinion was alarmed by crimes of a particular character, they resorted to anything that they thought might meet them. I do not intend to discuss with the hon. and learned Gentleman whether garrotting ceased in consequence of the imposition of flogging or not, because my allegation to this House would be that if you check any particular crime by the administration of a brutalizing punishment you inflict upon society a permanent evil in excess of the temporary crime you diminish. I beg to move the rejection of this Bill.

Amendment proposed to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months."—(*Mr. Bradlaugh.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the question."

*MR. JACOB BRIGHT (Manchester): I beg to second the Amendment. In introducing his Bill it appeared to me

that that portion of the hon. and learned Gentleman's speech which ought to have been the most important was by far the weakest part of the whole utterance. Everybody, I believe, on both sides of the House would much rather not resort to the punishment of flogging, or not extend it, unless it was felt to be in some respects very advantageous to do so. When any Gentleman brings in a Bill of this character he should give overwhelming evidence that flogging is a punishment which diminishes crime, which lessens the number of criminals, and makes the country more secure. Anyone who heard the hon. and learned Gentleman's speech must be struck with the fact that we had almost no evidence of that kind. The hon. and learned Gentleman referred to garrotting, and to what is supposed to have occurred. I understood him that he had no very clear idea of what was the result on garrotting of flogging legislation. But we have the clearest proof from Lord Aberdare, who, as Mr. Bruce was Home Secretary at the time, and who has shown to the public again and again that the discontinuance of garrotting had nothing whatever to do with the Bill passed for flogging. He has shown us again and again that whatever garrotting existed—and he said it was monstrously exaggerated—was put down months before the Flogging Bill passed this House in 1862. Then the hon. and learned Gentleman gave us some fragmentary sort of evidence with regard to some county in Wales. Surely we ought to have known something of what occurred in the whole of the United Kingdom—some much broader facts should have been placed before us. I can tell the hon. and learned Gentleman that if he would refer to the statistics of crime during a number of years after the year 1862, when the Flogging Bill was passed, he would find that, during a period of seven years, the crimes against which flogging had been enacted increased in number, whilst almost every other class of crime throughout the country diminished. Now, does flogging deter from crime? Because if it does I should like to know why the hon. and learned Gentleman is so careful in his Bill to limit flogging to certain offences? If flogging deters from crime it is a blessed discovery

which ought to be widely extended, and if it diminishes crime and makes the public secure I should be of opinion that it should be extended to almost every kind of crime. I should not flog men alone, I should let women have the advantage of flogging because if you could reduce the number of women who are sent to gaol, and who are treated as prisoners, it would be a great advantage to the sex. Again, if flogging is so advantageous, how is it that it is confined to this country. So far as I know, there is not another Christian country in the world which adopts flogging in regard to crime. Go to the United States you have thirty or forty independent Governments each acting on the best advice and knowledge it can obtain, and there is not one of those states which resorts to flogging. There is not one of our colonies where such an odious custom exists. I believe there is not one single country throughout the whole of Europe that flogs; and yet these countries are just as intelligent as ourselves, and if there was this sovereign remedy in flogging which the honourable and learned Gentleman thinks there is, surely he would find it existing in many parts of the world. I agree with everything that was said by the hon. Member for Northampton. I believe this punishment brutalizes the persons who receive it, brutalizes those who inflict it, and brutalizes the society among which it exists. In 1875 I think it was, there was a debate in this House on this subject—a most interesting and remarkable debate; and if anyone wants information on the subject, he could not do better than take the volume of Hansard for 1875 and read the speech of Mr. Peter Taylor, then Member for Leicester. He treats the whole subject with the greatest possible care, having investigated it in all respects. I believe the speech convinced, the House of that day of the inability, and folly, and barbarism of this punishment.

SIR GEORGE RUSSELL (Berks, Wokingham): I desire, Sir, to give my support to the Measure, on the ground that in the long run the punishment which is most really deterrent in its character is found to be the most humane in its operation. If I am satisfied of one thing more than another it is that if anything will deter and restrain men

from the continued commission of brutal crime it is corporal punishment. The hon. Member for Northampton has said that ever since the severity of punishment has been diminished there has been a corresponding diminution of crime. I altogether deny that the decrease is consequent on a lessening of the severity of the punishment. At one time men were hung for sheep stealing. It is no longer a capital offence, and certainly it is not so frequently committed. But why? Because it is almost impossible in the present day for a man to steal a sheep and not be detected. I advocate corporal punishment for brutal crime—in which I include burglary with firearms—not only because it is effective, but because it is cheap. The enormous expense which we incur in the detection and punishment of crime is a disgrace to us. We have a vast class in this country who prey upon society from the beginning to the end of their lives, and who are either kept in gaol at an enormous expense, or out of gaol prey more directly upon us. I represent and live in a county (East Berkshire) which has become notorious for the burglaries committed in it, and I would ask hon. Members to consider what alarm is created in a household among women and children when they know of such a state of things in their neighbourhood, and what danger there is of the house being broken into by a gang of armed miscreants. I was sorry to hear the Home Secretary say the other day in answer to a question that he thought corporal punishment contrary to the spirit of the age. I can only say that I deem it an additional argument in favour of administering corporal punishment. One can be too humanitarian now-a-days, and I hope the Government will on this occasion show courage and pluck and rise to a sense of its duty. I believe the Irish Secretary is so popular because he does not shrink from doing what he believes to be his duty, and I hope that the Government will not be deterred by the supposititious unpopularity of corporal punishment in following what it believes to be the right course that will lead to the diminution of brutal crime and save unnecessary expense to this country. But this is an age of shams, of sham humanitarianism among the rest. I went over a gaol some time ago, and an old warder told me that

from his experience and from what he had heard criminals say, the two punishments which they fear are capital punishment and flogging, and I believe that if the flogging were administered in the presence of all this rascally type of criminals, it would act as a deterrent from rendering themselves liable to similar punishment. I am not afraid of running counter to the humanitarian spirit of the age, and I believe that if the House will boldly face this question and give the Judges power to order the administration of corporal punishment in all cases of brutal crime, including armed burglary, it will lead to a great diminution of crime and will promote economy.

*MR. CUNINGHAME GRAHAM (Lanark, N.W.): I do not propose to follow the hon. Member who last spoke into the question of the popularity of the Irish Secretary, but in dealing with the wisdom of severity of punishment, I wish he had read the book "Pains and Penalties," by Beccuria, published at the end of last century, for if he had I do not believe he would have advanced the arguments he had laid before the House. I absolutely dissent from every word the hon. Gentleman has said, and for several reasons I deny that severity ever does act as a deterrent. When I was in Texas, horse stealing was very prevalent, and the punishment was generally prompt and complete. The neighbours used to assemble, and when they caught the thief they hung him on the nearest tree. I have myself assisted at several of these entertainments, and although many promising able-bodied male white citizens were thus removed from their sphere of usefulness here below, the punishment did not prove in any way efficacious in checking the crime, for it is still one of the most prevalent in that State. Again, I have another personal experience which will show how a man's humanitarian sentiments are blunted, and how he is rendered hard-hearted. I remember exercising one day with other criminals in Pentonville, when a young man was

taken away to be flogged. He had been guilty of the crime of violence and aggravated assault upon an old man, and I know it struck several of us with great horror. But in three or four days another man was removed to undergo a similar punishment, and I confess the incident did not then produce the same keen effect on me. Sir, it is strange that at the end of the nineteenth century we should be asked to check crime by increasing the severity of the punishment. There are two classes who prey upon society—the landlords and the capitalists—who are the heaviest burdens the taxpayers have to sustain, but even to them I would not apply severe measures to turn them from the error of their ways. We must, in my opinion, look to education for the reduction of the criminal classes; we must improve their surroundings. We must get rid of the misery in which they live; we must do away with everything that tends to brutalize and debase their natures; and these remedies—sentimental, as they may be termed—are infinitely better calculated to lessen the great criminal class than any measure of punishment however severe.

MR. H. J. ATKINSON (Boston): I believe that criminals do fear corporal punishment. I do not care to accept the hon. Member's recommendation to read a book published at the end of the last century; I prefer to be guided by my own experience, and having been a magistrate for 25 years or more and a visiting justice for a part of the time, I give my support to the Bill.

*MR. C. GRAHAM: The object of the writer of the book was to advocate abolition of corporal punishment. He protests against the extreme severity that then existed in that part of Italy in which he lived, and he proved that it acted in no way as a deterrent.

MR. ATKINSON: I do not think I said anything to call for interruption on the part of the hon. Member. I say that from my experience as a magistrate and as a visiting justice, I know perfectly well what are the sentiments of the criminal classes, and I contend that

crime would be prevented by this measure. The hon. Member for Northampton has told us that he is against barbarous punishments; so are we; but for my own part, I am more against barbarous crimes, and if we have to choose between the two, I think we should rather have barbarous punishments come upon the guilty, than barbarous crimes upon the innocent. If that is so, the supporters of the Bill have made out their case. The safeguards contained in the Bill against excessive severity are quite sufficient, but if necessary they might be added to in Committee. The young are protected, a surgeon is to be present at the infliction of the punishment. Hon. Members opposite talk about public opinion. Let me point out that we on this side represent the majority of the electors, and we therefore are entitled to talk about public opinion. I declare from the bottom of my heart, that, in my opinion, the subjects of Her Majesty are entitled to protection at the hands of those who are chosen as their representatives in Parliament, and that the great majority will be satisfied if the House pass this Bill. I believe there is a general desire throughout the country that it should be passed. It would often be a mercy to a man who developes brutal tendencies to stop him at the outset. If he were flogged in the first instance that would prevent him from again committing an offence of the same kind. If, however, he is not deterred he is a mere brute, and deserves to receive the brutal punishment which is due to such men, who fear nothing but flogging or capital punishment. Remember that little children are often violated and assaulted by these brutes and ruffians; if one of your children were so treated would you dare stand up in this House and declare that the brute should under no circumstances be flogged? Let us put ourselves in the place of those whom we are sent here to protect. I say if you flogged these brutes you would prevent 99 out of every 100 from ever committing the offence a second time. I hope the Bill will be allowed to go into Committee, and I am sure we are highly indebted to the hon. Member who has brought it forward.

Mr. Atkinson

*MR. G. OSBORNE MORGAN (Denbighshire, E.): If I vote against the Bill it will not be because I do not entertain a feeling of indignation and loathing for the brutal crimes which have been referred to. But it is a singular circumstance that whereas every other civilized country has discarded the use of the lash, there is in England alone a desire to revert to this form of punishment, and I have often, when abused, been asked to explain how that is. The question, especially when accompanied by an uncomplimentary comparison between England and Russia, is not a pleasant one, and is not easy to answer. Of course nobody but a few fanatics advocate corporal punishment for its own sake, and I am quite willing to believe my hon. Friend when he says he brings forward this Bill because he thinks flogging is the only deterrent from certain kinds of crime. Is it a fact, however, that corporal punishment is really a deterrent? If the judicial statistics are any guide my hon. Friend's opinion is founded on as weak a foundation as any popular fallacy can rest upon. The hon. Member has quoted opinions of Grand Juries. Well I am not disposed to place implicit reliance on the opinions of Grand Juries. But even supposing that the opinions which have been quoted are entitled to the greatest possible weight, surely before we legislate in a direction opposed to the whole current of modern legislation, we are entitled to something more than opinions. We are entitled to facts based upon official statistics and concerning which there can be no doubt whatever. By facts I do not mean letters in newspapers or conversations with prison warders. I mean, I repeat, facts based on judicial statistics. I will not go back to the time when men and women were flogged through the streets of London at the cart's tail, and when flogging seemed to act as a stimulant to crime rather than as a deterrent, but I will take three modern cases, being, indeed, the only cases in which in modern times corporal punishment has been resorted to. In the case of the Army and Navy the lash has not proved a deterrent from crime, which has

decreased enormously since the punishment of flogging was abolished. Therefore we may assume that it would not prove to be a deterrent to men who do not belong to the Army or Navy. The statistics show that at the time when flogging was of almost daily occurrence in the Army in one year there were no less than 510 men flogged. In those days the Army was a perfect sink of crime, and in the same year as those floggings took place there were 22,852 Courts Martial. That was in the year 1866. In another year the number of Courts Martial rose as high as 26,000. Well, in 1868 a Motion was brought forward for the abolition of flogging in the Army except in time of war. In that debate it was said, as it is said now, that these ruffians would only be deterred from crime by fear of physical pain, and so strong was the feeling in the House that the Motion was only carried by a majority of one. The next year the Government prohibited flogging except when the men were on active service. Crime immediately decreased. The number of Courts Martial fell as low as 12,000, and I believe they have never risen beyond 16,000. In the year 1881 I brought in a Bill for total abolition of flogging in the Army. As to the Navy, the provision as to active service excluded the operation of the order, as men on board ship were always deemed to be on active service. I showed that the result of the abolition of flogging had been that crime had year by year decreased. I am bound to say that some very remarkable speeches by the hon. Member for the City of Cork in 1879 gave a great impetus to this movement, and to him is really due the abolition of flogging in the Army; and the Bill, which a few years before had been thrown out by a majority of 106, eventually passed the House of Commons without a single dissident. I say it, I hope, with all humility, but there is no single act of my whole life upon which I shall look back with more satisfaction than this. From that moment crime fell again. In 1881, the last year of flogging, the number of courts martial was 91 per thousand men; in 1884 the number fell to 73, and in 1887, the last year for which I have the returns, they fell to 61 per thousand men—or a little over 6 per cent, as against 14 or 15 per

cent in the palmy days of flogging. There was an equal reduction in the case of the Navy and the Marines, when Courts Martial on board ship fell from 266 in 1881, the last year of flogging, to 169 in 1886. Yet there are people who tell us that the abolition of flogging in the Army and Navy has led to an increase of crime! I think now I am entitled to assume that what has occurred in the services will not be different from the result in the civilian classes, and that flogging will not be found to act as a deterrent. I will next take the cases of assaults upon the Queen. There have, I believe been six of these dastardly assaults upon Her Majesty. The first took place in 1841, and soon after the distinguished father of the present Speaker brought in a Bill inflicting whipping as a punishment for assaults upon the Queen. But all these assaults, except, of course, the first, and perhaps the second, took place after, and not before, corporal punishment had been authorized. What, then, becomes of the argument that flogging acted as a deterrent? I now come to the last case I am going to cite—namely, robbery with violence. I will ask the careful attention of the House to the facts that I am going to lay before it. It has been stated by the mover of this Bill that robbery with violence has diminished in consequence of the punishment of the lash.

*MR. MILVAIN: My point was that in the district where the lash was ordered, robbery with violence has been suppressed.

*MR. G. OSBORNE MORGAN: But what is the evidence of that? I will accept only judicial statistics. Individual experience and opinions on this subject are so contradictory that it is not safe to act upon anything but judicial statistics. A quarter of a century ago there was a panic about garrotting, and Lord Norton, then Mr. Adderley, who had a perfect mania on the subject of flogging, by means of which only he seemed to think the world could be regenerated, induced Parliament to pass an Act to punish the offence of garrotting with flogging. But before the Act was passed

garroting, in the technical and scientific sense of the word—that which has caused the panic—had been completely put an end to, because the gang who had practised it had been broken up, all its members having been captured, convicted, and sentenced to penal servitude. These are facts for which I have the authority of the late Recorder, Mr. Russell Gurney. The question is, has robbery with violence increased or decreased? The Act has been in force more than 25 years, and surely, if it was to bear fruit at all, there ought now to be a steady diminution in the offences against which it was directed. I have been at some pains to ascertain the facts. I have gone through the criminal statistics for the period of ten years, and I think the right hon. Gentleman will agree that that will give sufficient data to enable us to come to a conclusion on a question of this kind. The best judicial statistics are from 1888. They divide the previous ten years into two quinquennial periods, from 1878 to 1882, and from 1883 to 1887, and the result has proved most satisfactory. It shows that in the last five years, as compared with the preceding five years, there has been a great diminution in serious crimes—from 77,576 to 69,918—whereas there has been an increase in those that are punishable with flogging, from 1,372 to 1,390. There is a considerable increase in the number of assaults upon women, but that is to be explained by the passing of the Criminal Law Amendment Act, the consequent vigilance on the part of the police, and the prosecutions that followed. But even these are now on the decline. At the recent sessions of the Central Criminal Court, out of 89 prisoners 15 were charged with robbery with violence, and the Grand Jury called upon the Recorder to inflict the punishment of the lash. It would be instructive to know whether the Recorder agreed with the Grand Jury. It is easy to mislead popular opinion on such a subject. A journalist told me that this was actually done by a leading London

newspaper a few years ago, and a sort of panic created by simply collecting cases of assaults of women, and, by putting them together, concentrating attention upon them, while at the very time this was being done it afterwards proved that there had been a diminution in the number of cases. An American once remarked to me, “Your nation are the greatest set of cowards on God’s earth; you are always afraid of something. You are always going to be either invaded or garrotted.” If the lash is so effective a deterrent, why do we not go on and inflict it in cases of robbery without violence? And that is what we shall get to, for as Lord Bacon observed 300 years ago, the appetite for these vindictive punishments grows with indulgence. When the Irish Crimes Act was before the House, an hon. Member opposite (Mr. Swetenham) put on the paper an amendment that any one guilty of offences named in certain clauses should be liable to be once, twice, or thrice, privately whipped, the number of lashes not to exceed 50 at each whipping. One of the offences specified was assaulting or injuring a dwelling. One hundred and fifty lashes for “injuring a dwelling”! Why, in no other country in Europe would a member of a representative Assembly have dared to make such a proposal. Yet that is what we have come to in this age of “spurious sentimentality.” I mentioned the fact to an Italian Deputy, and he told me that if anything of the kind had been proposed in their Assembly the Member would have been hissed out of the Chamber. I hope there are on both sides of the House fair-minded men who, having listened to the facts I have quoted, will oppose the Second Reading of a Bill which would be tolerated by no other Legislature in Europe, and which our own experience has shown to be not only barbarous, but absolutely ineffective.

*MR. MATTHEWS: I think everybody will admit that the present state of the law with regard to the punishment of flogging is unsatisfactory. We flog in a sporadic and eccentric kind of way that is I think totally indefensible. There is the Treason Felony Act under

which, for certain assaults on the Queen, flogging may be administered; then assaults accompanying robbery with violence and garrotting or attempted choking may be punished in the same way. Then there are several offences under the Vagrant Act for which the punishment of flogging may still be inflicted. For instance, a man convicted for the second time as an idle and disorderly person may be flogged, as may a man who neglects to maintain himself or his family; so may a chapman travelling or selling without a licence, or any person sleeping in the open air without any visible means of subsistence. I should be disposed myself to vote for the Second Reading of the Bill if only because it proposes to deal with the whole question and determine once for all which punishments should be dealt with by this kind of punishment and which should not. These discussions on questions of punishment involve questions of social philosophy which are interesting to us all. I suppose all will agree that any punishment necessary for the protection of society against crime is justifiable, although I do not know whether the opposite of that proposition will be generally accepted. The first question which arises is whether a given punishment is deterrent or not. I have listened with some surprise to the argument of the right hon. Gentleman opposite, and as far as I could follow it, it conveyed to my puzzled mind the idea that flogging, so far from deterring from crime, has the effect of leading to the commission of that class of crime to which it is applied, and that a wise Legislature ought to flog for acts of virtue.

*MR. G. OSBORNE MORGAN: I simply stated the facts.

*MR. MATTHEWS: Yes; but the facts are for the purpose of drawing inferences, and as far as I can follow the right hon. Gentleman, they are intended to lead to the conclusion that the punishment of flogging does not deter from but actually leads to the class of crime to which it was applied. If that is a sound

argument, I repeat it leads to the conclusion that flogging is a most valuable social instrument for the promotion of virtue, if not for the prevention of crime. That is a question on which we all of us have experience of our own to guide us. We have many, if not all, of us experienced the punishment of flogging, and when the experience of foreign countries is quoted, and it is said that a man would be scouted out of the Senate of a foreign nation if he proposed such a punishment, my short answer will be that those foreign legislators have not been flogged and we have. No man exposes himself willingly to that punishment, and I confess that, bringing my own experience to bear on the question, I cannot doubt that flogging is deterrent. That alone is not enough to say, because torture was deterrent. I am not going to push the argument too far; it does not follow that because a punishment is deterrent, it is therefore justifiable. Let me point out how inconclusive the figures quoted by the right hon. Gentleman are. The right hon. Gentleman pointed out in the comparisons which he quoted two figures only—namely, those for the two quinquennial periods immediately preceding 1887—of robbery and assaults with intent to rob by persons armed or to the number of two or more together. It is not every robbery or assault with intent to rob which is floggable. In order to be floggable it must be by a person armed or by two or more persons; therefore the figures are misleading. The figures were 1,390 for the second period, and in the first period 1,327. The right hon. Gentleman did not favour the House with any calculation to show that that was more than should have followed from the increase of population or more than accident or local circumstances might have accounted for. Both periods are under the operation of the lash, and if the right hon. Gentleman ascribes the increase in the last period to flogging, those who oppose the right hon. Gentleman may ascribe the decrease on the former period to flogging. If the right hon. Gentleman looks a few lines below in the Return from which he has quoted

his figures he will find an analogous class of offence in which the numbers are quite stationary. Let him take another class of cases in which flogging is not inflicted—unnatural offences—and he will find that in the same period the increase is rather startling—namely, 162 in the first period and 186 in the second. A similar increase is apparent in cases of assault with intent to ravish and indecent assaults, where the numbers are 349 in the first period and 387 in the second. See how the right hon. Gentleman's argument can be turned against him. Here are offences which are not floggable which have increased much more markedly than floggable offences. The right hon. Gentleman's opponents may say it is because of the absence of that punishment. I do not put that forward as an argument, but say it is neither any better nor any worse than the argument the right hon. Gentleman opposite has offered to the House. It seems to me that the argument is useless, both as presented by the right hon. Gentleman and in the kind of retort I have suggested. If the right hon. Gentleman had compared the periods before the passing of the Act authorizing flogging and since, the comparison might have been useful, but no doubt those figures are very difficult to extract. Can anyone doubt that flogging is a thing that no man likes, and does anyone doubt that a punishment that a man does not like is deterrent? As far as my experience of Criminal Courts goes I do not doubt that flogging is deterrent. No one who has seen the extraordinary anxiety with which the practised burglar cross-examines with a view to minimize the evidence of violence in order to escape flogging, and the extraordinary liveliness of anxiety he exhibits with regard to that subject, can doubt that it is deterrent. A punishment, however, must not only be deterrent. No prudent Legislature would select that punishment unless it is in accord with public feeling, because otherwise juries would evade the law and improperly acquit in order to save the criminal from the punishment. That is not a very high philosophical view, but it is one which no prudent Legislature would neglect to consider. I think that to that extent you must

select your punishment, because the whole justification of your penal system is self protection, and you will not protect yourselves in an efficient and sufficient way if you do not adopt a punishment which commends itself to those among whom you live. If punishments are too severe for the ordinary sense of justice, jurors will acquit. This is the reason why the Draconian system, which prevailed in this country before the reforms of Sir Samuel Romilly, did not operate to diminish crime. Jurors were unwilling to convict, and criminals could safely reckon that they had nine chances of acquittal to one of conviction. It is, therefore, a question of fact whether or not flogging is too severe, or too brutalizing a punishment for the prevalent feeling of the day. I discard as really irrelevant foreign opinion on the question. I do not believe that public opinion objects altogether to flogging. It is said to be a barbarous and brutalizing punishment; but it is ludicrous to talk about brutalizing some of the classes of offenders to whom the Bill applies, men, for instance, who commit outrages on children of four or five years old. Though I will support the Bill, however, I will not pronounce a final opinion as to the cases in which it is to be applied. I should be inclined to include under it offences involving extraordinary brutality, gross cases of violence against women and children, and nocturnal offences which cause terror to unarmed and defenceless persons. I am not prepared to include burglars who are merely in possession of weapons, unless they use or threaten to use them. Certainly flogging ought only to be applied with caution and discretion, and in such a way as not to shock public feeling. There are many men to whom the very suggestion of extending flogging is shocking. It is, too, to some extent, a retrograde step in modern legislation. But at the same time it is a great evil that the public mind should be in a state of alarm, and that persons should feel that they are not sufficiently protected; and there certainly is such a feeling. The law wants consolidating and to be dealt with as a whole. I support the Bill because it is aimed at a class of offences against which flogging will have a powerful deterrent effect, though I do not commit

myself to the schedule of offences in its entirety.

*MR. BRADLAUGH: Perhaps I may be allowed to explain that I did not say flogging was brutalizing alone to the criminal, but was brutalizing also to those who witness it and those who inflict it, and I gave my own Army experience to prove that.

*MR. HUNTER (Aberdeen, N.): There is one clause in this Bill which has my entire and cordial approval, and only one clause. That is the clause which says, "This Bill shall not extend to Scotland." I think the framer of the measure exercised a most wise discretion when he excluded Scotland from the operations of this retrograde and disgraceful Bill. In Scotland we find no class of men capable of applying the lash. No man in Scotland will become a warder in a prison, except under express contract with the Government, that he shall not be called upon to use the lash. And I venture to think that that public feeling in Scotland corresponds to the great paucity of brutal offences in Scotland, compared with those in England. The right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary has asked us whether flogging is not a deterrent. I reply by asking, is imprisonment not a deterrent? Of course they are deterrents. Every pain you can inflict is of the nature of a deterrent. What did the right hon. Gentleman make out for his floggings? Did he prove or attempt to prove by any facts or figures that flogging was a more successful deterrent than imprisonment? He did not attempt to argue the question. He assumed that such was the fact, in obedience to an utterly demonstrable fallacy. The distinction between flogging and imprisonment is this, that flogging inflicts actual physical pain, short in its duration, but extremely acute during the time it lasts, while imprisonment inflicts pain upon the mind, the loss of

liberty being the main ingredient in the punishment of the prison. Now, Sir, it is a fact of familiar experience, that bodily pains, however acute, do not dwell in the memory. They do not impress themselves on the mind, or influence the imagination, or act as deterrents. I am speaking comparatively and of those pains which are entirely physical in their effects. Take such acute pains as neuralgia and toothache. Nothing is more painful at the time, but nothing produces so little effect on the mind, and that is the cause of the want of sympathy we exhibit for those who are suffering those pains. Therefore, flogging is on the face of it an expensive punishment, in the sense in which Bentham uses the word, that is to say a punishment which inflicts a great deal of pain and gives no adequate return to society. It is difficult to prove the precise value of any specific mode of punishment, but I can give one argument against flogging which would be all but conclusive unless it were proved by actual experience that flogging had such a remarkable deterring power that it destroyed the offences against which it was directed. It is because the contrary is the case, and because the contrary is consistent with human nature that I oppose this punishment, more because it is stupid than because it is barbarous. The argument I refer to is this. Flogging is an irrevocable punishment—it is a punishment which cannot be undone. You must, however carefully you administer your law, have a certain proportion of miscarriages of justice. You must inevitably, in the ordinary course of the administration of justice, have a number of persons unjustly flogged. Now, Sir, this operates on the minds of jurymen very forcibly. I can only judge by the effect it would produce on my own mind. If it were a case of sentencing a man to a flogging I should require evidence such as I

should require in a case of murder. I should not be satisfied with ordinary or reasonable proof, inasmuch as a mistake could not be corrected if made. If it were possible that you could gain anything by the physical torture of flogging you would lose that advantage, and more than lose it, in the uncertainty that would occur as to the infliction of punishment. But why stop at the lash? If there be, what experience and common-sense show there is not, any peculiarly deterrent power in this form of pain, why not go on to use all the tortures known in the middle ages? No one can prove by any criminal statistics that flogging has done any good. Reference has been made to flogging at school. That explains to me what I confess has always been a mystery. I have frequently observed in this House that when any brutal sentiment is uttered, or accounts are given of brutal conduct, they are received by many Members with rapturous cheers, and I have come to the conclusion that flogging has done them no good. I thank the hon. Member who proposed the measure for having omitted Scotland from it. I am glad he has not attempted to put this disgrace and scandal upon us, and I shall be surprised if England will accept a Bill which he does not dare to apply to Scotland.

MR. C. W. R. COOKE (Newington, W.): I shall vote against this measure not on any special humanitarian grounds, but for this one reason, that the measure proposes to extend a form of punishment that ought certainly not lightly to be extended to a new class of offences, and no evidence has been produced to show that that class of offences is extending. That is my sole ground for voting against the Bill. I have no doubt whatever in my own mind that flogging is a strong deterrent, and when I am told that you cannot undo flogging when once inflicted, my reply is that you cannot either do away the effect of imprisonment or capital punishment. This Bill proposes to do more than consolidate

Mr. Hunter

the law as to flogging, because it would extend the punishment to a class of cases of a very doubtful character indeed, in which the defendant is often placed in an extremely difficult position, and would be almost unable to prove his innocence by his own testimony. When, therefore, it is proposed to apply this particular form of punishment to these offences, we ought to have, not perhaps an investigation by a Select Committee on the subject, but, at all events, the production of some stronger evidence to justify the proposed change in the law. I agree with the Bill so far as it continues to punish and to flog those guilty of serious and brutal crimes, but I cannot support it, because it proposes to extend flogging to offences which have not been shown to have increased lately.

*MR. SHAW LEFEVRE (Bradford, Central): I very much regretted to hear from the Home Secretary that the Government intended to support the Second Reading of this Bill, even with the limitations, important, as I fully admit, they are. I should have thought it would have been well for the right hon. Gentleman to have been guided by the experience of his predecessor. The House will recollect that in 1875 Lord Cross, who was then Home Secretary, introduced a measure dealing with this subject. He proposed to extend the punishment of flogging, by no means to the extent proposed in the present Bill, but yet to an important extent. The measure proved to be a most unpopular one in the country and it led to very important debate in the House. The rejection of the Bill was moved by Mr. P. Taylor the then Member for Leicester, and I think the general feeling of the House, after listening to Mr. Taylor's speech and to the debate which followed, was that the case against the Bill was conclusive; at all events the Government dropped the Bill. Now, I fully admit that this matter must not be decided purely by sentiment, but by

something harder, namely by experience, and the query really is whether the experience of this and other countries shows that flogging tends to deter people from crime. If it had that effect I would be disposed to abandon sentiment and vote for the Bill, but I firmly believe that when the matter is thoroughly investigated it will be found that flogging has not been a deterrent of crime. Certainly it is a remarkable fact that flogging was almost universal throughout Europe for something like 300 years—in this country it was inflicted for almost all offences against the criminal law—but that within the last 50 years it has been abandoned, not only by this country but by other countries. Even Russia has now abandoned the knout. We are the only country which has made any retrograde step in the matter, and that only in the case of robbery with violence. The Home Secretary scarcely did justice to the argument of my right hon. Friend (Mr. G. O. Morgan) who showed that while offences generally have diminished, the offences to which corporal punishment applies has actually increased. It is true that corporal punishment may be applied in certain cases under the Vagrancy Acts, but as a matter of fact it is never applied. The Home Secretary recommended us to study the statistics of offences against the person before the Act of 1863 and after that Act. It so happens that I can supply the right hon. Gentleman with statistics on the point. I took part in the debate in 1875 and the figures I then gave were not challenged and have not been challenged since. For the five years preceeding the Act of 1863 the offences against the persons with violence averaged 200 a year, while the average of such offences after the passing of that Act was 383, an increase of nearly 100 per cent. I believe it is the opinion of many people that garrotting was put down by corporal punish-

ment, but that is not the fact. It is beyond all question that garrotting had ceased altogether before passing of the Act of 1863. [An hon. GENTLEMAN: "No."] It has been stated publicly and in the most positive manner by Mr. Bruce, now Lord Aberdare, who was Under Secretary for the Home Department at the time, that garrotting had wholly ceased before the Act of 1863 was passed into law. Although the crime had ceased, for weeks afterwards the Home Office was besieged by people who professed to have been subjected to garrotting, but in every one of the cases it appeared there was a mistake. But although garrotting had ceased, other crimes of robbery with violence increased. Now, I must say that the statement of the hon. Member for Aberdeen (Mr. Hunter) with regard to Scotland was most important; it was that in Scotland public opinion would not justify a change of the law in this respect, that it would be impossible to get people to serve in prisons unless it was well understood that flogging would not be allowed. The Act of 1863 did not apply to Scotland, and although under the common law of Scotland flogging is permissible, yet for 40 years previous to the Act of 1863 flogging had fallen into disuse, and two years after the passing of the Act of 1863 flogging in Scotland was specially abolished by Act of Parliament. Personally, I am content to take my stand upon the general experience of mankind, and I do think it is one of the strongest arguments against flogging that it has been deliberately abandoned by every country in Europe after the experience of ages. I will not say that flogging actually increases crimes of violence, but I do maintain that it does not act as a deterrent. I believe it brutalizes still more the brute who commits these offences, and that it also brutalizes the people who have to administer the punishment. Certainly the experience of the army and navy in which flogging formerly existed is conclusive against the practice of flogging.

*MR. SWETENHAM (Carnarvon): When I came down to the House I did not think that the Second Reading of this Measure would be reached to-day,

or that a personal attack was going to be made on me. I should have prepared myself with facts and figures to show that corporal punishment properly administered has a very salutary deterrent effect in many cases, and to have shown what my Amendment to the Crimes Act really embraced. I don't think there are many men, either in or out of the House, who have had so many opportunities as I have had of attending trials of prisoners and of watching the effect of punishment upon them. For about 28 years of my life I annually attended the prosecution of about 500 prisoners, and, therefore, if I speak upon this subject I do not speak entirely in ignorance. This Bill deals with two classes of persons. The third section proposes that in certain cases a Court of Assize or Quarter Session may order the flogging or whipping of male youthful offenders. This is a most beneficial and also a most humane proposition. There are no persons who have acted as Chairmen of Quarter Session, and no persons who have acted as Judges of Assize, who have not from time to time felt most painfully the duty of being obliged to commit young boys under the age of 16 to prison, having no opportunity of administering instead the salutary punishment of a good flogging similar to that administered in schools, and we know that a boy is never degraded or brutalized by a flogging at school. The Bill proposes that flogging shall be administered under certain given restrictions; it is to be administered with a birch rod, and the number of strokes is to be limited. Surely such a moderate flogging would teach a boy under 16, who had committed an offence, a lesson that would be useful to him in after life; whereas, if he were sent to prison where he would have to associate with criminals, he would probably come out worse than he went in. Then, in regard to flogging adult prisoners for the classes of offences con-

templated by the Bill, it is idle to suppose that flogging has not a deterrent influence. The opinion of Lord Aberdare had been quoted; but why should not that of Lord Bramwell be also cited? When the Act authorizing the flogging of garroters was passed the sentences awarded under it by Lord Bramwell had a most salutary effect, and crimes of violence greatly diminished. In Cheshire we have an enormous number of criminals tried every year, and after the passing of the Act of 1863, and after the sentences administered by Lord Bramwell, the crime of garroting and acts of violence of that nature, if they did not absolutely cease, were very greatly diminished. It is said that flogging is brutalizing. You cannot further brutalize the persons upon whom it is proposed that this punishment should be inflicted. The arguments advanced from the opposite benches appear to show that the sympathy is with the criminal. [*Cries of "No."*] Do not misunderstand me. I do not say there is absolute sympathy with the criminal, but all the arguments of hon. Gentlemen opposite have been in the interest of the criminal. [*Cries of "No."*] It appears to me that sympathy ought to be afforded with the poor young girl under 13 and with the defenceless women who are raped, frequently with violence. The hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh) and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Denbighshire (Mr. G. O. Morgan) have alluded to flogging in the Army. I entirely agree with them that the flogging in the Army was a disgrace to the system, because the men rose up from the flogging with mangled bodies, and distorted figures. But nothing of the kind is contemplated by this Bill. There is corporal punishment and corporal punishment, and what I advocate is the very moderate punishment advocated by Mr. Tallack, the Secretary of the Howard Association, who in his book upon this subject says that the chief defence of that punishment of a moderate description consists in its mercifulness. Mr. Tallack, after enumerating some of the horrible and brutal crimes frequently perpetrated upon helpless women and children, says that these are the sort of outrages—and their name is legion—that are com-

mitted constantly by a class of wretches at once cruel and most cowardly. It is absurd to talk about degrading the creatures who can commit such crimes as the terms of the Bill are directed against. I will not say that I am prepared to support the Bill in every detail; it will require the most careful consideration in Committee; but in the interests of humanity and of the unhappy and helpless victims of these brutal ruffians, I pray the House to read the Bill a second time. I must say one word in defence of myself against the attack made upon me by my right hon. Friend the Member for Denbighshire (Mr. G. O. Morgan). I am only speaking from memory as to the terms of my Amendment. I am quite sure my right hon. Friend did not mean to misrepresent me, and I am convinced that the House will believe me when I say that the object, at least, of the Amendment which I had on the Paper when the Crimes Act was under consideration, whatever its effect may have seemed to be, was to give the Judges in Ireland power similar to that conferred by the Bill before the House, in punishing persons guilty of shooting and maiming men and women or of cruelly mutilating cattle. If I referred to assault in dwelling houses such reference applied only to shooting into dwelling houses for the object of maiming people therein.

MR. G. O. MORGAN: I hope I may not be charged with making an unfair attack upon anyone. Of course, if the hon. Gentleman says he did not intend what he put on the Paper and what his Amendment would most certainly have done, I have nothing more to say.

*SIR J. PEASE (Durham, Barnard Castle): I have always voted against what I call an excess of corporal punishment. I had always thought there was a flaw, a great flaw, in carrying out our laws; that we did not attend in our prisons to ameliorating and softening influences so as to bring our prisoners—men and women—out of prison better than they went into it. I believe I have voted for all the Bills which have proposed to do away with flogging, but on

the present occasion I desire to give the House a little of my own experience of a certain class of offences which are dealt with in this Bill, because that experience induces me to vote for the Second Reading, much as I dislike the whole process of increasing rather than decreasing corporal punishment. It has fallen to my lot for many years past to serve, almost annually, as foreman of the Grand Jury in the county of Durham. At one Assize we had brought before us at least 11 cases where men had committed rapes of the grossest character on little girls, children so young that we could not administer the oath to them. Little children brought in by their mothers, who described the injuries done to them, and who, in several instances, had been contaminated with foul disease. The Grand Jury on one of the last occasions went to the Judge with a presentation asking him to influence the Home Office to support any Bill that dealt with such offenders by flogging. It has been said that flogging has been a failure. I believe that in a great majority of cases flogging has failed, but here is an offence so utterly brutal that I am very much inclined to try the experiment. I believe you will have to resort to flogging in order to bring this class of offences to an end. I do not approve of many of the paragraphs of the schedule of the Bill. I think additional instructions to the judges are requisite. I think a stronger definition is required, but I shall support the Bill in the hope that in Committee we may deal with it as the House approves. Let me remark that in making the presentation to the Judge I was anxious not to commit myself to any course of conduct or proceeding contrary to views I had expressed or votes I had given. I excused myself from expressing the view entertained by every other member of the Grand Jury, but in looking into the question soberly and quietly, I came to the conclusion that it was my duty to support any measure which would have any influence whatever in deterring men from committing the offences which I have mentioned. I trust, however, that the experiment may at least be tried for three or five years.

*MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green): I put down the notice for the rejection of this Bill and I must thank the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh) for having in my absence moved the Motion. I am at a disadvantage in not having heard the debate, but I should like to refer to the hon. Gentlemen who have backed the Bill. My hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Milvain) has thrown his net pretty widely, and yet he has only succeeded in bagging two very respectable Chairmen of Quarter Sessions (Sir Matthew White Ridley and Mr. Wharton), and the hon. Gentleman, the Member for Flintshire (Mr. Samuel Smith). How the hon. Member for Flintshire came in such company we shall see by-and-bye. I notice that the names of the hon. Member for Blackpool (Sir Matthew White Ridley), and the hon. and learned Member for Ripon (Mr. Wharton) are upon the back of another Bill now before the House, namely, The Assizes Relief Bill. The object of the Assizes Relief Bill is to diminish the criminal work which Judges of Assize perform, but the effect of this Bill will be to increase the criminal work which Judges of Assize now perform. I am aware that the majority of the offences with which this Bill deals are not triable at Quarter Sessions, but there are some that are so triable. I said I thought it would not be difficult to indicate why it is we find the name of the hon. Member for Flintshire on the back of this Bill, and when I turn to the second part of the first schedule I find the explanation. It is provided that persons guilty of indecent assaults upon young girls under thirteen years of age shall be liable to the punishment of whipping at the discretion of the Justices at Quarter Sessions, and I can quite understand, (knowing the very peculiar views of my hon. Friend), why he should have assented to a proposal of this kind, but it really

does pass my comprehension how (unless it be from a desire to conciliate the support of the hon. Member for Flintshire), my hon. and learned Friend, than whom no one has had more experience of criminal Courts should have thought for a moment of giving this enormous power to Quarter Sessions, because he must know perfectly well that these are cases of a peculiarly difficult character in which an innocent man is most liable to be convicted by the false oath of a wicked girl. Yet my hon. and learned Friend knowing this, and having many such cases within his experience, is prepared to give power to Quarter Sessions to inflict this degrading punishment. I dare say those who have preceded me have referred to the epidemic of garrotting which occurred in London in 1862, and, not really knowing the facts of the case, supporters of this Bill may have had the audacity to tell the House that the Garroters Act, which Mr. Adderley introduced put down garrotting in London, but what are the facts? I quote the authority of Sir George Grey on the subject, and he says that garrotting in London was put down at the Sessions held at the Central Criminal Court, in November, 1862. It was not until February 1863, that Mr. Adderley obtained leave to introduce his Bill. I am sorry to learn that the right hon. Gentleman who now presides at the Home Office, is disposed with certain limitations to look favourably on this Bill. I should like respectfully to commend to him the wise remarks made by his great predecessor, Sir George Grey, in opposing the Second Reading of the Garroters Bill. He was speaking in March 1863, and he said:—

“In 1862 there was an exceptionally large number of robberies with violence in London, and in consequence the police were increased and a certain number of them were employed in the streets in plain clothes with the result that many of this class of criminals were apprehended, brought to justice, tried and convicted at the Central Criminal Court, at the November Assizes.”

Now, I ask the House to mark these words, the words be it remembered of the Home Secretary of the day responsible for the protection of life and property:

"The consequence is that the number of robberies with violence in London does not at the present time exceed the usual amount. Where then he asked was the necessity for Parliament to alter the law when the vigilance of the police and the administration of the existing law had been found sufficient to put down the crime."

I submit these are wise words, they indicate the methods to apply to epidemics of crime that occur from time to time and have never failed if properly put into effect. I regret exceedingly that the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary has not given heed to this example set by his predecessor. The right hon. Gentleman might have also taken warning from the experience of another of his predecessors, Sir Richard Cross. Surely he is aware that in 1875 Sir Richard Cross introduced a Bill to inflict the punishment of flogging for crimes of violence and that Bill was supported as this proposal is supported now by the opinions of Judges and presentments of Grand Juries and endorsed no doubt by any number of Chairmen of Quarter Sessions. Yes, Sir Richard Cross introduced his Bill, but he did not succeed in passing it, he had to drop it because he found that the feeling of the House and of the country was against it. I venture to think the present Home Secretary will have a similar experience now. Now let me revert to something that was said by the hon. and learned Gentleman who is sitting on the front bench opposite. He contended that flogging deterred from crime. Now therein is a great fallacy. No sensible man will deny for a moment that criminals are afraid of flogging, everybody dreads it who has seen how terrible a punishment it is. But it is one proposition to say that criminals are afraid of flogging, and quite a different proposition to say that the liability to flogging is a deterrent from crime. Let me give an illustration. I suppose at the end of last century, and the beginning of this, no one will deny that men were afraid of death; most men are afraid of death. And yet the liability to capital punishment was not found a deterrent from the crimes of shop lifting and sheep stealing. Why? simply because of the uncertainty of the punishment, the criminals knew that they had a fair chance of escaping the capital penalty and so the liability had not a deterrent

effect. Will anyone contend that the criminals of to-day will not have at least as great a chance of escaping flogging for crimes of violence, as the criminals of those days who stole sheep had of escaping the capital penalty? I should like to quote a Return which was obtained by Sir Farrer Herschell, a Return giving the number of persons convicted of crimes of violence, and the number of those who were subjected to the punishment of flogging, and the point to which I would draw attention is the uncertainty of the punishment. I find the greatest possible variation in the proportions of those flogged to the number convicted at the different assizes. For instance, at the Central Criminal Court, 615 persons were convicted, and 127 flogged; on the Home Circuit, 118 convictions, 17 floggings, and so on, until we come to the Western Circuit; and there I find that 114 persons were convicted of crimes with violence, that is to say, of whipable offences, and only one of them was whipped; so that it appears—on the Western Circuit at any rate—that even with a law of this kind, there were 114 chances to one against any particular criminal who committed an offence of this description being after all punished by flogging. Now what is the logical conclusion of this Bill? Let me ask the two hon. and learned Gentlemen opposite, whether they are prepared to advocate the whipping of women, who are guilty of crimes of equal atrocity with those of which they have given illustrations to the House? If my memory serves me, that appalling case to which the hon. and learned Member referred in my hearing, of putting a dying boy in water—I say if my memory serves me—that crime was committed, not by a man, but by a woman, and anyone who has any experience of our criminal courts must know, that some of the most awful fiends in human shape are women. Then I ask the hon. and learned Member for Durham why does he not propose the whipping of women? I do not think the hon. Member can give any logical answer to that question. Indeed if you reject the considerations upon which we oppose this Bill, if you reject considerations of humanity, considerations of decency,

considerations not for the persons flogged, but for the community which flogs, then I say you cannot logically stop until you have revived in this country the whipping of women. Then again I would ask how are you going to limit the crimes to which this punishment is to be applied? At present the hon. Member for Durham proposes to limit the punishment of flogging to burglary and crime of that character on the one hand, and to sexual crimes on the other. Why? Simply because he has got a certain amount of popular feeling at his back with regard to these two particular classes of crime. Owing to a few notorious cases of burglary, and particularly the case at Highgate, this crime has attracted a good deal of attention, and has excited the public mind. Then as to the other class of crime during the last few years there has been a great awakening of the public conscience with regard to sexual crimes committed against women and children, but depend upon it as you now have epidemics of this or that particular class of crime, so at some future time you will have epidemics of some other classes of crime, which will equally appeal to the public imagination, which will equally excite public indignation, and exactly the same arguments will be advanced in favour of extending the punishment of flogging to crimes of such a description as are now advanced in favour of this Bill. Indeed at the present time there is the greatest possible difference of opinion among men who have only one opinion in common—that they approve of flogging—as to the character of crime to which flogging should be applied. For instance there is or was a learned Judge, who thought the firing of stacks a crime to be appropriately punished by flogging. But I think in this respect the right hon. Gentleman who is now Postmaster General bears away the palm, for in by-gone days that right hon. Gentlemen distinguished himself in this House by promoting two Bills the object of which was to punish with flogging the crime of libel. In conclusion, I submit the hon. and learned Gentlemen opposite have totally misunderstood the grounds upon which we oppose the Bill. I heard the hon. and learned Gentleman say that we sympathized with criminals. I

Mr. Pickersgil

wholly repudiate that statement. I think, indeed, it needs no repudiation; it answers itself. It is not the criminals we regard, but it is those who are not criminal. We have regard to the effect of a brutal punishment of this kind on the Judge who passes the sentence; upon the people in Court who hear it pronounced; upon the people outside who discuss the sentence; and the officials of the prisons, who are most unfortunate of all in having to inflict the punishment. In fact, it is not the criminals for whom we care, but the community. Yesterday afternoon, the Grand Jury of the County of London made at the Central Criminal Court a presentment in favour of some such Bill as that which is now in our hands. Possibly my hon. and learned Friend has reminded the House of that, but I should like to carry the matter a little further and quote to the House the grave and dignified reply made to the Grand Jury by the learned and respected Recorder of the City of London, who was once a respected Member of this House. He pointed out to the Grand Jury that there "was not in the history of the Legislature a punishment so deliberately abandoned after very long and most anxious discussion as this." That is a consideration I urge upon the House to-night. This Bill is a reactionary Bill; it is a return to a brutal punishment of the past. It is not a final Bill; you cannot stop where the hon. and learned Member for Durham purposes to stop, and I think he knows that as well as I do. The House having deliberately abandoned the penalty of corporal punishment, I ask it, though this Bill has received the sanction of the Home Secretary, to have regard to its former deliberate decision and the words of a former Home Secretary, who, without disrespect I may say, should have more influence than the present holder of the office, and reject this Bill.

*THE SOLICITOR GENERAL (Sir EDWARD CLARKE, Plymouth): If the House will allow me, I will explain in a very few words why I purpose to take a different course to that adopted by my right hon. Friend the Home Secretary in respect to this Bill. This, of course, is not

in its nature and never could be a Party matter to be decided in any sense by a Party Division, and my right hon. Friend did not say that the Government were going to take part in it, though phrases have been used that seemed to carry that impression. I was teller with the right hon. Member for Halifax (Mr. Stansfeld) in 1885, the last year when the question of flogging came before the House for decision. I think it was to this occasion the hon. Baronet, the Member for Barnard Castle (Sir J. Pease), made allusion in respect to that part of the schedule which has induced him to support this Bill. In 1885 we had a discussion on the point, a long discussion in which many Members of the House took part, and the refusal of the House to accept corporal punishment as applied to cases to which this schedule refers, was supported by Sir Farrer Herschell, the right hon. Member for Bury (Sir Henry James), the hon. and learned Member for Stockton (Sir Horace Davey), and by the Recorder for London, who testified to the results of an official experience extending over many years. If I could think this would be a deterrent punishment and would check the progress of offences of this very serious class, I should not discuss the humanitarian question or the question of sentiment or taste, but no one ever succeeded in proving that in any class of offences the punishment of flogging had a deterrent effect. I believe this is altogether a retrograde proposal, and I shall certainly resist it in every form. I am, of course, very sensible of the fact that crime is—I will not say is prevalent, because it is diminishing—but that there is a great deal of crime amongst us, but I look for remedy in other directions, to improvement in the means of detecting crime, to making the conduct of criminal cases more fair to persons unjustly accused, and to making your sentences a little more equal in char-

acter. Let us have more certainty of detection and of a known and equal punishment, and I believe we shall do a great deal more than we shall effect by such a measure as this. At all events I shall vote against the Bill.

*SIR H. SELWIN-IBBETSON (Essex, Epping): The right hon. Member for Bradford has made a statement with an amount certainty that calls for a word or two in reply. The hon. Member asserted that Sir Richard Cross's Bill was withdrawn because of a unanimous feeling in the House against that measure. Now, I happened to be Under Secretary at the Home Office at that time with Sir Richard Cross who prepared and drew the Bill, and I may say we obtained for the Bill the sanction of every Judge in the Kingdom but two, and practically of every Quarter Sessions in the country, in favour of an alteration of the law in this particular way. It was only because at that time—just after the abolition of flogging in the Army—a certain section of the House, led by Mr. Hopwood, took up a line of opposition to the Bill, that it was delayed, and afterwards, from stress of time, Sir Richard Cross was compelled to drop it. But he was convinced, as I was from investigations that we then made, that some change in this direction was necessary. I can confirm what has been stated by the hon. Member for Carnarvon. As Chairman of Quarter Sessions I have had, over and over again, most painful cases to try in which a measure of this character would have applied with the most salutary effect. I do not want to detain the House beyond making my protest against the manner in which the right hon. Member for Bradford has referred to the Bill I have mentioned. We had the almost unanimous feeling of Judges and of Quarter Sessions in favour of the Bill, and it was only abandoned for the reason I have stated. I only wished to state this in correction of the statement of the right hon. Gentleman, made with an assumption of accuracy the facts do not justify.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy): I do not wish to detain the House at length, but as I have had a great deal to do with corporal punishment, I may be allowed a few words. I am surprised to find the name of the hon. Member for Durham on the Bill, seeing that he has long been engaged in the investigation of a peculiar case that exemplifies the danger of inflicting this punishment. I have had great experience of corporal punishment—(laughter)—I do not mean corporal experience—and I must say that of all punishments, it is the most unequal and most uncertain, both as regards on whom it is inflicted, and by whom it is inflicted, and it may be inflicted lightly or with great severity. It seems to me it would be dangerous in the extreme to follow the oscillations of public opinion on the subject, now sweeping it away, now reintroducing the punishment, and it would be very inconsistent that we, having made a boast of abolishing the Kourlash in Egypt, should reintroduce corporal punishment into England. I admit it is very useful for juveniles, and it may be very useful for women, but I think it is a dangerous and doubtful policy to introduce it in this piecemeal kind of way. We ought to consider it more deliberately in relation to our whole criminal law, and for my part I am disposed to pay considerable attention to the suggestions of the Solicitor General, though I know the difficulty of securing certainty in detection and punishment. It may be that corporal punishment is best inflicted by the whip, but it is very uncertain and unequal, and, upon the question as it has been brought forward, I think it is safer to vote against the Bill.

The House divided:—Ayes 195; Noes, 140.

Main Question put, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

The House divided:—Ayes 194; Noes 126. (Div. List, No. 99.)

Bill read a second time, and committed for June 19th.

TECHNICAL EDUCATION BILL (No. 27.)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

SIR H. ROSCOE (Manchester, S.): I hope the House will allow me to take the second reading of this Bill, to which there is no notice of opposition, and, I believe, the Government offer no objection.

Question, "That the Bill be read a second time," put and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed for Wednesday, 19th June.

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS (MEETINGS IN SCHOOLS) BILL. (No. 34.)

Order for Second Reading, read and discharged.

Bill withdrawn.

MOTIONS.

REGISTRATION OF COUNTY ELECTORS

(EXTENSION OF TIME) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Hobhouse, Bill to Extend the Time for the Preparation of the Registers of County Electors in England and Wales, Ordered to be brought in by Mr. Hobhouse, Sir Ughtred Kay-Shuttleworth, Sir John Dorrington, Mr. Gurdon, Mr. Dugdale, and Mr. Arthur Acland.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 210.]

TECHNICAL SCHOOLS (LOCAL AUTHORITIES) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Arthur Acland, Bill to enable the Councils of Counties and Municipal Boroughs to provide Technical Schools and Classes, Ordered to be brought in by Mr. Arthur Acland, Mr. Francis Powell, Mr. Rathbone, and Sir Henry Roscoe.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 211.]

It being Six of the clock, Mr. Speaker left the Chair without Question put.

HANSARD'S PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES.

No. 15.] THIRD VOLUME OF SESSION 1889.

[MAY 17.]

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Thursday, 9th May, 1889.

SAT FIRST.

The Lord Kenyon, after the death of his grandfather.

MARRIAGE WITH A DECEASED WIFE'S SISTER BILL. (No. 16.)

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading, read.

*THE DUKE OF ST. ALBANS: In moving the Second Reading of this Bill, if I seem too briefly to touch on this important question it is not from any want of interest in its success, or ample materials at my command in its favour, or of respect for the House. I have already stated my reasons for this alteration of the marriage law, and wish to leave time for those who can place arguments before your Lordships with more ability, weight, and knowledge than I possess. I can claim that I have been careful not to trouble your Lordships unnecessarily with a question which is painful in itself, and with arguments which were or must be of a distressing character. It was wished in 1887, when the presence of many of our Colonial fellow-subjects, to whom this question is of such vital interest, might be of advantage, to bring this question forward. Those with whom I act were successful in arranging that the matter should rest in the Jubilee year, seeing the improbability of its passing the House of Commons, and that your Lordships had rejected the Bill in 1886. But our opponents

would not let sleeping dogs lie, and the representatives of the right reverend Bench attacked us in clerical debate, and in the magazines. The Bishop of Oxford, whose absence we regret, writing in the *Nineteenth Century*, said:—

“Half-a-dozen young men hastily summoned from the race-course to give a vote in harmony with the opinion and wish of some distinguished personage, have been able to influence divisions on which the welfare of every family in England depended. They may have had as little desire to take that part as they had opportunity of acquainting themselves with the merits of the question which we are considering; but the Parliamentary game required their presence, and seemed to place the stakes of victory at their disposal.”

This is not a reason against the marriage, but it is an insult to your Lordships' House. To quote the words of a dignitary of the Church—

“Is not this rather strong for a Bishop, and does not it appear to you as rather close an imitation of that language which is used in the peaceful occupation of trafficking in fish?”

But, when a Peer is summoned from Sunday racing in France to vote against this Bill, a very different view is taken of the matter, and it is boasted that the young Peers, having now happily left their amusements on the race-course, have come to the defence of the Church and her Laws. Before the Reformation these marriages were valid by the dispensation of the Pope. Henry VIII. of pious memory had conscientious scruples as regards the table of affinity, when he wished to put away Queen Catherine and marry Anne Bolyne. And, according to the interests of those in power, the Marriage Law constantly changed in this country, till in 1835 it stood that marriage with a deceased wife's sister was voidable, not void. The marriage was to all intents

and purposes valid, and the children legitimate. Lord Lyndhurst's Bill, by making those marriages in future void, declared those in existence to be valid. The Bishops in 1835 sanctioned the validity of those then existing marriages which the Christianity of mitred politicians recognized it as their duty to denounce as incestuous unions; incestuous unions within the limits of our Laws, but Holy and Godly marriages sanctioned by the Crown in our colonies, and recognized in every other part of the civilized world. If these marriages are wrong now, why were they right in 1835? And, if it was right for the Bishops to acknowledge and bless those in existence in 1835, why are they wrong now? This is ecclesiastical economy which I shall be glad to have explained. I wish to quote from a clergyman in the diocese of Lincoln, who said—

“I trust that your Grace's efforts on behalf of the deceased wife's sister will shortly be successful. I have no parishioners of more blameless or better life and example, or more useful to the poor and needy, than a couple who for fifteen years suffered under the moral stigma cast upon them by the state of this disgraceful law.”

The Duke of Argyll, in moving the rejection of this Bill in 1886, concluded an eloquent panegyric on the Jews and their marriage laws with these words—

“But if they found in any part of human history anything like views loftier than our own it was in the Jewish marriage laws, which were so intimately connected with the preservation of the Jews at the present time. The only Member of your Lordships' House professing the Hebrew faith voted for this Bill in 1886, and every Rabbi has expressed himself in favour of marriage with a deceased wife's sister. I, therefore, claim that they are logically with me as supporters who vote with me on this occasion.”

The Duke of Argyll remembered when a boy hearing of such a marriage in Glasgow, and the parties could not be admitted into civilized society. But the greater number of these marriages were contracted in Scotland, in proportion to the population. Sixty out of the 70 Members support the principle. The Presbyterian Church in Canada and the United States have expunged the prohibition from the Confession of Faith, and though the Scotch churches have not taken this extreme step, such marriages are practically recognised in the established and United Presbyterian

Churches of Scotland. The Second Reading of a Scotch Bill, which raised this objection to piece-meal legislation, has been carried in the House of Commons this year by a majority of 53. I may take it for granted that the particular phrase in Leviticus has been jetsoned by our opponents, and the sins of commission which probably the Bishops themselves have committed. As regards the social question, I think we may ask for proof that immorality has arisen in those colonies where this marriage has been allowed. Women dislike the idea of their husbands marrying again, but the fact that 45,000 women have signed in favour in Leeds is perfectly conclusive that they are not, as a whole, against the principle. I will dismiss the marriage with a brother-in-law for the reason that this marriage is not desired, is seldom contracted, and is illegal in the Colonies. This Bill was carried in the House of Commons by a majority of 57 in 1888 and comes before your Lordships now with the hall-mark of a reformed Parliament. It legalizes marriage with a deceased wife's sister and enacts that no marriage between a man and a woman shall be void or voidable by reason that the woman is sister to his deceased wife. This Bill expressly, as well as Lord Lyndhursts and other Marriage Acts, legitimizes the children. I think few would wish, if this marriage is legally acknowledged, that the innocent children should alone be the sufferers. It, however, respects the rights of those who have inherited, and guards against any confusion as to succession in family. I acknowledge that some clergymen have a conscientious but mistaken feeling against this marriage, and it is not proposed by the Bill that they should be obliged, under penalty, to perform the religious service. This was done in deference to their scruples. I, however, believe the good sense of the clergy would prevent them from withholding the benediction of the Church if these marriages were declared valid by the law of the land. Such is the Bill I present to your Lordships. It is supported by the whole of the Labour Representatives in the House of Commons and by almost every Member of the Trade Congress. A very numerous deputation from that class, representing over 600,000 members, interviewed the Prime Minister at

the Foreign Office. Finally there are petitions in its favour from every Town Council in England, Scotland, and Ireland. I hold in my hand a petition from all the 81 burghs in Scotland, and a memorial to Her Majesty's Ministers signed by 100 out of 135 of the new County Council, approved by the Council, a declaration signed by the Presidents and ex-Presidents, and a very large number of the Nonconformist ladies, and supported by 8,000 of their ministers. I ask permission to read a Memorial to me signed by a distinguished Colonial Bishop, by all the Agents-General, and by every colonial delegate found in a residence in London and in other parts of the country:—

“My Lord Duke: In view of the facts hereinafter stated in the form of a Memorial, which we understand, in slightly varied terms, has been addressed to Her Majesty by the Canadian and Australian Parliaments, the undersigned, who are connected with the Colonies in which liberty to contract marriage with a deceased wife's sister has been sanctioned by the Queen in Council, desire to offer to your Grace their most cordial support in your efforts to secure such an amendment of the Imperial Law in relation to these marriages as will make them uniformly legal and valid throughout Her Majesty's dominions.”

A Colonial subject of the Queen who has contracted this marriage legally in another part of the Queen's dominion is told he is living here in a state of concubinage. His children who are legitimate there are bastards as regards succession here. He is told by the law of the land a man is forbidden to marry his sister-in-law as a near relation. But, suppose he inherits property from his sister-in-law, he is told that by the law of the land she is absolutely no relation, and a stranger in blood, and he must pay 13½ per cent Probate and Succession Duty. This is the state of the law, and I cannot help thinking that the fabric of our marriage laws can be best maintained by lopping off this dead branch. This is a poor man's question, not that of a few rich men who have contracted this marriage. This change the prayers and petitions show is desired by the majority of the working classes and earnestly asked for by the agricultural class. Greater Britain will not make this marriage void. And I appeal to you who maintain the integrity of the Empire—I appeal to you who would call into exist-

ence a federation of the Anglo-Saxon races—to remove this barrier which places a stigma on the wives of many of our Colonial fellow-subjects, and affects injuriously the interests, position, and status of their children, by giving a Second Reading to this Bill.

Moved, “That the Bill be now read 2^a.”—(*The Duke of St. Albans.*)

*EARL PERCY: My Lords, I move that the Bill be read a second time this day six months. In matters of importance brought before the attention of your Lordships' House it has always been thought respectful to your House to state some reasons for introducing it. My Lords, I have listened with great attention to the speech of the noble duke, and all I have been able to gather from it is that this House is to reverse the decision which it has, over and over again, expressed with regard to this measure, upon no better grounds than the example of other nations, and because a certain portion of the people of this country is in favour of it. There has not been, so far as I know, one single argument presented by the noble Duke which should induce your Lordships to think that the Bill is a right or proper one except that of the example of others. I venture to think that before you change the basis of our marriage law you will require a wider argument than that to induce you to do so. My Lords, I feel quite as strongly as the noble Duke can feel the disadvantage which those who speak upon this matter must lie under. It is impossible to bring forward any argument which is either new or novel on a question which has been so often discussed. But the noble Duke certainly stood in a position which afforded him an opportunity of doing that, which, as far as I know, has never been done before by any of the supporters of this measure. He might have given us some slight indication of the foundation upon which he desires that the marriage law of England should rest. It has been my lot to hear many speeches upon this subject, but I have never heard one supporter of the measure discuss the principle which should govern the legislation of this country with regard to the marriage law. We have heard a great deal about what the marriage law is not to

be based upon. We are not to base it upon Leviticus, or upon the declaration which runs through the whole of Scripture, that man and wife are one flesh; we are not to base it upon the practically unanimous voice of the Church for 1800 years; or upon the example of the Roman law; or upon the still more remarkable decision of a much more recent date, that of the Napoleonic Code, which expressly excluded these marriages on the ground that experience showed that grave evils resulted from them. We have there a body of precedents, examples, and opinions equal, I believe, to the body of precedents and opinions which the noble Duke has laid before the House. The case which I wish to lay before your Lordships is this. If the Bill passes there would be left 19 degrees of relationship of affinity within which a man might not marry, and there would be left 19 degrees of relationship in which a woman might not marry. I think we have a right to demand from its supporters that they should give some comprehensible reason why they did not include these relationships within the four corners of their measure. It is said that these relationships are inexpedient and undesirable, and that nobody, or scarcely anybody, wishes to contract them. Does any one think that the mere *ipse dixit* of Parliament that a certain marriage is inexpedient affords a justifiable cause, or would prove to the people of this country a satisfactory cause, for forbidding it by law? The language which is used on this subject reminds me of the old doggerel—

"I do not like you, Dr. Fell,
The reason why I cannot tell."

Does any one think that a woman, because of a mere expression of opinion, will think it wrong to marry the man she likes to marry? Thenoble Duke has stated that there are between 800 and 1,000 of these marriages contracted annually. I should like to know where the figures were obtained. I look upon the estimate with suspicion, but supposing it to be correct, I do not know that very much can be argued upon it. The question is not whether these marriages are numerous, but whether they are an offence, not only against law, but against morals; and I wish that the noble Duke had been able to lay before your Lordships some argument upon that point. But is there

no demand that the law should be further relaxed? About two months ago, at a meeting of a board of guardians, a letter from the Local Government Board was read, declining to sanction the appointment of the master and matron of the workhouse on the ground that they were not man and wife, the master having married the widow of his deceased brother. After some discussion, it was resolved to petition Parliament in favour of legalizing such marriages. That is an example of what agitation on the subject might do towards breaking down the existing law; and, more than that, there is a body of persons possessing average intelligence, and the very class to whom your Lordships have recently granted enlarged powers of Local Government, going outside their duties and petitioning Parliament—for I venture to think that petitioning Parliament is no part of local government. That body has in their wisdom shown the greatest desire for a change of the law in the direction which the noble Duke and his friends look upon with the greatest abhorrence. Over and over again when this Measure has been introduced in another place it has been proposed to introduce a clause legalizing marriage with a deceased brother's widow; but those having charge of the Bill have always declined to accept that addition, although it is perfectly logical and analogous, and is desired by a certain portion of the population. The noble Duke has referred to the petitions which have been presented to your Lordships' House, but we all know how these petitions are got up and their real value. There is no question upon which even educated persons have thought so little as upon that of the marriage law of this country. It is within your Lordships' experience that many highly educated persons if asked whether they know of any reason why a man should not marry his deceased wife's sister will reply that they do not, simply because they have taken the law for granted, and can give no reason for the existence of that law. Well, my Lords, the noble Duke has referred to the petitions which have been presented on the subject. Those petitions, which represent the ignorance of the people, are put before the House, not only as the result of the mature thought of the country, but as if it represented the number of people who actually

wished to legalize this kind of marriage. I think we have a right to demand from those who support this measure how far they intend to go. Do they intend to stop at the point indicated in the Bill, or do they intend to go further? If they intend to go further why do not they do so now? And if they intend to stop, why do not they state the grounds upon which they so limit their measure? The law at present is perfectly clear, logical, and consistent; the law declares that no man shall marry a woman who stands within the prohibited degrees of relationship of affinity or consanguinity, and the same idea is expressed by the opinion of the Scottish Church. I was very much surprised to hear from the noble Duke that the Established Church of Scotland practically recognized those marriages. The only test so far as I know of the opinions and beliefs of the Church of Scotland is her Confession of Faith, which lays down distinctly that a man may not marry anyone nearer in blood of his wife's kindred than of his own, and the same as to the woman. That is a perfectly consistent, logical, and complete declaration. It is based upon the declaration that man and wife are in marriage one flesh. I am prepared to stand by that declaration. It has been called a metaphor, but a metaphor is merely a mode of expressing certain abstract ideas in words, and the question is whether the ideas expressed by it are true or false. Are the thirty-nine prohibitions which would be left on the Statute book, connections which it is immoral to make? If immoral, by what arguments can the supporters of the Bill prove them so to be which would not equally apply to marriage with a deceased wife's sister; and if they are moral why have not they the courage to make them legal? We have no right to deny a man freedom of choice in his wife unless we think a particular marriage wrong on the highest grounds. Our marriage law is at the best one of the strongest invasions of the liberty of the subject it is possible to conceive. It is extremely galling to many people, and if we wish to secure loyal and willing obedience to the marriage law that law must be placed upon some intelligible and just basis. The whole of the Bill bristles with inconsistencies. The fifth clause is very

remarkable. The divorce law of the country provides relief for those who suffer by the unfaithfulness of their husbands with one of their near relations, and it provides that for the purposes of the Act, incestuous adultery should be adultery with any one whom, if his wife were dead, a man could not lawfully marry by reason of her being within the prohibited degrees of consanguinity or affinity. If there is no objection to those marriages it is intolerable that a pure and holy alliance should be stigmatized as incestuous. One would have thought that the words of the Divorce Act would be most acceptable to the supporters of the Bill; because they had no necessity to refer to it at all. The wife's sister would have been in exactly the same position as any other woman, and adultery with her would be what it could only be if their arguments are true—simple adultery. But they have gone out of their way to exempt from the provisions of the Divorce Act the miserable wife's sister who should marry her brother, and have introduced the monstrous absurdity that as long as her sister lives she is her brother-in-law's near relation, but that the moment her sister dies she ceases to be any relation to him whatever. This measure has been introduced over and over again, and I venture to say, my Lords, though I know it is a bold thing to say—that no measure was ever more incomplete, or illogical, or ill-considered, and that none was ever less worthy of the attention of your Lordships. If it were a gas or a water Bill it would be rejected without delay, but because it deals with the very foundation of the social system and affects the very highest interests of humanity, it is brought in, year after year, without any preparation or modification in all its natal nudity. As to the social aspect of the question, your Lordships have doubtless received a number of epistles from gentlemen who have married their deceased wives' sisters, and others who desired to do so. But the real truth is that from the social aspect as much can be said on one side as on the other. Those who support the Bill seem to proceed on the assumption that every man, the moment his wife dies, wishes to marry again. There are many men who do not wish to marry a second time, and it is a cruel thing to

prevent a man from having the assistance of his wife's sister unless he marries her. The only organ which expresses the opinion of women, so far as I know, is the *Women's Suffrage Journal*, and that journal has taken up a position of very decided opposition to this Bill. I hope your Lordships will allow me to read a letter which I have received from a lady, because it shows the feeling which exists in the minds of the women of this country, or some of them. The letter says—

"I think it is very hard that a sister should be prevented going to her sister's children in the hour of their sorest need and be a help to the brother-in-law, which would be the case if this Bill passes, as no woman can run her head against public opinion, and hundreds of families will be deprived of the loving care of their aunt."

I only want to point out that there is as much to be said on one side as on the other. It is felt that the Bill would interfere with the happiness of a great number of people. I ask your Lordships to pause before sanctioning a measure which strikes at the root of the present marriage system without supplying any other system which would take its place, before you shake the confidence of the people of this country in Church and State, and before you grievously wound the consciences of many of the most religious and law-abiding people in this country. I believe that I can with confidence leave the measure in your hands, certain that you will do, as you have done before, justice in this matter.

Amendment moved, "To leave out 'now,' and add at the end of the Motion 'this day six months.'"—(*The Lord Lovaine [Earl Percy]*).

***LORD GRIMTHORPE:** My Lords, as the noble Earl complains that the noble Duke has given us no reasons why your Lordships should reverse your former decisions on this Bill, I will endeavour to do so. That cannot be done briefly, nor without historical and other details, which I fear will be tedious; but, if I omit any that are material, I am sure to be charged with doing so from either ignorance or intention. The noble Duke naturally did not go much into these questions, and you see the consequence already. But surely he has given one sufficient reason why you should reverse your former decisions in the fact that the public demand for such reversal has been steadily and

constantly growing. I have long observed that when distinguished Members of this House have to return thanks and to justify its existence in these temples of *veritas in vino* where they sometimes address the whole of England, they do it in something like these words, which I happened to read from one of the most eminent and learned of them who is before me just now. Lord Selborne said at the Mansion House last June "The House of Lords will at all times be prepared to give way to the well-ascertained wishes of the people," and so on. Will anybody contend that there has not been every possible proof of the wishes of the people in this matter? I will only give the shortest possible account of them after those adduced by the noble Duke. I know that the noble Earl has a summary way of disposing of the petitions and memorials of a great many of the public bodies who have so spoken, by saying that the law of marriage was no business of theirs, and that some of the petitions only represent the ignorance of the people. I should have thought he and his party would admit that the law of marriage was the business of everybody, and not the less so when they happen to be sitting as members of some such large and comprehensive bodies as have spoken from time to time with sufficing unanimity about this. Of course I cannot vouch for the figures myself. I only quote them as they have been published formerly in your debates and elsewhere. But I see in such publications that there have been petitions or resolutions from 1878 down to now, of Poor Law Boards representing a third of the population; from 6000 landowners and farmers in two not very populous counties; 400 Mayors and ex-Mayors, and 1000 Town Councils; and the Convention of 81 Royal and Parliamentary burghs in Scotland has petitioned twelve times, and above half the constituency of Midlothian, and the Trades Union Congress, representing nearly half a million members, by a vote of more than 50 to 1, the minority consisting of three; a large deputation of working men went to the noble Marquess a few years ago, 8,000 out of 9,500 dissenting ministers petitioned, and again 150 of their chiefs last year. 45,000 women from Leeds the noble Duke mentioned, and equally

large numbers of them in proportion to the population of some smaller towns. Before adding any more of the same kind, or giving other indications of public opinion, I will answer the noble Earl's depreciation of petitions, in the usual style of those who have got none worth speaking of, by remarking that his Marriage Law Defence Association is probably much richer than the mostly poorer people who are interested in getting rid of this piece of aristocratic tyranny, as an eminent London clergyman called it some years ago, and has unbounded theological zeal to stimulate it besides. So if getting up petitions like those is so easy, that Society could still more easily have done it. I have said nothing yet, and I did not hear the noble Duke mention it, of the steady and all but unbroken opinion of another body, which is generally taken to represent public feeling in the long run more than any other. I mean the House of Commons, almost continuously since the Report of the Royal Commission in 1848, that the Act of 1835 had failed in preventing these marriages, and would continue to fail—a prediction most amply verified. A very Conservative House of Commons has a few times rejected these Bills; but excepting four times in 40 years, and once in the last ten, under a Conservative Government, that House has passed such Bills, or resolutions in favour of them, by majorities of nearly 60 on the average; and taking in the whole 40 years, I have counted no less than 22 divisions in favour of them, besides many consents without division. The recent passing of the Scotch Bill, by a very large majority of Scotch Members, and of two for amending the gross iniquity foisted upon the Colonies in an Act of 1865 pretending to relieve them, are quite as significant as all the others, especially as it had been frequently said before that the Scotch were almost unanimously on the other side. It is clear too, that even the law of Scotland about it is uncertain yet, from the statement, published a few years ago, from Lord Fraser, an eminent Scotch Judge, who said that it has never been legally decided after argument. It is absolutely ridiculous, especially after the latest change in the Constitution, whatever else we may think of it, to contend that the House of Commons, or rather so

many Houses of Commons of all degrees of colour, have not represented the complete opinion of the people. Therefore I now ask any defender of this prohibition to tell us, if he can, of any class whatever of Her Majesty's subjects all over the world, and of English speaking people everywhere, that he even believes to be on his side, with the single exception of the majority of the English Clergy. I said "all over the world" because another feature in the case is that every Government here, willing or unwilling, has felt itself obliged to concede the continual demands of the Colonies, except as to the treatment of colonists when they come here; and there is now, I believe, not one of any consequence where the prohibition remains, except, by a peculiar monstrosity, for Protestants alone in India, according to a late decision of the Courts there. So you have somehow or other yielded for India to the known opinion and practice of the Roman Church, as testified by Cardinals Wiseman, Cullen, and Newman, and 200 Roman priests in London who petitioned a few years ago, but refuse to do it here to either them or the equally unanimous, and far more numerous Protestant dissenters, and the Jews, whose law the prohibitionists pretend to be adopting in spite of every possible proof that they are reversing it. As I am speaking now of public opinion being the only safe guide on a question of this kind, because no such law can be enforced against it, it is worth adding that your Lordships have had twice over ecclesiastical authority the very highest for adopting the maxim that "social legislation ought to proceed on the principle of the greatest happiness of the greatest number," and again, that "you ought to trust the people." Does the most reverend Prelate think the people don't know better than he does what is for their greatest happiness in a matter of this kind? And if not, where is his principle gone to? I suppose to where most principles and maxims go when they have served their purpose of supporting a foregone conclusion which cannot be proved either by experience or by logical reasoning. Their case is full of such principles in every branch of it. Therefore I shall not trouble your Lordships with arguing what is called

the social question. The noble Earl admitted there was as much to be said on one side as the other; which means from an advocate that he knows that there is much more to be said on the other. I will be content with that, and will equally admit to him that in that class which it is the fashion to call Society—the class for which Paley's famous description of the Law of Honour was written—the balance of wishes at any rate, and perhaps of convenience, is to prohibit marrying sisters-in-law, so as to let them come or go, stay and play with their brothers-in-law as they like. And so I daresay there is no exaggeration in what I read lately from a very eminent man, that “the prohibition is only kept up by the bishops and fine ladies.” I do not profess to know myself much of the opinions or ways of the latter class, but I do know that they are a smaller proportion of the people of England than even the clergy, and have no right for their own convenience to deprive other people of the liberty which God has given them. I take leave to quote what was published years ago by a very different kind of person, namely, one of the many clergymen of very large places, who, both to the Commissioners and afterwards, said that apart from all theological questions, on which men must differ, they were satisfied from their parochial experience, that the law of 1835 did far more harm than good. In no other instance does the law of England prohibit one class of people marrying for the convenience of any other class, even if it were a very large one. Canon Gurney, one of the Marylebone Rectors, ended a letter too long to read, thus:—

“If I were a demagogue wanting to rouse the passions of the working classes against the injustice of rich men's legislation, I would not wish for a better topic. If the matter were broached in an assembly of working men of steady habits, and wishing as anxiously as Lords and Commons to do right before God and man, not one hand in 50 would be held up for the law.”

The other clergymen who allowed their opinions of that kind to be published were Dr. Hook, of Leeds and Coventry; Dr. Miller, of Birmingham and Greenwich; Champneys, of White-chapel; Owen, of Bilston; Hatchard, of Plymouth; Dale, of St. Pancras and another great London Parish; and

Archdeacon Hill, of Derby. Such experiences as those are worth more than tons of “principles.” And experiences of those who live under the opposite law are worth even more, because the prohibitionists cannot venture to apply ignominious epithets to them as they do to breakers of their law here. Such experiences were given in a former debate by the late Lord Dalhousie, who had written to and got answers from 120 governors and officials of all kinds in the United States, which abolished this law long ago; and all but one of those answers said in various terms, that no harm whatever had resulted from it. That one, I remember—for they were printed in a pamphlet—was from a clergyman, not professing to give any counter experiences of his own, but only the usual clerical dicta which we are so well used to. It should not be forgotten too, that when somebody here threw some slur on American morality, as suffering from this freedom, Lord Lyndhurst repelled the imputation indignantly, though he never voted against that compromise which he had unluckily accepted from the bishops in 1835, completely transforming his Bill in the way that I will describe presently. And I now give this answer to what I can only call the nonsense that is often talked about this permission leading to disregard of the sanctity of marriage generally, and specially to an increase of divorce. The former is disposed of already; as to the latter, what possible connection is there between them? Besides that, the time for prophesying is gone. It was easy enough for Bishop Philpotts to talk about the frequency of divorces in other countries before we had a Divorce Act here. But now we have; and we need not go abroad to find how much divorce increases, without the assistance of being able to live in holy matrimony with your late wife's sister, instead of in concubinage. Certainly we did our best to increase divorce by allowing every woman to change her husband whenever she pleases by simply committing adultery with the man whom she prefers, and taking care to let her husband know it. And here I had better notice what the noble Earl said about the 5th clause of the Bill, “That this Act shall not remove wives' sisters from the number

of those persons adultery with whom constitutes a right to sue for divorce." Though I had nothing to do with drawing the Bill, and disapprove of some of its details, I think that is right; first, because I think as strongly as the other side can that adultery with a woman who has been taken into your house on such a footing as a sister-in-law is, and always will be, is such an aggravation of injury to the wife that it is at least as bad as cruelty, which is legally requisite besides adultery to entitle the wife to a divorce. The noble Earl was badly off for a topic to find fault with that. He would have had good reason if the clause had not been there. The main reasons besides experience and public feeling for repealing this prohibition are the badness of the reasons on which it was founded and has been ever since defended. I cannot do better than take those from the highest authorities who have given them from the time when it first began to be discussed, soon after the passing of the Act of 1835; for it is very singular that there was no discussion in this House when Lord Lyndhurst's Bill was transformed from what it was when he introduced and explained it as a Bill to reduce the time within which prohibited marriages could be impeached, to two years after celebration; which meant absolutely ratifying them if they were not impeached, as they hardly ever were. In the House of Commons this marriage was first excepted by amendment; and all the subsequent mischief has arisen from their being told that this House, meaning really the bishops, would reject the Bill if it was sent back with that exception, and that it could be reconsidered the next year. And that was in almost the last hours of an unusually late Session when a Government can do anything. But from the beginning to the end, now more than half a century, that House has been steadily against it, with the few exceptions I alluded to. In order that I may face the best arguments on the other side, I cannot do better than begin with the eloquent summary of their case in 1886 by the Duke of Argyll (as it is now lawful to use the names of Peers who are present as well as absent), enforced in still more summary language by the Primate of all

England. The noble Duke said (with a few mere grammatical variations to bring it all together)—

"I hold it is most reasonable to go back to Jews for guidance in this matter. . . . We ought to hear a voice saying, 'This is the way, walk ye in it.' It speaks to us through the ages, from the days of patriarchs and prophets, through Roman Emperors and French Republics. . . . The Eastern and Western Churches concur with the post-Reformation ones . . . in calling upon us to reject this Bill and stand fast in the ancient ways."

And the most reverend Prelate very naturally, in the name of his brethren, thanked him for such a speech, and still more emphatically summed up the history thus—"This marriage was unknown to the Christian Church. It was unknown to Roman law. It was unknown to Judaism." Undoubtedly if all those statements are correct, their case is a very strong one; but if all those great authorities should turn out the other way, it is equally clear that the case for the prohibition is gone. First for the Roman Emperors. The noble duke expatiated on the ancient glories of Rome, and called "the Romans perhaps the noblest specimens of humanity that the world has ever seen," with more that I should like to quote if there were time. And then comes the Archbishop's dictum that they knew no such marriage. There happens to be a precise record of the time when the prohibition was first enacted at Rome, and I think few people would consider it exactly the epoch when the Romans were the climax of humanity. For it was in the year 355, under the emperor Constantius, who was indeed a Christian, but an Arian, and the persecutor of Athanasius, as was pointed out long ago by the most learned of all the writers on this subject, Dr. McCaul. But I have not arrived at Christian authorities just yet. Everyone who heard or read the speeches I have quoted would understand them to mean the really great Romans, and not the Romans of the "Decline and Fall." Otherwise there was no point in those speeches. They were plainly intended to show that the opinion of even the most civilized pagans acting by the light of nature was against marriage with a wife's sister. And it happens that the very decree itself which prohibited them began with the recital, as we should call it in a Statute, *etsi veteres licitum crediderunt*. I do not for-

get that episcopal and other eminent prohibitionists have quoted over and over again one of Gibbon's magniloquent general descriptions of Roman legislation, of undefined date, ending with, "and they treated affinity and adoption as a just imitation of the ties of blood." It was in vain pointed out to them by an able legal writer immediately after Bishop Blomfield quoted it, that it was simply not true as to brothers and sisters-in-law, though it was to lineal affinity, even in Justinian's famous code ("*De affinibus, &c.*"), and it clearly was not before 355. But it seems to me that the prohibitionists carefully abstain from reading any publications on the other side, and so go on repeating the same mistakes continually. I suppose they take it for granted that we are all either heretics, or fools, or inventors of history. It is plain that somebody is the last of those things, at least. The noble Duke's next great civil authority was the French Republic. But in 1805, when that decree was made, the French Republic meant the First Consul, who threw his sword into the scale of the minority (not the majority) of the Committee, which had reported against introducing the restriction. And if the authority of that eminent theologian and moralist is invoked for prohibiting wives' sisters it is equally valid for the permission of uncles to marry their nieces by dispensations, and the converse; and further still, after only 27 years the prohibition was reabolished, though the pamphlet of the Defence Association, which prints all the rest, omits that, which I learn from another. Then we come to the highest authority of all, the Jews, on whom the noble Duke dilated even more than on the Romans, implying that they were equally positive and undivided on his side; and the most Rev. Prelate more distinctly said so.

THE DUKE OF ARGYLL: Was the phrase quoted verbally from anything said or written by me? I have no recollection of having used it.

*LORD GRIMTHORPE: The noble Duke did not say so in words; but when an orator expatiates through half a column of the *Times* on the magnitude of an ancient authority whom he has specially invoked as the highest, what does it matter if he omits to finish with the actual

words like those of the Archbishop, "these marriages were unknown to them?" Everybody who hears him understands that to be implied. I am not concerned with persons but with arguments, and though the noble Duke is a profuse and able writer on theology, and I wish him better success in his defence of Moses against a powerful opponent, I must accept the Primate of all England speaking for his brethren as the highest exponent of the reasons why they believe that Moses meant to prohibit this marriage, though according to all legal rules of interpretation, and all common sense, he said that he did not, in verse 18 of the chapter containing all the prohibitions. I admit that if the Jews did always understand it so, it would go a very long way towards deciding against us, on the other great legal doctrine of *contemporanea expositio* of rules fairly doubtful. But this case is just like the Roman, except that the Jews have never varied about it, and the Romans did. I defy those two great theologians to cite a single authority, except possibly some modern bold assertor of whatever is wanted for so good a cause, to the effect that there was ever the smallest difference of opinion among the ancient Jews: much less that such marriages were unknown to them. That being so, I need only cite Dr. Adler, the Chief Rabbi in 1848, who told the Commission "that not a single Rabbinical opinion can be met with throwing any doubt on the legality or propriety of such a marriage," and he added, "they almost invariably end happily." Even Pusey admitted it, as he did the Ancient Roman Law, adding that the only Jews who ever dissented, and who, Dr. McCaul says, came into existence only in our eighth century, were an insignificant sect called Karaites, whose interpretation Dr. Adler said was "destitute of all authority and discordant with the spirit of the sacred language." I must do the prohibitionists generally the justice to say that they had previously been content to magnify the Karaites and to sink their being a merely modern sect. Probably they think themselves quite irrefragable on the noble Duke and the Primate's other statement about the opinion of all the Christian churches from the beginning. But there also history is no less fatally against them.

They surely know, if they have ever read only the principal speeches or writings on our side, that there has never been even alleged to be the smallest scrap of contemporaneous evidence of any church or man before the middle of the fourth century, and only one before the fifth, forbidding these marriages, or saying they were forbidden. And now comes a still more important point. The earliest Council that dealt with the marriage prohibitions at all, which Pusey considered worth mentioning, that of Neo-Cæsarea in 315, drew the line exactly where this Bill draws it, between brother's wife and wife's sister, and exactly where Moses did, for all who do not choose, for their own principles, as they call them to kick the eighteenth verse out of the Bible under any pretext they can invent. What can be more decisive than that? I know there was a little Council of a few bishops at an unknown place in Spain, called by several different names, just ten years before, which did prohibit this marriage, but also all marriages of the clergy, and ordered them to put away their wives: a heresy which, McCaul says, had entered the Church at least a century before this prohibition, and soon spread widely. But as Pusey treated that little Council as of no more importance than the later Karaite heresy among the Jews, I only mention it lest I should be accused of suppressing it. What is the next alleged Christian prohibition? In 1851 Bishop Blomfield for the first time defended his action and Act of 1835 in a debate here; and what he relied on was not the Mosaic law, but the fact that—

"This marriage was at least condemned by implication in that very early body of constitutions call the Apostolic Canons, which proved that the prohibition had been in force almost from the time of the Apostles."

Therefore it is of real importance to know a little more about them, as they are undoubtedly the earliest authority to that effect. But though the earliest they are rather too late. Blomfield was more celebrated for Greek than theological learning. Some clever man had evidently crammed him with the Apostolic Canons and had not told him the whole story. Pusey shall again be my authority, as I always like to take the best I can on the other side. And he said in effect what a good many of Bishop Blomfield's assessors

on that bench must have known very well, that the Apostolic Canons were no more apostolic than Henry VIII.'s various Marriage Acts, adapted to his various conjugal circumstances, but were a forgery by an unknown hand of the middle of the fourth century, pretending to have been compiled by Clement of the first. Secondly, they do not say a word about marriages of laymen. Thirdly, the things they prohibit, are priests married after baptism, or married after being ordained, and still more their marrying twice, or marrying widows, or their wives' sisters, or actresses, or maid-servants. And Blomfield had done all of them except the two last. The next time he spoke he dropped the Apostolic Canons, of which I suppose he had learnt a little more, and found other reasons for his action in 1835. So we are still in want of evidence even in the fourth century. At last it comes, and in a form which Lord Cairns said in 1883 was quite conclusive as to the existence of the prohibition from the earliest times. A bishop called St. Basil about 375 had a controversy with another named Diodorus, just as good as himself, who had pronounced this marriage lawful, and wrote him a letter very much in the style of Bishop Philpotts's scolding epistle to Bishop Lonsdale for saying both in his Report and in a letter afterwards that he could see no scriptural authority for it. But Basil, like Blomfield, did not rely on the Mosaic law, and in fact he said that it was no more binding than circumcision, though he argued against Diodorus's interpretation of it, as you may see in Pusey's evidence. What he did rely on he expressly said was "our custom, which has been transmitted down to us by holy men." People have discussed whether even that meant to assert more than the custom of his own diocese. Not that it the least signifies; for Lord Cairns was as wrong as possible in representing it as contemporaneous evidence, or any evidence at all on a disputed question of history. Unluckily none of Diodorus's writings have survived, though he was a very considerable person, as you may see in Dr. Wace's Ecclesiastical Biography; so we know no more of what passed between them. But of Basil we do know something more. His own opinions were of the most ascetic type, condemning all second

marriages and calling third ones "beastly." He was one of the founders of monkery, and had been the head of a monastery close by Neo-Cæsarea in Pontus, the very place where that Canon had been made, omitting wives' sisters, by a Council about 60 years before he disputed with Diodorus. Therefore he must have known that if his statement meant the universality of this prohibition it was false. And that, with the Roman decree of 355, is all that has been ever pretended to exist of this prohibition in the Church before the 5th century; and I repeat that before the 4th there is absolutely none. I need hardly tell your Lordships that any doctrine which is reasonably proved to have made its first appearance in the Church after the first century, at the latest, is *ipso facto*, proved to be heretical, to all real Protestants at any rate. After the fourth century the repetitions of this doctrine become plentiful, and restrictions went on increasing rapidly both in the eastern and western church, till they reached what is called the 7th degree—a degree of cousinship and a heap of other relations which I cannot attempt to summarise. The Lateran Council of 1225 benevolently reduced them to the 4th degree, which goes no farther than third cousins, or the great grandchildren of any of your eight great grandfathers and mothers, and many other collaterals up and down. And as they were made easy by dispensations, at first granted by the State, and afterwards by the Church, they were probably not more oppressive, except in a pecuniary way, than the law here was from the Reformation till the Act of Blomfield and Philpotts. But now comes the really crucial question in all this history: when did either Church or State anywhere first draw the line where Henry VIII drew it, and not where the first Council of Neo-Cæsarea did? Never, anywhere, that I can find. People employed themselves in discussing for and against that pious monarch how far the Pope could dispense. But what was the use of discussing that, when there was no authority to overrule him when he did dispense. From the earliest known legal history pertaining to those Acts, all that the Common Law Courts could do was to send to the ecclesiastical the question, was any particular marriage

good? If there had been a dispensation for it they could only certify that it was. A later Pope could overrule an earlier, as we know from the attempts in Henry's business, though both were infallible; but that has nothing to do with it; and the law simply was what I said just now. All that time it would be ridiculous to contend that any line was drawn by any kind of decree, ecclesiastical or civil, just when Henry VIII. drew it first in 1533, just before he married Anne. Bishop Philpotts, who had facts and arguments ready for any emergency, boldly asserted that the first Pope who dispensed for a wife's sister was "that monster of iniquity Alexander VI," whose iniquities he of course enlarged on; but was soon exposed and refuted, as in all his other assertions of new discoveries. Then also he asked, what possible motive, except conscience and the opinion of the church, Henry VIII. could have had for including wives' sisters which he did not want besides a brother's wife which he did. He would easily have answered his own question if he had been arguing on the other side, with the obvious remark that Henry preferred not to exhibit himself to the world as drawing a new line exactly where he wanted it, and availed himself of the plausible analogy between brother's wife and wife's sister. But unfortunately there is another bit of history, which his distinguished white-washer, Mr. Froude, has overlooked, perhaps from not being a lawyer. After Anne's death, Henry was as anxious to prove that her marriage was invalid as he had been before to make it valid. So then his Parliament was made to pass another Act, 28 Hen. VIII., c. 7:—

"Furthermore to dilate and declare the meaning of these prohibitions (of 25 Hen. VIII. c. 22), it is to be understood that if it chance any man to know carnally any woman, then all persons in any degree of consanguinity as is above written so carnally offending, shall be deemed to be within the said prohibitions."

Your lordships probably know the suspicion that he lay under of a previous connection with Anne's sister, and you may have read in Froude's appendix the dispensation which was prepared for him, which the Pope was asked to sign before his marriage, and perhaps did; and it is significant in several ways. It was to permit him to marry "cum quacum-

que alia muliere, etsi tibi alias secundo gradu consanguinitas aut primo affinitatis [observe the distinction], ex quocunque licito aut illicito coitu conjuncta, dummodo relicta fratris tui non fuerit," &c. Mr. Froude argues that this might be intended for a mere sweeping clause to provide for all possible accusations. It was bad enough if it was. But the light thrown mutually between the dispensation before the marriage and the Statute after Anne's death, besides the prevalent scandal, started by Cardinal Pole, Henry's own cousin, is stronger than even Mr. Froude's ingenuity can again obscure. So far as I know, I was the first person to bring those mutual reflectors together, in a pamphlet two two years ago. There was a third Act of Henry VIII which became what lawyers call spent; and yet another, 32 Henry VIII. c. 38, which does not re-enumerate the prohibitions, but only refers to "the law of God." That was doubtless meant (though some great modern lawyers doubted it having that legal effect) to adopt the definition of the previous ones, which were repealed by Mary, and not revived by Elizabeth, who had her own reasons for wanting to keep wives' sisters prohibited, as an answer to Philip's desire to obtain her. That construction was adopted finally by this House in the great case of *Brook v. Brook*, as to these marriages solemnised abroad, when Lord Cranworth said the seven Tudor Acts on which it all turned were very confusing. After all this it is impossible for anybody to contend that the line was ever drawn where it is now by any Church or State in any kingdom in the world, until Henry VIII threw his axe into the scale, as Napoleon did his sword, only with more durable effect, now that he has been helped by the English bishops in 1835. For until then the prohibition was little more than nominal, seeing the Ecclesiastical Courts under the Tudor Acts and all the decisions in the superior courts, could only "separate the parties" during their joint lives if anybody chose to institute a suit for that purpose, which of course nobody ever did in 999 out of 1000 cases. And yet Lord Hatherley, one of the most violent prohibitionists, actually said in a speech (not judicially) that these marriages were always "absolutely in-

valid," though the Act of 1835 recites that they were not "void but only voidable" in the way I described, and they nearly always remained valid for ever. A man who committed bigamy after marrying his wife's sister would have been convicted immediately. Lord Cairns said in 1883 that some unnamed and unknown case in this House had decided that they were void before. Lord Bramwell answered him then, and I do now, after careful searching, there was never any such case. I need hardly say here, that Archbishop Parker's table, illegally printed in the Prayer Book, is nothing but a tabular exhibition in nice-looking columns with 10 groups in each, of Henry VIII's Acts, though prohibitionists always talk of it as if it were a solid stone like the Table of Commandments, and must all crumble to pieces if you knock off a bit which has no divine authority whatever, but is contrary to the clearest possible Divine words; of which I recognize the perpetual obligation quite as much as any bishop—and in fact a great deal more, as I will show presently. Having disposed of all State legislation and "the anti-Reformation Churches, east and west," I beg to ask where is the English Church legislation drawing this line, or any line at all? Bishop Philpotts answered a similar question with well acted indignation—"Don't you know the 99th Canon of 1603?" Yes, we do. But where was what you call Church legislation from 1533 till then? It would have cost you your head to try any if you had lived then. Even Elizabeth would never allow it, and threw the attempted Canons of 1570 into the fire, as we may say. The so-called Church legislation of 1603 was just like what the two Convocations have asked leave and been allowed to do twice lately. In 1865 they humbly begged and were allowed to alter their 36th canon to follow an Act of Parliament on the very important subject of clerical subscription. Last year they did the same to follow our Act of 1886 to allow marriages in the afternoon. Did any human being except themselves care a farthing whether they did either? Canons are mere by-laws of and for the clergy within proper limits, and for nobody else. Not half of those of 1603 are valid now, if they ever were, for any purpose what-

ever. Moreover, by a famous decision of one of our greatest Chancellors and Chief Justices, Lord Hardwicke, in *Middleton v. Croft*, it is as settled law as *Magna Charta* that, "there are many things of an ecclesiastical nature which no canon can touch, such as the prohibited degrees of consanguinity and affinity;" so that not even for themselves could the clergy make any law of that kind. Suppose they had dared to extend Henry VIII's prohibitions to cousins? Does the most exalted convocationist believe that such a canon, if "the British Solomon" had ratified it, would have been anything but laughed at even in the ecclesiastical courts if any advocate was silly enough to cite it? The fact is that all the clerical bluster about Church law on this point is that, and nothing else. There is no Church law and can be none on anything affecting the laity, or on this subject at all, unless we go on yielding to clerical aggression till we restore as bad a supremacy as the Pope's. Bishop Philpotts dared to tell this House in 1851 that it "ought to defer to that authority to which the law both of England and the law of the Church requires it to submit"; and the Canterbury Convocation in 1883 declared that "it cannot recognize the power of Parliament to dispense with (what this House of Convocation declares to be) the law of God"; and the Primate of all England in 1886 asked your Lordships "what will be the next step? The views of the Church (that is the clergy) being disregarded, what set of opinions can be sure of respect"? That question I will not attempt to answer, beyond saying that the more such language is circulated among the people of England the better they will appreciate the opposition to this Bill and other things of still more consequence. It is almost incredible that in these days, when all sorts of sentimental and imaginary grievances of dissenters get redressed, and even bishops sometimes bring in Bills to do it, we find that we are still living under the claim of a mere majority of the bishops and clergy of this alone of all the Protestant Churches in the world to prevent everybody else, whether Churchmen who differ from them, or dissenters who repudiate them altogether, from marrying according to what they all believe the law of God, and in the face

of indisputable law that the clergy have not, and never had, a right to meddle with it at all; and if the further fact that their interpretation is repudiated by as great and greater ecclesiastical authorities than any of those who have committed themselves to this as a theological dogma; for not many of our episcopal opponents have, and some, I know, do not hold it. I will quote once more Bishop Jeremy Taylor's well-known sentence about it:—

"God is not a judge to quarrel with men by unknown measures and secret rules of interpretation. *Quod in lege prohibitoria non vetitum est permixtum intelligitur.*"

[Lord SELBORNE: "That is wrong."] No; it is not. I know Philpotts's attempt to contradict it by another quotation of a more general kind, like the attempts to contradict the definite Roman Law by Gibbon's generality, though I have not the means of referring to it just now. Next I mention Bishop Heber, who agreed with him. So did Bishops Kaye and Thirlwall, though they both voted against this Bill on what are called the social grounds. My father-in-law, Bishop Lonsdale, I have mentioned already, whose learning or orthodoxy not even Philpotts dared to question in his scolding pamphlet, and whose prejudices Taylor's biographer and editor, Bishop were all on the side of the really ancient ways and genuine Church authority; as indeed those of nearly all his colleagues on that Commission naturally would be, except possibly one of them of whom I knew nothing. Archbishop Whately's powerful mind and works are likely to be remembered as long as any of his present opponent's; and with him one naturally mentions his friend, Bishop Hinds, another eminent writer of his time; and Bishop Copleston, the head of his own College, then the *leonum nutrix* of Oxford. Bishop Lee, of Manchester, a great scholar, and Professor Lee, a greater theologian and Hebrew Professor of great fame in my Cambridge days, both denied the prohibition; and higher than all these, McCaul, Professor of Hebrew and Theology at King's College, who was selected by a great Archbishop to write two articles in the book called "*Aids to Faith*," in answer to the *Essays and Reviews*, which Convocation (within its rights) con-

demned. The living Bishop whom Philpotts called "my singular brother of Worcester," if not equally famous as a controversialist, is very much more so for wisdom and discretion, besides having been the best man of his day at Cambridge; and he wrote not long ago, "I have never ceased to advocate this measure." Archbishop Musgrave was Professor of Arabic at Cambridge, and well known as a man of common sense, though I do not set him up as a theologian. Bishop Fitzgerald had a great reputation as a theological writer. I merely run over the names of Bishops Bickersteth, Villiers, Lord Auckland, Dickinson, Knox, and Griffin, Archdeacon Hare, Dean Close, and all the parochial clergymen I named before, as denouncing the prohibition on one or both grounds, besides thousands of others who have expressed their opinion in various ways. There are two other prelates whose names I must not merely run over without explanation. Archbishop Tait, who has been called the Archiepiscopal Statesman, signed a petition for this kind of Bill in 1849, as has been often published, with the rest. But in 1883, his successor is reported to have told your Lordships that Tait was only then "a young man and a master at Rugby," and that he had the best authority for saying that he changed his mind, and would have voted against this Bill if he had had an opportunity. To us old people he certainly does appear a young man then, for he was only thirty-nine, but was within a few years of the age when the proverb says a man is wise if he ever will be, and nobody denies his wisdom. It is also true that he was a master at Rugby; for he was Head-Master of Rugby, and had been so seven years, and was never anything else there; and the very next year he was Dean of Carlisle, and not long after, Bishop of London, and for no less than twenty-seven years had the same opportunities as other Bishops of voting no less than eight or nine times against these Bills. I admit that he never voted for them, any more than Bishop Lonsdale did, who preferred not to offend the majority of the Clergy thereby, as I know that some lay peers also do, with that blindness to the relative importance of things which is too common even among clever men. Another prelate's

name needs special notice because the Duke of Argyll in 1886 said that he had been misunderstood. I mean the Bishop of Peterborough, whom I am sorry not to see here, who is reported to have said in 1882,

"That he had never been able to take what is commonly called the high scriptural or theological ground, at least as regards the Old Testament: having said this, he would pass away from the theological argument;"

and did so. I find not a word about the New Testament in the report, and should have been surprised if I had. So until we have some better information, I think we must continue to reckon that eminent prelate among the disbelievers in any scriptural prohibition of this marriage. But I have another, at whose name most of your Lordships will be startled; a no less distinguished advocate of it on ecclesiastical grounds than Pusey, whom I suppose I agree with the prohibitionists in regarding as the most able of them all. The very title of his book shows his hand, "Marriage with a wife's sister prohibited by Holy Scripture"—but it does not stop there—"as understood by the Church for 1500 years." I am not sure whether he meant the first 1500 years, or the last, and for the present purpose I do not care which. The point is the confession that Holy Scripture does not decide the question without the help of the Church, which means the supremacy of the Church over it. And his evidence proves that still more. For, passing over v. 18, as they all do, except when they try to get rid of it, he founded himself upon the general prohibition of "near of kin." He was asked, then why not cousins? To which he answered, "I suppose it was left to the Church at the time to decide," and he said so again in answer to another question put to get his view quite clearly. The Commissioners did not go on to ask, what Church at what time, so I must take all the possible meanings. I should think he would have disclaimed meaning every Church at every time, and would have said "The Holy Catholic Church." No other alternative occurs to me; nor does it matter, because the moment you invoke an interpreter of Scripture that means invoking a superior authority, or if you like, an authority necessary to complete the other; and as that other is the Word

of God, and the superior or substitute is the word of man, we who are Protestants need go no farther. But suppose we accept his interpreter, the Holy Catholic Church. What is that? Happily the very voice of the Church of England, "the Sacred Synod of this nation," as the High Church Clergy (quite wrongly) call the two Convocations, answers the question for us distinctly, and we ought to hear that definition read before every sermon, in the Bidding Prayer, from which they always take care to omit it, as they treat every Canon that they dislike. "Ye shall pray for the Holy Catholic Church, that is for the whole congregation of Christian people dispersed throughout the whole world," says the 55th Canon. What says that congregation to Pusey's definition of the prohibited "near of kin." Your Lordships have anticipated the answer. No church in the whole world accepts that definition, except this, under the orders of Henry VIII, unless some one or two of the various Scotch churches do; and unless the doubtful law of the State there agrees with it, that goes for nothing. Only one thing more on that point. There was, you know, a conference of the Bishops of all nations in communion with this Church of England last year, which certainly could not be accused of timidity, for it invited the Primate to alter two of the creeds, if after consultation with those whom he chose to consult, he should think fit to do so—a power which no Pope has ever claimed. It was well known—at least I was several times told so before the result—that the prohibitionists were making a great effort to obtain a declaration in their favour from that sacred Synod of the universe. But it was silent. And how could it have been otherwise, with all the nations of the world on one side and only a majority of English Bishops on the other? As the prohibition speakers have always treated your Lordships to as much theology as suited them, it is time that you heard something on the other side, though of course it is presumptuous of me to discuss theology with Bishops, and Lord Chancellors in that line. But presumptuous laymen made the Reformation, and perhaps will have to defend it before long. As I have all those distinguished ecclesiastics I have mentioned on my side,

Lord Grimthorpe

the question is an open one, notwithstanding the claim of ecclesiastics to perpetual spiritual illumination for judicial purposes, which some of us have been discussing lately. The first question which we have to ask about any asserted doctrine, according to our 6th Article, is, can it be proved by Holy Scripture? If not, it is not required to be believed; much less can disbelievers be forced to act upon it. And the primary question for determining that is, does the Bible speak plainly on it anywhere? If it does, nothing but a qualification of equal plainness somewhere else can justify us in overruling it. It has always appeared to me absolutely fatal to the prohibitionists that they have to begin, and always do, with inventing excuses to get rid of the one verse in all the Bible that speaks expressly on this subject, except the history of Jacob and his two wives. I do not know if he was the patriarch alluded to by the noble Duke in his summary of authorities; but he is the only one besides Moses that occurs to me, and his unrebuked and uncensured example is very significant. For as bigamy was lawful then and fully recognised in Deuteronomy xxi. 15, besides plenty of subsequent history, this concurrence of his sister-wives was no more than the succession of ours. If that succession had been plainly forbidden afterwards his example would be worth no more than Abraham's marrying his half-sister; but it was not; and therefore Jacob's example is a good argument for us and against the noble Duke. I agree with what the most reverend prelate said in 1886, that the levirate law (so called from *levir*, that kind of brother-in-law) was exceptional and not perpetual, though I should not like to be responsible for his reasoning about it. But nothing can be more striking than the difference of treatment of brother's wife and wife's sister in the 16th and 18th verses of Leviticus, xviii. My reason for considering the levirate law temporary or peculiar is the broad and simple one that the verse which contains it, Deuteronomy xxv. 5, is surrounded by purely ceremonial ordinances which no Christian believes to be perpetual, besides being more limited than is generally remembered. The next distinction made by Moses between brothers' wives and wives' sisters is this. Most

of the prohibitions are repeated in Leviticus xx; which includes the *d fortiori* and exactly parallel ones, to all reasonable people who believe the Bible at all; and they are mostly made capital offences. How are these two treated? Not in that way; but God reserved the judgment on marrying a brother's wife to himself: "They shall be childless"—*i.e.*, where there were children by the first wife, by reason of the levirate exception; and as to the wives' sisters it is altogether silent, all having been said about them in the 18th chapter that was required. For nothing could make it plainer. Nor could anybody now unite the prohibition and the permission together more plainly if he tried than it is in that verse which the people who call themselves the Church invariably try to get rid of. Only to-day in the *Times* we have a long letter from another bishop, enlarging upon everything else that we have heard innumerable times before, but stopping just short of the only verse that says anything about wives' sisters, and evidently not daring to touch it. A third distinction is that Moses gives a reason for the brother's wife which you may see would be simply nonsense if written of the wife's sister. And as to the general assertion of parity of sexes, as competent to override all these express distinctions, everything in the Bible tends the other way, and everything in the experience and legislation of the world. Nobody ever treated them alike in the matter of divorce, on account of the immense difference of the consequences of adultery. Certainly not Moses; for a wife's adultery was capital, but a husband's was not, unless it involved a wife's also. For the present purpose that is quite enough, as we are discussing Mosaic legislation, but St. Paul was quite as little an advocate of the equality of sexes as Moses. I am glad to be able to agree with the most rev. Prelate in another thing, on which I therefore differ from my noble and learned friend Lord Bramwell, as I do from some other of the views he expressed in 1886. I agree that the much misused phrase "they shall be one flesh" was not metaphorical but simply physical, in the most obvious sense. St. Paul's application of it to a harlot in 1 Corinthians vi. is decisive, besides other reasons. And a very curious fact bearing

thereon was published about three years ago by a surgeon of long standing, who was confirmed by Sir James Paget and other eminent men—namely, that it is well known both to them, and to some breeders of animals, that a female who has had children by one father generally imparts some of his characteristics (which means his flesh according to all modern science) to all future children by another father; but nothing of the kind takes place between successive mothers and the same father. This "one flesh" argument has always been the favourite one with the prohibitionists, and we have had it again to-day. Once more I ask how they account for Moses never using it in connection with the prohibited degrees, nor St. Paul, when he spoke of one in 1 Cor. vii. That is another of their improvements on the Bible, and putting unworkable reasons of their own into it. I say unworkable because not one of them has ever been able to invent a rational answer to the question with which Bishop Lonsdale posed Archdeacon Hale, a very able man, *viz.*, if that reason was the real one, and your sister-in-law is as unlawful as your sister, why is not your wife's sister-in-law unlawful too? Or, without going to collaterals, why may the sons of a widower marry the daughters of a widow who has married him? If he and she are one flesh for this purpose, surely all their children are. And the question must be extended *ad infinitum* for collaterals. I say no rational or logical answer has ever been given to that. The most rev. Prelate cut the knot both in 1883 and 1886 by calling the argument absurd; only he forgot the difference between an absurdity and a *reductio ad absurdum*, which Bishop Lonsdale did not, who of course used it so, and reduced the Archdeacon to confess he could not answer. Other people have tried to get over it by foisting in the word "affinity," and then telling us that it only means your wife's blood relations. I made some of them very angry in the *Guardian* by saying I had no objection to its meaning anything they pleased until they could show where Moses used it on this subject. If he had, we should have had to interpret it as we could. Another of them asked me what I should say if v. 18 were out of the way. I answered that I should say it would save them from the disgrace of

trying to put it out of the way by a heap of disingenuous pretexts. And I say so now. For after all that has been written about it, and the concurrence of every Hebraist worth naming, and every version (McCaul says) in all languages, and all the old ones, from Coverdale through Tyndale, and Luther, back to the Septuagint about 280 B.C., our A.V. and now the R.V. stand absolutely inrefragable—

“Thou shalt not take a wife to her sister, to vex her (R.V. to be a rival to her) beside the other, in her lifetime.”

Your Lordships may be curious to hear what are the pretexts for getting rid of that unmistakable permission and prohibition combined for death and lifetime. I am sorry to say that two of the highest ecclesiastics here have several times pronounced it, without the least explanation why they do, obscure, ambiguous, capable of four translations; and the present Prolocutor of York, in Hook's dictionary, improves them into 14, suggesting that the best of them is that in the margin of the A.V. which turns it into an absurd prohibition of polygamy besides other defects. I asked him if he would say that he himself believed it, and he was too discreet to answer. Perhaps by that time he remembered that he himself, as the writer on Deuteronomy in the Speaker's Commentary, had corrected an astounding and ludicrous mistake of such a learned man as the late Bishop Wordsworth in defending that translation. Besides its other absurdities, it was only invented in 1575, and ought never to have got even into the margin of any authorized translation. But as it is now as dead as any door nail to every competent scholar in the world, I pass it by, and remind all the propounders or insinulators of either four or fourteen undescribed versions, that the more are the attempts to explain away what every honest man of common sense sees to be as plain as possible, the worse for the inventors; though if a verse is doubtful on the face of it, the attempts to make it clear may be innumerable before one receives general acceptance. I do not believe there is a bishop living, or a scholar with a name to lose, who will risk it on any one of the few or many versions which these people talk of without stating what they are. Even

Philpotts, in his speech here in 1851, said he concurred with all the best Hebrew scholars in accepting the A.V. text, and not the margin. When they have thus kicked it out of their way, they go to work with their “principles.” If I were inventing a table of degrees, I daresay I should think it necessary to start with something that would be called a principle. But I have not to invent a table but to accept it from one whose principles I have no business to invent also, and I decline altogether to listen to people who claim to do so because the words of Moses contradict them. And then, you see, we know as a matter of fact and history, who did invent their table as it is, and why; not Moses, nor any kind of scriptural authority, but Henry VIII. The modern principles to bolster it up *ex post facto* are like most principles now, invented to involve foregone conclusions. The noble Earl told us in effect that it would lose its present elegant symmetry by being reduced from 30 to 29—or rather, to quote him accurately, he said 20 to 19 prohibitions for the man, while it remains 20 for the woman, and he also put them together at 39; which looks as if he had got a little confused between the number of the Articles at the end of the Prayer-book, and of the Prohibited Degrees which follow. But unless he can satisfy me that symmetry and the number 30 were the reasons why Moses, or rather the Holy Ghost, ought to have made it so, I do not care a farthing for symmetry or principles. In 1883 the most Rev. Prelate invented a new one of his own; which I suppose somebody afterwards made him understand was fatal to nearly half the table; and as he never produced it again, I will let it die in peace, having said my say about it elsewhere. And I will not weary your Lordships with any more discussion of such principles. The Bishop of London, in 1886, and the noble Earl now, asked what principle we have if we reject their symmetrical arrangement. I cannot answer for all the opponents of the prohibition, either as to their reasons or the various lengths to which they go. But my principle is so simple that it hardly deserves that name. It is only attending to the written law, and all necessary inferences from it. No inference is necessary or admissible which con-

tradicts plain language interpreted by common sense. All experience of the 30,000 or 40,000 of these marriages, or whatever may be the number, that have taken place proves that all besides the wives' sisters are an utterly insignificant number; and that also proves that there is no demand worth notice for any other alteration; and therefore, that the "thin end of the wedge," or "where will you stop" argument is none at all here. I understand that the Association for promoting this Bill have only heard of 23 brothers' wives marriages in the last 15 years, against what they are sure are about 15,000 of wives sisters. Of course I know that there are persons who object to any restriction beyond the nearest consanguinity, and deny all divine authority for any. But they are not the least formidable because they have neither numbers nor reason on their side. It is odd that the prohibitionists cannot avoid exaggeration, even when their reasoning is sound. Though every person of sense and honesty must see that the express prohibitions in Leviticus are incomplete, and if accepted as authority at all, must be extended to really parallel cases, do the prohibitionists think they mend that case by the ever-reiterated assertion that there is no prohibition of a daughter without inferences? How could you marry your daughter without breaking the prohibition to marry "a woman and her daughter"? It prohibits daughter and step-daughter together. The attempt to extend the Mosaic law by talking of Christian purity and the absence of any prohibition of polygamy in the New Testament, are other fatal specimens of their reasoning. That very pretext of ultra-Scriptural purity ended, as everybody knows, in the grossest impurity among the people who professed it. And the universal understanding of mankind very soon after Christianity came in, that it was against polygamy without any direct prohibition, for well-known reasons, is at once a striking proof of a power which no human legislators could have used, and a striking contrast to this fictitious prohibition which the vast majority of Christians reject. There never was a stronger case of "making the law of no effect by your traditions," than that of ejecting v. 18 from the Bible by such arguments as

these of our bishops and their followers. I was sorry to hear the noble Earl follow the bad example of the retired Bishop of Oxford. In his case it may be attributed to his superficial study of this subject and his want of something more definite to say. Bishop Mackainness had no such excuse for twice deliberately imputing to the supporters of this Bill generally, a desire to abolish all the affinity prohibitions, and calling upon them to avow it and discuss the question fairly. I do not mean that it was his fault that the *Times*, which always gave the utmost prominence to his letters, refused to publish answers to them from various persons, one of whom (not me) he had personally reflected on. The *Guardian*, I am glad to testify, though strongly on his side editorially, permitted two years ago the only full discussion there has ever been in any newspaper or periodical. The Duke of Argyll too, in 1883, imputed the same general intention or desire to the defenders of the 18th verse. If he did not remember, Bishop Mackainness could not possibly forget, that the only unlawful marriage expressly condemned by St. Paul was an affinity one; and it might have occurred to him that he was accusing all those great divines, far more eminent than himself, of reading St. Paul's condemnation of marrying a stepmother out of the Bible, as he and his party "read out" the permission to marry a wife's sister, which some of them actually say has nothing to do with the question. If so, what was that verse for? Others of them more mildly say that if we exclude a wife's sister from the table, there is no principle on which we can retain the others of affinity. It may be quite unprincipled to accept the words of the Bible, and all necessary and uncontradicted inferences from them, as I have said, and I can give them no other principle; but I wish to add a few words on the only other case which seems to me fairly arguable, viz., a wife's niece, as being one degree farther off and not expressly prohibited. But, on the other hand, there is nothing like verse 18 to exclude her from the general analogies, and experience proves that there is no demand for it. And further still, wives' nieces are generally regarded as much more like your own than sisters-in-law

are like sisters. Therefore I see no reason for fearing that demand in consequence of granting this. And after all, the experience that a mere positive law fails in making anything except offenders in great numbers is the strongest argument to people of common sense for not continuing the unequal fight and committing tyranny for nothing but the abstract pleasure of it. But as they are so fond of denouncing us as secret conspirators for making an unscriptural distinction between affinity and consanguinity they had better remember who made it first—the Bishops who made the Act of 1835, absolutely validating all the existing affinity marriages, and not those of consanguinity, the very thing which the noble Earl is so angry with this Bill for doing to these marriages alone. Apparently he has never read the Act which he is so anxious to uphold. And now for a few words only on those existing marriages in which the parties have done all they could towards pledging themselves to each other for life, though this bishops' law says they may separate again when they please. I am not concerned to prove the exact number; but I saw quite enough years ago of ludicrous failure of the attempts to impeach the statistics which satisfied that most impartial and competent Commission, to pay any attention to the noble Earl's professed suspicion of the number of 1000 a year, which the Association vouches for. I could tell your Lordships some amusing stories of the refutations of former orators who pretended to have disproved those statistics either generally or in particular places, but it would take too much time, and they have been published often enough, and nothing turns on the exact number. So, as I must use some, I shall use that which I believe in. The prohibitionists always revile those 80,000 people, and often call them names, and the clergy do especially, and sometimes their children also, as has been published in newspapers and not denied. Of all the absurd charges, the absurdest is, that they are persons who will not restrain unlawful passions, and that there are plenty of other women they could marry if they would. Whether they are wrong or right in other ways, it is evident that such marriages are on the average less

due to passion than most. For they are nearly all due to the desire of widowers to get the best stepmother for the children, and on the part of the aunt, to stay in that character with them. Innumerable cases have been given of dying wives begging their husbands to do so, rather than expose their children to a strange stepmother. It is very easy to say that men can keep their sisters-in-law with them now without marrying them. First, that is very doubtful indeed, where they are young. And by laws of nature and of God it is better for "every man to have his own wife and every woman to have her own husband;" and if they are not allowed to have the one who is wanted for the children, they must either turn her out or do worse. Nor can they be certain of retaining her unless by something they consider marriage, though it legally is not. Our experience of large houses and facilities of all kinds are apt to mislead us about small ones. I do not know what right any of us have to say we do not believe the abundant evidence that has been continually poured in and published. I suspect very few prohibitionists even condescend to look at it—or any other evidence on that side. But I am not arguing that question, but simply what effect these 40,000 illegal or invalid unions ought to have on us as legislators. They may be wrong if you like, but we have the strongest evidence that the most religious and best people in the classes in which they take place, though they are not ours, do not think so, and that the parties suffer no social inconveniences from it. I was told by several dissenters two years ago that that is the reason why they have not agitated more, when I asked them why they did not, as they understand that art so well. They say it is almost entirely a social question, and they settle it by their own social judgment. Do you think you can stop that? If on the other hand you choose to condemn their so living together as a great sin, be it so. For the worse their sin is, and the more mischievous their example, leading more ignorant people to disregard the sanctity of marriage altogether, the more those have to answer for who cause all this, and turn these 80,000 people, who would otherwise be living irreproachably, into concubines

and paramours, either for the pleasure of maintaining what they call the law of the Church, or for the convenience of their own select society. I have disposed of all the noble Duke's array of authorities and ancient ways, except his "prophets." With all my efforts I can only think of one prophecy bearing on his case—"In the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to doctrines of devils, forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving"; exactly the two forms of asceticism most in favour with those who have called themselves the Church above all men, from the time when its corruptions began to this day. And all history shows that with them no moral sin is ever deemed so deadly as defying the law of the Church, whatever it may be in their opinion. I decline the responsibility of helping to fulfil that prophecy, and therefore I have always done my best to help this measure, though neither I nor anybody belonging to me has the smallest personal interest in it.

*THE EARL OF SELBORNE: My Lords, I do not think it is well that your Lordships should go to a division immediately after so long a speech from the noble and learned Lord without something at all events being said on the other side. To attempt to answer in detail all that has been said by him would take a week, but I think this is one of the cases where when debate is challenged the challenge should be accepted. The noble and learned Lord has gone over a very large field. That could not be done without much preparation; and a proper answer to all his points would require preparation too. I think it will be enough now to refer to certain points in the speech. I would caution your Lordships against being misled by the authority of the noble and learned Lord. He and I are very old antagonists on this matter, though not, on his side, in Parliament. I will merely say that in this matter the noble and learned Lord, able as he is in everything he does, wrote a pamphlet nearly forty years ago, in which he told the world that these marriages could be legally contracted by people going to Denmark or any other country where these marriages were permitted by the local law.

*LORD GRIMTHORPE: I gave the opinion as some much greater lawyers did before the decision of the Courts upon the question.

*THE EARL OF SELBORNE: Quite so, but when the question was raised in the case of *Brook v. Brook* and in other cases, the Judges all decided the other way, showing that the noble and learned Lord is not infallible. Then with regard to the authorities which he quoted. He quoted a passage, to which no exception was to be taken, except that it was irrelevant, from Bishop Jeremy Taylor; but in the very earliest debate which I remember in the House of Commons on this subject, in reply to a speech from another not less learned person, the late Lord Chief Justice Cockburn, I showed that the opinion of Jeremy Taylor was opposed to these marriages, and that he expounded and asserted the soundness of the principle of interpretation, according to which marriages with a deceased wife's sister are held to be prohibited by the Levitical Code. Take the particular instances of prohibition, you apply it *pari ratione* to cases where the relationships are equal, and *à fortiori* you apply it to cases which are actually within them, and to affinity within the same degrees as consanguinity. Marriage with a deceased wife's sister is prohibited for that reason. That was the opinion of Jeremy Taylor, and that is the foundation of our law upon the subject. I am not going through the Roman law, but, if I did refer to it, I should think that the law of the Christianized Romans on this subject would be entitled to receive even more deference from us than the law of the Pagan Romans which has been referred to. I am not going through that or the other laws to which the noble and learned Lord referred; but I can tell your Lordship this, that though he said the Council of Neo-Cesarea was the first which dealt with this subject, neither that Council nor the Council of Eliberis, nor any other Council, ever dealt with it as a new thing, but they were going upon the lines which all along the Church had adopted. It had never been shown that at any time in the Christian Church, from the beginning, there was any difference of opinion as to these marriages being within the

prohibited degree. We now live under the law laid down in the time of Henry VIII., not as to this particular degree of affinity only, but as to all the degrees. We have been living under that law for above 350 years, and that law is in every point the same as that which had been enforced before, except that the ecclesiastical prohibitions going beyond the Levitical degrees were then cut off, and dispensations were no longer allowed. If we are to have a marriage law, it should be on consistent principles. Surely, if we are to have marriage laws at all, it is not unreasonable to ask that they should be consistent in principle. If we are to sanction these marriages, I do not see how we can prohibit marriage with a deceased husband's brother, and still less with a wife's niece, which is a degree more remote. Your Lordships cannot assent to a Bill in which you can find no consistent principle or any principle at all except that of giving way to a certain amount of agitation and clamour. If that be so, and if your Lordships give way to that agitation, it will be totally impossible in reason and justice to resist the demand of any who may agitate for marriage with a deceased husband's brother or a wife's niece. The noble Duke said that the Levitical Law is no more binding upon us in regard to this matter than it is with regard to eating certain meats. The noble Duke draws a very arbitrary line; but I should like to know how we are to meet the demand of the numbers of persons who may come forward and ask that all the degrees of affinity, and some of consanguinity, may be swept away; saying, "We do not think the Levitical Law is binding upon us." If you appeal to Germany, and other countries where these marriages are allowed you will find that they also allow marriage within certain degrees of consanguinity without dispensation. I think we are entitled to say we will take our stand upon the principles of the law as it is. We think it is a good thing for the purity of families and for the peace and happiness of families that the sister of the wife should be in law the sister of the husband and should be received both in her sister's lifetime and after her death as if she were really his sister. We are not convinced that this is in any true sense a poor

man's question. Of course those who wish for this measure endeavour to collect opinions everywhere; but I think those who investigate facts in their own neighbourhoods will not find that there are really any greater number of this particular kind of marriages in one class than in another. No doubt they exist, but in an infinitesimal ratio to the whole population. The men who does not want to marry their deceased wife's sisters, but who do want to retain the benefit of their sisterhood, would all suffer loss by this Bill. My Lords, one word more is all I will say with regard to this Bill. It has a retrospective effect. It says that all marriages of this kind solemnized during the last 50 years shall no longer be void or voidable. It is contemplated by this Act of Parliament that all persons who have been breaking the law with their eyes open and not by mere mistake shall be treated as if they had always been validly married; and that, whether they like it or not. Those even who may have changed their minds, and have lived for any number of years apart from each other, are to be compulsorily married by this Bill, unless they have in the meantime made some other marriage. I cannot but say, my Lords, that while I regret very much being obliged to stand opposed to the comparatively inconsiderable number of persons who may desire to do what the law does not permit, I think I should be setting a very bad example and giving encouragement to wholesale breaches of the law upon all sorts of subjects if I voted for the second reading of the Bill; and I most strongly suspect that if the retrospective effect of the Bill were omitted from it, its promoters would not care very much about what would remain.

LORD HERSCHELL: My Lords, I only desire to say, in commenting upon the remarks which the noble Lord has just made, it strikes me that if the only obstacle to any marriage between relatives, however nearly related, is a belief in the perpetual obligation of the Levitical Law, it appears to me that our marriage law is in a very perilous condition. It has always seemed to me that there is an insuperable obstacle to saying that this is opposed to the Levitical Law. If we are entitled to say that certain provisions of the Levitical

Law with reference to marriage are Divine commands of perpetual obligation, by what right can we reject other provisions of that law which are equally distinct and clear, and to say that they are not Divine commands of perpetual obligation? The Levitical Law enjoins marriage with a deceased husband's brother. If you say that in this particular respect it is binding, what right have you to say that that command shall not be followed? It appears to me it is impossible to draw that distinction unless you can point to something in the Book of Leviticus itself which justifies it. My Lords, it seems to me that if you once break away from what is established to be the Levitical Law with regard to this subject you must break away from it in regard to others, although those who might be presumed to know something of the Book of Leviticus deny that it is the Levitical Law. Where are you to stop? On one occasion a Jewish Member of the other House, now unhappily dead, when speaking on this subject, and referring to the eloquence and noble diction devoted to it, said he had been gratified at the eloquent tribute paid to his race, but he thought they might have credited the Jews with being able to interpret their own Scriptures. My Lords, when we are dealing with this question of the Book of Leviticus I think we are bound in no way by authority if it is said that such marriages are prohibited; and even if it were clear that that is the case, by what right are we to be told that these are obligations upon us to-day if these other obligations in respect to marriage are not to be equally binding upon us? With regard to this particular kind of marriage, I believe that the feeling of the vast majority of our countrymen is that there is nothing wrong about it at all. They cannot see it to be wrong or feel it to be wrong. With all the eloquence of the whole bench of Bishops they cannot hold it to be wrong. If that is so my Lords, what then? Why is it not the case that you are to follow the other obligation? If you permit one kind of marriage, you must permit it in all cases, whatever the affinity or consanguinity. I would appeal to what was said by the noble Marquess opposite, only two or three days ago, when another measure was put forward, that that is not the way we deal with Legislation in this country, but we deal with

a particular subject matter when it is pressed forward, and leave the consequences to take care of themselves. I cannot help feeling that if this particular marriage is one about which a vast number of people are concerned, as undoubtedly they are, they will see, from the very fact that a distinction is drawn between this marriage and others, there is sufficient assurance that you need not fear the change. In the case of the Bill before your Lordships' House the change does not necessarily involve the consequence which it is feared will follow. If it comes to be, as I believe it does come to be, if you cannot show any particular sanction for it, then, in a case of public advantage and benefit, I fail to see why your Lordships should not accede to the demand for this change. I believe the existing law to be mischievous and immoral in all respects, and I believe this measure would in no way change the relations of life, which now happily exist. But, my Lords, we are happily not without proof that the fears of the noble Lord are without foundation. We are not speaking of an experiment which has never been tried. We have had experience of this law in two cases of people and churches nearly akin to ours, of the same religion, and possessing the same traditions, and what do we see? Look at America, look at our Australian and other Colonies. The truth is, that these difficulties, these dangers that were suggested, have proved to be imaginary. We have not here merely that confidence in the future which is felt by either the advocates or the opponents of the measure. Here, happily, we have an appeal to the test of fact, and we can see that the evils which some anticipate have proved to be wholly unfounded. There have been many men, having suffered the most painful loss that can happen to man, with a family of children left motherless, who have thought that the best security for their own future happiness and the best guarantee of a mother's care for their motherless children, would be in such an union as this. The law steps in and prohibits it; compels the father, if he is to marry again, to marry some one other than the deceased wife's sister, whom he believes to be the best mother for the motherless children. My Lords, can it be doubted that there

are many cases where the wife's sister would be the best mother to the children? We are told this is not a poor man's case. But when you consider the condition of a man left with a family, often with most limited accommodation, it is almost impossible for him to have his wife's sister taking care of the children with any notions or sense of decency unless that woman becomes his wife. And what is the consequence? The sister does come to take care of the children; they do not marry, but they live unmarried as husband and wife, and there can be no doubt that that is done to a great extent in this country amongst the working classes. It is useless to tell us that in that case, the sister may come and take care of the children without marrying the husband. In such a case as that decency would render it almost, if not quite impossible. There are these distinct advantages in making this change in the law. Now what are the disadvantages that it is supposed would outweigh them? I desire to treat them with the utmost respect, although I confess I have a little difficulty in appreciating them. It is said that if you render it possible for a man to marry his wife's sister, the relation of brother and sister-in-law must cease to be what is—that there must grow up between them a barrier such as does not now exist. My Lords, there again I appeal to experience. I am informed by those who have lived in countries where this marriage is legalized that there is no foundation in fact for that apprehension, and that the relation of brother and sister-in-law is there just what it is here, and that there they can associate together as here without reproach, without fear, and without danger. A fear has been expressed lest the fact that a man could marry a wife's sister might induce improper affection between them during the wife's lifetime and be a cause of jealousy and of subsequent complications. Why are we to suppose such a thing? Is it really true that the mere fact that a man cannot, in the event of his wife's death marry her sister, is to be the obstacle, the barrier which prevents improper affection or desire growing up in the mind of either man or woman? I venture to say that it is inconceivable that it should be so. I have read in an

American paper which was dealing with this subject of the supposed pained feelings of the wife, owing to the state of mind of the husband towards her sister, the writer said—

"I cannot understand our English cousins. From the sort of language they use, it would almost seem as if they had married the wrong sister first."

I do not believe in this theory; I believe it is purely imaginary. Now I come to the objections to the Bill. The suggestion is that the wife's sister can make a home for and take care of the children, leaving the husband to marry somebody else if he wanted to. Now, I received a letter a day or two ago from a medical man whose sister-in-law had been a patient at his establishment, and he said that after a time their condition became intolerable. She came to reside with him. There was no intention or idea of his marrying her, but notwithstanding that, and notwithstanding the existence of the present law, he said he found that it was utterly impossible that they could continue to live together, on account of the views of the society by which they were surrounded. Therefore it is not true that under present circumstances the wife's sister can always be in the brother-in-law's house and taking care of her sister's children. But if the law were to change, why should the sister-in-law not still take care of the children and live in the brother-in-law's house? Why should there be any scandal? It is said society would not permit it. More shame, say I, for society that it should think any wrong. If the two can marry and do not, why should anybody suppose that there is a desire to marry or any desire existing between them which should make it wrong that they should live under the same roof? It seems to me that by permitting the marriage you take away the cause of offence and not add to it; you prevent the danger which must exist where marriage is impossible and where nevertheless the desire to marry remains. Therefore, so far from rendering it more difficult, I believe it would render it easier for the deceased wife's sister to take charge of the brother-in-law's house and his children than it is under the existing law. My Lords, I have dealt with the arguments which are urged against the Bill on the

assumption that there is no Divine Law which prohibits these marriages, or that, at all events, those who do not believe that it exists are as much entitled to their views, and to act upon their views, as are the minority who do think that it exists; and I observe that when the noble Earl alluded to this prohibition in early times, so early that you could not find the commencement of it, I did not hear him make any answer to the challenge of the noble Lord opposite—namely, point to the time when that prohibition existed in the Church without, at the same time, the existence, side by side with it, of other prohibitions which have been disregarded. It is not enough to say that this marriage was prohibited if other marriages which to-day are lawful were prohibited too. I do not want to detain your Lordships longer. I believe that this matter really is of very much greater importance than many of your Lordships think. The noble Earl treats it as a light matter—a matter concerning only a few people who have chosen to break the law. I might mention a somewhat significant fact with reference to the view taken by the laity of this matter. This is a marriage which the right reverend Prelates tell us is incestuous, and yet I hear that not so long very ago a Bench of Magistrates elected as their Chairman of Quarter Sessions one who had made a sister-in-law his wife, and I believe that affords a very good indication of the view generally taken by the Laity of this marriage as against the view taken by the clergy and many belonging to the Church. I feel that it would tend to morality, and not to immorality, to make this alteration in the law; it would tend to make the marriage bond more sacred, not less sacred, because nothing can more endanger the marriage bond than that any people should go through the ceremony of marriage and believe themselves and have multitudes of people believe that they are lawfully married and have the right to live together as man and wife—nothing, I say, can be more likely to seriously affect the sanctity of the marriage bond than that. I believe that by passing this law you will bring happiness to many, you will do injury to none; and I believe, still more than that, you will show that you are in harmony with the

opinions of the vast majority of your country.

THE DUKE OF ARGYLL: My Lords, I came down not only wholly unprepared to take any part in this debate, but with a fixed determination that I would avoid it if I could; but I am sure your Lordships will permit me for a few moments to refer to the persistent attacks which have been made upon certain arguments which I ventured to address to your Lordships now two years ago. I have not brought a copy of that speech with me. The report in *Hansard* is exceedingly imperfect. The speech was afterwards published by the Marriage Law Association, and if I had known that I should have been referred to in that manner, I should have taken care to have armed myself with a copy of that speech, but I know what I said sufficiently well to know this, that the noble and learned Lord opposite has unintentionally, I have no doubt, entirely misrepresented all the views that I advanced. I heard with amazement and with alarm, the argument of my noble and learned Lord who has just sat down, that unless we are to accept the whole of the Levitical Law we are to accept none of the morality of the Book of Leviticus.

LORD HERSCHELL: That was not what I said. If you are to accept certain traditions of the Levitical Law relating to marriage and degrees of marriage, I said that you were not entitled to reject others relating to the same subject matter.

THE DUKE OF ARGYLL: That is quite a different argument. That I quite admit to a certain extent. But, my Lords, the noble Lord and his friends have gone much further. They have argued generally that the Jewish Law with respect to marriage has no bearing on ours. My noble and learned Friend Lord Herschell knows that in the language of theology and in the language of history the Levitical Law has a definite meaning. It means the law of sacrifices, the ceremonial law of the Jewish people. No one has ever pretended that we are bound by that, or even by the principles which it involves. To extend the phrase "the Levitical Law" to all the rules of moral conduct which happen to be contained in the Book of Leviticus is a great violation of all historical and theological argument. The chapter in which the law of marriage is

laid down has nothing to do with the ceremonial law of the Jews. The whole contents of the chapter are different. Now, I will quote to my noble and learned Friend the words which, in my opinion, lay down a principle. There are, if I remember right, 12 specific prohibitions in that chapter with regard to marriage. Of these 12, no less than seven are marriages of affinity and not of consanguinity, and in one of them, where a man is prohibited from marrying his wife's aunt, the reason is, "For she is *thine* aunt." There is the principle laid down. It is quite true that that does not exhaust the whole chapter; but the Christian Church has always stood upon the general principle that affinity is equal to consanguinity. It is a rational and a reasonable principle, and if you break it down in one respect, you will have, sooner or later, to break it down in another. The noble and learned Lord referred to the Roman Law, and went back to very early times; but it is absurd to talk of the Roman Law on this subject of marriage. Marriage in the Roman sense was not marriage in our sense at all. We cannot draw any conclusion from such an illustration. My authority, with all deference to my noble and learned Friend, was a greater authority than his—my authority was Gibbon. I quoted to your Lordships a passage, a splendid passage, one of the most splendid passages in that august book, in which he described the principle that was laid down by the Code of Justinian, in which he says distinctly that, having before them all that had been said by the Christian Church, and all the feelings and traditions of antiquity, they laid down the principle that marriages of consanguinity should be prohibited. Then it will be remembered that I quoted from the Code Napoleon, and the noble and learned Lord has asked what is the use of quoting the Code Napoleon, because the Commission that decided that, was presided over by a certain person whose name was Napoleon, whose voice put into the scale weighed down all the other votes. I do not know whether the noble and learned Lord has done me the honour of reading my speech as published by the Marriage Law Association, but, if so, he will be aware that we have the minutes of the meeting of the

Council over which Napoleon presided. The fact is that it was a considerable and a serious debate, and although the noble and learned Lord sneered at Napoleon, nobody who has read history and who has read the memoirs of that time, will fail to know that even in civil and political matters Napoleon's was one of the keenest and most splendid of intellects. There was a long debate; the matter was argued upon both sides perfectly fairly before Napoleon, and as I quoted to your Lordships, although the noble and learned Lord took care not to refer to it, the debate was not decided merely by Napoleon's vote, but the Council was mainly influenced by the representative of the Minister of Justice or one of his colleagues, who informed the Council, that during the years in which that marriage had been legal all the Courts of Justice recorded the most significant results. These are the three historic cases to which I referred in the speech which I had the honour of addressing your Lordships three years ago, and I submit to your Lordships that the noble and learned Lord has not touched the authority one wit.

*THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY: I crave your Lordships' attention for a very few moments. I shall not attempt to enter into the details of such a speech as with great preparation was presented to your Lordships on this side, but I may venture to say for myself that wherever I was able to follow the authorities from Basil down to Archbishop Tait, they were not accurately represented. If an opportunity were given they could be traversed. I will not, therefore, go into details, but just re-state the two principles upon which I hitherto, the Bench of Bishops and the majority of this House in almost all instances, have taken our stand. I cannot say I follow the principles which the noble and learned Lord has attempted to lay down, but that may be because he objected to principles, as he told us. I would point out that, when in the early Councils decrees were passed, not affecting the marriage of clergy (which was a matter for themselves alone to deal with), but affecting the marriages of the laity, it was not done without the mind of the laity. It was centuries before the clergy had interests to serve growing out of restriction and dispen-

sation, centuries before they were dominating society, and none wish the days of domination back again; but studying the early period you will know well that the clergy did not stand alone. The Councils were not influenced by the clergy only. They represented the great wide sense of the Christian laity as well as that of the particular people who were called upon to enunciate their principles, and they so pronounced the two great principles which are before us to-day—the principles of Scripture and of Society. My Lords, we lean nothing at all upon single texts. More time would be necessary to deal with those texts than we can now give, but if we do not rest at all upon particular texts, we do rest upon the construction of the code of the chapter of Leviticus. If we place it before us, it is no mere mass of prohibitions; we see a distinct and fine line round that chapter, we see simply that it is a definition of the family. All Society is based upon the family, and there is no country that recognizes it more than our own, and that chapter of Leviticus defines who are the members of the family. It proceeds upon the principle that, in the matter of consanguinity, both the parties must be considered equal; and it builds the family upon this general precept—that no man is to marry anyone who is near of kin to him. And then, next after the immediate parents, sisters and niece, the first instance of a person who is near of kin is the brother's wife. That begins the line of kindred. That gives us the key; that gives the clue which is followed through the whole chapter which the noble and learned Lord (Lord Selborne) on the opposite side of the House so clearly described. It has been already said, and it is so important, that I think I may crave a moment to repeat it. Not each possible case of forbidden union is enumerated. It suffices if either the male step or the female step is mentioned. The other follows. The noble and learned Lord said that in that Code *Quod non vetitum est licitum est.* In that case a woman may marry her uncle, for it is only said that a man may not marry his aunt or his aunt-in-law. But that is just an example of the method of this Code. What our reformers set to work to do in the whole of their

reform was to bring back the Church and the law to the standard of Scripture, and what they had to do here was twofold. In bringing back the Marriage Law to the standard of the Scripture they removed merely ecclesiastical restrictions and they swept away ecclesiastical dispensations. Then the whole Code stood out scriptural and perfect, and it is that upon which we have lived ever since, just as the early centuries lived upon it before. When, however, the Code was spoken of as "Parker's Table," the noble and learned Lord who spoke so fully seems not to have been aware that it is shortly given in a State-paper of Cranmer's in A.D. 1536. Another noble learned and Lord opposite will, I have no doubt, let me make one remark upon that kind of marriage which he spoke of as an exception. The noble learned Lord inquired why if we were to obey Leviticus in one direction, we should not obey what he stated as the injunction that a man should marry his brother's widow. My Lords, that is a popular cavil, but the answer to it is simply this, that it does not command a man to marry his brother's widow. There was no marriage of the kind. The childless man's brother under the laws of property was told to take his brother's widow and raise up seed unto his brother. A child born of that union was not counted as a child of the man. He was not born in that wedlock. He was the child of the deceased man, he was the inheritor of the deceased man, and he inherited nothing from the man who performed that duty in obedience to the law and for that special purpose. Then there is one other question which the earlier decrees raised—namely, the difficulties which would be created in society. Those difficulties were experienced in early times, and I am convinced they would be in these. It is impossible to jest these difficulties away. A case came under my notice the other day of the benefit the English Law had been to a foreigner, who here had been able to get his wife's sister to bring up a large family of children with the utmost freedom and happiness in public and in private. The man said to me "if it had not been for that law I do not know how my children could have been brought up. There was no one else to whom I could have gone." This is not an isolated case. I say not

in hundreds but in thousands of families, the sisters-in-law, the wife's sister, is the only person who can bring up the children, and it would be impossible for her to enter the brother's house if it were felt that she was not only placing herself in the way of marriage, but of a lowering kind of marriage because it would be lowering in the minds of many of the best people amongst us. It is so now, and will never cease to be so. Most people have felt it to be opposed to the Divine law as I do for one, and most will think it an error against society. It is felt amongst large classes of society that it is a serious error to depart from the uniform practice of Christianity and of this England ever since we have had a Church and a State. There would be planted in the midst of us a class of people of whom it would be felt by most religious and most feeling persons that in the most important and greatest step of their lives *Quod factum fieri non debuit*.

On Question "That the word 'now' stand part of the Motion." The House Divided, Contents, 120; not-contents, 147.

REMOVAL OF WRECKS ACT (1877) AMENDMENT BILL (No 46).

House in Committee (according to order); Bill reported without Amendment; and to be read 3^d to-morrow.

COMMITTEE OF SELECTION FOR STANDING COMMITTEES.

Report from: That the Committee have added the Lord Leigh to the Standing Committee for Bills relating to Law, &c., for the consideration of the Reformatory Schools Bill [H.L.], read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

House adjourned at Eight o'clock
till To-morrow, a quarter
past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thursday, 9th May, 1889.

QUESTIONS.

DUNLEWY AGRICULTURAL NATIONAL SCHOOL.

MR. HENRY J. WILSON (Yorkshire, W.R., Holmfirth) asked the

The Archbishop of Canterbury

Solicitor General for Ireland whether he was aware that the farm of the Dunlewy Agricultural School, county Donegal, suffers much injury from being unfenced; whether an estimate for building a wall round it was prepared some years since: and whether the cost of building a stone wall round it was considered too great; and, if so, whether he would inquire as to the cost of a substantial wire fence for the protection of this model farm?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. Madden, University of Dublin): The Commissioners of National Education state that it has been reported that the school farm mentioned stands much in need of being enclosed. No detailed or formal statement has been prepared since 1875. The question of making a grant for the purpose was then under consideration. At that time a departmental inquiry was held, and the general question of surrounding all farms rented and managed by the Commissioners was under consideration. As a result of that inquiry, no grant was made in the case in question. The Commissioners are of opinion that the locality should provide such outlay as may be necessary for the fencing of the farm. The Commissioners, while continuing to pay all the rent, have handed over the land to local management. The teacher of the school, who was appointed by the manager, receives the farm produce and the result fees for the instruction of the pupils, in addition to his salary and free residence.

ROCHESTER PETTY SESSIONS.

MR. LAWSON (St. Pancras, W.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he was aware that, at the Rochester City Petty Sessions, on Saturday, the 13th April, when A. H. Filley, a prominent local Conservative, was summoned for assault and for using threats towards Robert Collins, the publisher of the *Rochester and Chatham Times*, a Liberal newspaper, no fewer than eleven magistrates were present on the Bench, although the usual attendance of justices is not more than three or four; whether the decision of the magistrates in the case was in accordance with the legal advice tendered them by their clerk; and whether, under these circumstances, he

will take measures to extend the jurisdiction of the present stipendiary magistrate at Chatham to the adjoining city of Rochester?

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (MR. MATTHEWS, Birmingham, E.): I am informed by the clerk to the Justices that the occasion referred to ten magistrates were present, the average attendance for the past twelve months being six. The magistrates' clerk advised the bench not on the merits of the case, but only on questions of law raised by defendant's solicitor, as to the power of the magistrates to exercise any discretion after hearing the evidence. On this point the magistrates granted a special case, which is now pending in a superior court. There is nothing in the case which appears to render necessary any extension of the jurisdiction of the Chatham Stipendiary, or to justify any action on my part.

THE ARMY ESTIMATES.

MR. HANBURY (Preston) asked the Secretary of State for War, whether his attention had been directed to the evidence given by the Controller and Auditor General before the Public Accounts Committee—

“The War Office is very much behind the Admiralty in the Information which they give to Parliament; they publish no programme showing distinctly what they are going to do with the money that is granted to them;”

Whether in addition to this defect in supplying information to Parliament in connection with its own Estimates for the manufacturing departments, the War Office also withholds such information with regard to the large Ordnance Vote now taken in the Navy Estimates, and the Auditor General is in consequence unable “to tell Parliament that the large Ordnance Vote of £1,385,000 was to furnish so many guns or rifles,” and that the money has been expended in so supplying them; and whether he will undertake that in future Parliament shall be able to “contrast between promise and performance in the Army Estimates,” as it will be able to do in those of the Admiralty?

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (MR. E. STANHOPE, Lincolnshire, Horncastle): If my hon. Friend will look at the Army Estimates for the pre-

sent year he will see that they now show, much more fully than ever before, the services for which the House is asked to Vote. Until we have experience of the working of the present change I am not prepared to insert further details.

MR. HANBURY: What I wanted to ask was this. Just as the Admiralty tell us now what ships they are going to build, and at the end of the year give us an opportunity of knowing if the programme has been carried out, will the Secretary for War tell us what guns he is going to manufacture, and give us an opportunity of knowing at the end of the year whether the War Office programme has been carried out?

*MR. E. STANHOPE: The War Office does now show the details of what is ordered, and therefore the Auditor General can form an opinion as to whether we have performed our promises.

THE NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy) asked the First Commissioner of Works, whether any site is being considered as suitable for the National Portrait Gallery; whether it is really proposed to run another street between the Albert Hall and the Imperial Institute, to pull down the Conservatory, let out the land for private houses, and make an end of the last of the open garden ground; and, whether he will try to arrange with the Commissioners of the Exhibition of 1881 that the still unoccupied spaces at South Kensington should be reserved for public purposes and for air and light between various public institutions built or to be built.

THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (MR. PLUNKET, University of Dublin): The answer to the first question is in the affirmative; and the subject of the rest of the hon. Gentleman's inquiries does not come within my authority.

SIR J. CAMPBELL: Can the right hon. Gentleman say what is the site being considered?

MR. PLUNKET: No, Sir, I cannot.

WESTERN AUSTRALIA.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, whether, now that the Bill to give Western Australia responsible government has been passed and is on

its way home, he will take care that the Returns showing how and by whom land is held in that colony are produced in time.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Baron H. DE WORMS, Liverpool, East Toxteth): Steps have been taken to procure the returns asked for by my hon. Friend the Member for Central Hull, and it is expected that they will be ready for presentation when the Western Australia Responsible Government Bill comes before the House.

THE PORTUGUESE DEBT.

SIR JOHN SWINBURNE (Staffordshire, Lichfield) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, if it is a fact that since about 1813-14, Portugal has owed the British Government a sum of about three millions sterling; and, if so, whether Portugal is paying interest on the said amount; and whether there is any reason why this sum, and the interest thereon, should not now be repaid.

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir J. FERGUSSON, Manchester, N.W.): The matter is one on which no action has been taken for a considerable period of years.

IRELAND—THE OLPHERT EVICTIONS.

MR. MACNEILL (Donegal, S.) asked the Secretary of State for War, whether it is a fact that, on the 15th May, 1888, a detachment of the King's Royal Rifles were brought from Enniskillen to Dunfanaghy, County Donegal, to quell disturbances arising from disputes between Mr. Wybrant Olphert and the tenantry of Gweedore and Falcarragh; whether the workhouse at Dunfanaghy has been converted into a temporary barrack for these troops; and, if so, what rent, if any, has been paid by the Government to the Poor Law Union for this accommodation; whether the said workhouse has been, from the 15th May, 1888, till the present time, occupied by military; and what has been the average number of soldiers and officers quartered there; whether a detachment of the King's Royal Rifles is now occupying the outhouses attached to Ballyconnell House, Falcarragh, the residence of Mr. Olphert, while their

commanding officers are residing in Ballyconnell House; what is the strength of this detachment; and what, if any, is the remuneration given to Mr. Olphert for thus supplying them with accommodation; and, is it usual for the forces of the Crown, called upon to preserve the public peace in a dispute between a landlord and his tenant, to be billeted in the house of the landlord?

*MR. E. STANHOPE: I am not able to give the information which the hon. Member asks for. I must ask him to be good enough to postpone the question.

MR. MACNEILL: What time does the hon. Gentleman want?

*MR. E. STANHOPE: I will ask the hon. Member to put down the question for Monday.

TAXATION OF CHARITIES.

SIR WILLIAM HOULDSWORTH (Manchester, N.W.) asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he is aware that the Commissioners of Income Tax have recently adopted a new principle of collection, by which a great number of charities throughout the country hitherto exempt have been rendered liable; and, if it is intended that this principle shall be applied generally.

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN, St. George's, Hanover Square): Owing to a recent decision in the Courts of Law as to the interpretation to be placed on the expression "charitable purposes" in the Income Tax Acts, certain institutions hitherto exempt can now no longer be so regarded. We have no alternative but to continue to administer the law in this respect in accordance with the decision of the Judges, so long as such decision remains unaltered.

SIR W. HOULDSWORTH: This is a very serious matter. May I ask my right hon. Friend if he will undertake that no steps will be taken to enforce payment until a decision has been given in the House of Lords?

*MR. GOSCHEN: I have no power to relieve any charity from a fixed payment imposed on it by law. There are, however, not many charities affected, although my hon. Friend has spoken as if there were a large number. I will make further inquiry in the matter?

MR. TOMLINSON (Preston): Is the matter now pending in the House of Lords?

*MR. GOSCHEN: Yes, I think so.

THE RIVER RIBBLE.

SIR UGHTRED KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH (Lancashire, N. E., Clitheroe) asked the President of the Local Government Board whether complaints have reached him that the main sewers of the Borough of Preston have for upwards of two years debouched into an old channel of the River Ribble, from which the tidal scour has been diverted by the Preston Corporation; that the open cesspool thus formed is a source of danger to the lives and health of the inhabitants; whether his attention had been called to the fact that the death rate of Preston is, as a rule, much above the average of the towns reported upon weekly by the Registrar General; whether a Memorial has been received by the Local Government Board from any ratepayers of Preston praying for the intervention of the Board; and what steps the Local Government Board intend to take in the matter.

MR. TOMLINSON: Before the right hon. Gentleman answers the question, I desire to put another question on the same subject. I have to ask whether it is only since the 13th of March, 1888, that the river Ribble has ceased to flow in its old bed; whether the Corporation of Preston have now a scheme for dealing comprehensively with the sewage of the town, and whether such scheme is now before the Local Government Board; whether the scheme provides for the construction of a channel, to be temporarily used for the discharge of sewage into the river at a point below the junction of the new diversion; whether the construction of this channel when sanctioned will be only the work of a few months; whether the following are the figures of the annual death rate—["Order."]

*MR. SPEAKER: I do not know what notice the hon. Member has given of the question, but the hon. Gentleman is reading a long series of questions, and there is a rule of the House that questions are not to be read.

MR. TOMLINSON: The question on the Paper refers to certain statements of fact, and I wish to ask my right hon. Friend as to certain other facts which,

I think, have a bearing on the matter. The question on the Paper is whether the right hon. Gentleman's attention has been called—["Order."]

*MR. SPEAKER: As the question of the hon. Member is a very long one, the hon. Gentleman would do best to put it on the Paper as a distinct question.

MR. TOMLINSON: If you so rule, Sir, I must bow, but I do think that in the interest of the borough which is attacked in the question of the hon. Member, it is desirable that I should have an opportunity of putting another view—["Order."]

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (MR. RITCHIE, Tower Hamlets, St. George's): It may be some consolation to my hon. Friend to know that if he had completed his question I should have been totally unable to answer it because he asks as to matters of detail, which require examination, and which I have not been able to inquire into. The answer to the question on the Paper is that I received on the 13th of April last a memorial from a ratepayer and owner of property in the borough of Preston containing statements to the effect given in the question. With regard to the death rate of Preston, I believe that it is the case that the rate of mortality in the borough is much above the average of the 28 towns.

MR. TOMLINSON: May I put the last paragraph of my question, which has reference to the temporary arrangements for dealing with the specific matter alluded to, and that is whether the Local Government Board will consider whether they can give their sanction to the construction of a temporary outfall without waiting for the confirmation of the entire scheme.

*MR. RITCHIE: When application is made to the Local Government Board for sanction to a loan to enable a Public Authority to carry out certain works, they hold an inquiry by one of their Inspectors, and a full opportunity is given at that inquiry for the views of all people interested to be expressed. No doubt all matters which have reference to the question, will be fully considered by the Inspector, and when we have his report and his recommendations it will be for us to consider what the decision of the Board should be.

COAL MINES REGULATION ACT 1887—
THE BARROW COLLIERIES.

MR. PICKARD (Yorkshire, W. R., Normanton) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether he has received a copy of a Resolution from the miners of Barrow Collieries, Barnsley, Yorkshire, in which they strongly protest against the action of the Coroner, Mr. Thomas Taylor, in refusing to allow Mr. Dyson, who was appointed by a full meeting of the miners employed at the Barrow Collieries to represent them at the Coroner's inquest held on the body of J. W. Hoyland, who was killed at the Barrow Collieries on the 25th of April, to act on behalf of the workmen, as laid down in the 8th sub-section of Section 48 of "The Coal Mines Regulation Act, 1887;" and, whether the Coroner was acting in accordance with the duties prescribed by Sub-section 8 of Section 48 of "The Coal Mines Regulation Act, 1887;" and, if not, what steps he proposes to take in the matter.

MR. MATTHEWS: I have received a copy of the Resolution referred to. The coroner informs me he did not refuse to allow Mr. Dyson to represent the miners at the inquest. He merely told him that he would not be allowed to ask any question that he liked, upon which Mr. Dyson left the Court. The Act distinctly prescribes that the power given to the miners' representative to attend and examine any witness is to be subject to the order of the coroner. The coroner says that he is not aware that he acted in this case in any manner different from that which he has occasionally felt it his duty to do with counsel and other professional gentlemen who appear before him. In these circumstances it does not appear that the coroner acted otherwise than in accordance with the Act.

IRELAND—POSTAL ACCOMMODATION
IN DUBLIN.

MR. CLANCY (Dublin Co., N.) asked the Postmaster General whether it is a fact that recently the principal inhabitants of the district of the Crumlin Road, in the county Dublin, petitioned for the establishment of a post office on the Crumlin Road; whether the application was refused on the grounds that the inhabitants had already sufficient

postal accommodation; and, whether he is aware that in this portion of the county of Dublin there is an area of about 28 square miles without any office for the purchase, by the public, of stamps or postal orders; and, if so, whether he will re-consider his decision in this case and take steps to grant the inhabitants of the district referred to the postal facilities asked for in their petition.

*THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (MR. RAIKES, University of Cambridge): I am not aware whether the area of the county of Dublin outside the city without a Post Office is accurately stated by the hon. Member, but I know that there is a Post Office where Stamps and Postal Orders can be purchased only about one-third of a mile from the part of the Crumlin Road, where a new post office was asked for, and where there is already a pillar box for the posting of letters. I understand that the district is thinly inhabited, and there is but little Postal business done in it; and after further careful consideration there appears to be no sufficient reason for altering the decision previously arrived at.

INLAND REVENUE OFFICERS AND THE
COUNTY COUNCILS.

MR. THOMAS ELLIS (Merionethshire) asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether Inland Revenue officers can, consistently with their duty to the Government, be members of county or town councils; and, whether they can act as collectors or receivers of tithe rent charge.

*MR. GOSCHEN: Inland Revenue officers are not allowed to become candidates for county councils—vide Treasury Minute of December, 1888. No objection is made to an Inland Revenue officer being appointed a town councillor, but he would not be permitted to act as a collector or receiver of tithe rent-charges.

THE ESTATE DUTY.

MR. ALLISON (Cumberland, Eskdale) asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether he has made any estimate as to the proportion in which personal and real estate will contribute the sum of £800,000 to be raised by the

Estate Duty in the present financial year; and, if so, whether he will state it to the House.

*MR. GOSCHEN: The estimate of £800,000 does not take into consideration the produce of settled property, either real or personal. It is entirely based on the probable amount of the new duty on personality passing by will. Realty will contribute nothing in the first year, because the new duty in the case of realty follows the Succession Duty in respect of the date of payment, and no portion of the Succession Duty is payable till 12 months after the successor comes into possession. In a full year the amount derived from realty is estimated at £116,000, as compared with £1,000,000 derived from personality passing by will, the taxable amount of such personality in the country being far larger than that of realty. It may be asked why, if no revenue is to be derived from realty in the present financial year, I put the tax upon realty at all. My answer is that, as it is necessary to call upon property to make a special contribution to the exigencies of national defence, all property must bear its share in that contribution, and no Minister could propose to place the extra burden on one form of property alone to the exclusion of others.

THE SCIENCE AND ART DEPARTMENT.

MR. JOHN KELLY (Camberwell, N.) asked the Secretary to the Treasury whether the authorities of the Science and Art Department are now employing clerks engaged by a firm of law stationers; whether this firm is paid 1s. an hour for the services of each such clerk, while the clerks themselves receive but 9d.; and, whether the system under which these clerks are mulcted in one-third for the actual sum paid for the work is to be continued?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (MR. JACKSON, Leeds, N.): Four copyists engaged by a firm of law stationers are being employed at South Kensington to meet a temporary press of work, for which the Civil Service Commissioners were unable to supply copyists. Their employment will be discontinued as soon as possible. The payment made per hour is 1s., but I have no cognizance of any arrangements between the clerks and the law stationers.

MR. J. KELLY: May I ask why if 1s. is paid by the Department only 9d. is paid to the *employés*? Will the hon. Gentleman make an inquiry into the facts of the case?

MR. JACKSON: I do not conceive that an inquiry would be advantageous. My hon. Friend knows quite well what the usual arrangement is. I do not think we can go behind the person we employ in order to ascertain what arrangements he makes with those he employs.

THE CENTRAL TELEGRAPH OFFICE

BARON FERDINAND DE ROTHSCCHILD (Buckinghamshire, Aylesbury) asked the Postmaster General whether he is aware of the fact that clerks at the Central Telegraph Office have been promoted from the first to the senior class, without any prolonged wait, who are not able to perform the superior duties of the office; whether this has resulted in the closing of the senior class to those officers who have long been waiting at the maximum of the first class, who not only have longer service now than the clerks previously promoted had at the time of their promotion, but are capable of, have been for years, and are now performing superior duties, and whose prospects of promotion are apparently nil; and, whether having regard to the fact that the "Fawcett Scheme" provides for payment for work solely according to its quality, he will take such steps as will secure the early promotion of those clerks on the first class who are performing superior duties?

*MR. RAIKES: To the first of the hon. Member's questions, the answer is in the negative. The alleged cause not existing, I do not well see how the result suggested can have followed. To the second question, therefore, the answer is also in the negative. The complements of the several classes having been fixed after careful consideration, I am not prepared to recommend any increase of them at present.

IRELAND—ULSTER ROYAL SCHOOL ENDOWMENT SCHEME.

MR. JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, whether he is aware that the

General Synod of the Church of Ireland has protested against the Revised Draft Scheme for the Ulster Royal School endowments, on the ground "that it gives the Roman Catholic Church a share of the endowments which the statistics of intermediate education prove to be excessive; that it assigns to the Church of Ireland a wholly inadequate representation on the proposed Local Boards, which will deal with Protestant endowments," and for other reasons: And, whether care will be taken that no scheme will be sanctioned that deprives the Protestants of Ulster of their existing rights and privileges?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (MR. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): I understand that the General Synod has passed certain Resolutions, including those quoted in the Question, and has submitted them, through a deputation, to the Educational Endowments Commission. The Draft Scheme for the future administration of the Ulster Royal School Endowments is still under the consideration of the Commissioners, who have announced their intention of appointing a public sitting for its discussion as soon as the time for sending in objections has expired, and, if possible, before the end of this month. When the Scheme is submitted to the Lord Lieutenant in Council it will be open to discussion upon the subject by any party interested, and afterwards either House of Parliament can express its opinion upon it, if the scheme should fail to provide justly for any existing rights or privileges. Of course the desire of the Government is that full justice should be done to all parties in the matter.

MR. CLANCY: Does not the Commission to which the right hon. Gentleman refers consist of a majority of Protestants?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I cannot answer that question.

DOWN DISTRICT LUNATIC ASYLUM.

MR. JOHNSTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, whether the 18 Governors of the Down District Lunatic Asylum under the new arrangement have yet been appointed by the Lord Lieutenant; and if so, whether their names will be shortly announced?

Mr. Johnston

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The 18 Governors for the Down District Lunatic Asylum have practically been selected, but their formal appointments are awaiting the selection of Governors for some of the other asylums. I am unable to say when the names will be announced, but there will be no unnecessary delay.

ARMY REGULATIONS—SANDHURST AND WOOLWICH.

DR. CAMERON (Glasgow, College) asked the Secretary of State for War, whether it is true that under the Army Orders issued 1st of April, containing the new regulations for admission to Sandhurst and Woolwich, after the end of next year, Latin has been one of the two compulsory languages in which a candidate is required to pass, and that the second language, French or German, has, as regards marks, been placed on a level with Greek: And whether the former value given to a colloquial knowledge of French or German has been reduced from 600 to 400 marks?

*MR. E. STANHOPE: Under the new regulations candidates for admission to Sandhurst and Woolwich will be required to pass in mathematics, Latin, and either French or German. All languages have been marked at the same value, because when an optional subject is marked with less marks than another it is found that it practically drops out of the course at schools. The proportional value given to a colloquial knowledge of French or German remains the same as before—namely, one-fifth of the marks allotted to the subject.

IRELAND—ARBITRATION IN LAND DISPUTES.

MR. CHANNING (Northamptonshire, E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the letter of Archbishop Walsh, suggesting that the principle of arbitration, which has resulted in a friendly settlement of the points in dispute between landlord and tenant on the Vandeleur Estate, should be adopted on the other estates in Ireland where there are questions in dispute between landlord and tenant, with a view to an equitable settlement of those questions; and, whether he will make representations to the landlords of estates where disputes are

pending, or take other steps to bring about a general adoption of the principle of arbitration?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: There may be cases of land disputes in Ireland which could with advantage be settled by special arbitration. But the law has provided various methods of dealing with controverted questions in respect of rent which are, no doubt, of more general application, and which appear to possess the confidence of the people. The propriety of employing arbitrators must depend upon the special circumstances in each case, and upon the character of the arbitrators selected.

MR. CAREW, M.P.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Fermanagh, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, if it is true that Mr. Carew's health is such that he has been visited by the Prisons' Board doctor; and, if so, whether he will give that gentleman's report concerning Mr. Carew's state at present?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The medical member of the Prisons' Board has visited Mr. Carew. His report shows as the result of his examinations that there is no evidence of any organic disease or any more serious derangement of health than dyspepsia and a weak circulation. It would be contrary to a well-established practice to lay a confidential report on the Table of the House. Dr. O'Farrell suggests that better air and exercise might be obtained at Galway, and I think it might be well to carry out the suggestion if the reasons which induced the prisoner to move to Kilmainham are at an end.

CONSULAR REPORTS.

MR. PICTON, (Leicester), asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, if he has observed the following words in No. 486, Diplomatic and Consular Reports on Trade and Finance:—

"As I mentioned last year, all these projected improvements here and elsewhere are for the purpose—aided, as far as France is concerned, by the *Surtaxe d'Entrepôt*—of drawing as much as possible of the trade now going to our ports to those on the Continent, a scheme, the realization of which would be greatly aided by the Channel Tunnel, should it ever be constructed." (P. 2.)

"The rise in the price of bread has not exceeded the ratio of that which has taken

place in wheat in the European markets. If this fact can be taken as a test of what will always occur as the result of the keen competition of the wheat growing countries of the world, it would appear as if a considerable Customs Revenue might be raised from a moderate duty on wheat, without the consumer in any way suffering thereby." (P. 4):

And, whether, inasmuch as the original purpose of these Consular Reports was simply the collecting of facts, he will discourage any tendency to make such facts the basis of the writer's inferences affecting Party politics in this Country?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: In these Reports controversial argument is discouraged, and, if imported, is generally eliminated. The passages quoted hardly appeared to the Secretary of State, to go beyond fair comment upon the facts reported.

THE INDUSTRIAL RESOURCES OF IRELAND.

MR. W. A. MACDONALD (Queen's County, Ossory) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Government have abandoned their policy of developing the industrial resources of Ireland; and, if not, when and in what manner they propose to give effect to that policy?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I propose, in the course of a very few days, to introduce the Bills relating to drainage and light railroads, to which I have already referred more than once in answer to questions.

WEIGHTS AND MEASURES—MILK.

MR. HUBBARD (Bucks, N.) asked the President of the Board of Trade if his attention has been drawn to the growing desire for a greater uniformity of measure in the sale of milk; and, if the Department could frame regulations under which all milks will be measured and stamped by local Inspectors of Weights and Measures with a scale of imperial gallons.

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Sir M. HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): The Board of Trade have no power under the existing law to frame such a regulation as the hon. Member refers to, but if the Bill now before the House passes in its present form, the Board will be in a position to require local authorities to frame regulations by which milk measures will have their

contents in imperial gallons ascertained by the Local Inspectors.

PORTUGAL AND THE ZAMBESI.

MR. BUCHANAN (Edinburgh, N.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign affairs, whether it is a fact that Senor Barros Gomes stated, in the Chamber of Deputies at Lisbon, that it was the intention of the Portuguese Government, as a consequence of Lieutenant Cardoso's expedition, to build a residence for a Portuguese official near the southern end of Lake Nyassa; whether Lieutenant Seal is now there, as representing the Portuguese Government, and whether Lieutenant Cardoso and another officer are shortly to be sent back to Nyassaland; and whether Her Majesty's Government will decline to recognize any assertion of Portuguese sovereignty in this region, and prevent its annexation by Portugal?

DR. CAMERON also asked, whether the Portuguese Minister for Foreign Affairs was correctly reported by Reuter's Agency to have stated in the Chamber of Deputies on Saturday that "Portugal maintained her right to control the navigation of the Zambesi, and also the right to extend her influence over the territories which lay inland from her coast possessions," and "that these rights had been acknowledged by the Berlin Conference, and in particular by two Powers;" whether Her Majesty's Government admit the rights referred to have been acknowledged by the Berlin Conference as stated; and whether they acknowledge the existence of either right on the part of the Portuguese Government?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: I will reply to the question of the hon. Member for Glasgow along with this. Both the Reports quoted appear to be substantially correct. Her Majesty's Government have not disputed the right of Portugal to "control" the navigation of waters within her territories, but claim for their vessels the right to navigate the Zambesi so far as it is navigable; nor have they denied the right of Portugal to extend inland the area of her settlement and Government, but claim that British settlements shall not be disturbed by any act of the Portuguese in regions over which they have not hitherto exercised sovereignty or protectorate.

Sir M. Hicks Beach

THE SUBSIDY TO THE INTERNATIONAL CABLES COMPANY.

DR. CAMERON asked the Secretary to the Treasury, if he would state the capitalized present value of the subsidy of £8,100 a year for 20 years, proposed to be paid to the International Cables Company in respect of the Submarine Telegraph Contract (Halifax and Bermuda), a Motion for the approval of which stands in his name on the Paper; and, whether he intends to proceed with that Motion to-night?

MR. JACKSON: The hon. Member has not stated the rate of interest at which he thinks the capitalized value of the annuity referred to should be calculated and, therefore, I am unable to give him the information asked for, but a reference to Willich's Popular Tables will enable him to satisfy himself on the point. I intend to proceed with the Motion standing in my name to-night.

MALTA—MILITARY AND CIVILIANS.

MR. TOMLINSON (Preston): I beg to ask the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War, whether his attention has been called to the note on the recent drowning of a soldier at Malta, in the *Admiralty and Horse Guards Gazette* of April 13th, 1889, and particularly to the following passage—

"It is satisfactory to know that the supposed murderers are in custody; but this case is only another instance of the conduct of some of these Maltese gentry, and we fancy a little application of Lynch Law administered by the comrades of some of these victims of extortion would tend to mend matters."

And, whether any facts have come to his knowledge tending to show that the appearance of this note has tended to aggravate any ill-feeling which may exist between the military and civilians in Malta?

*MR. STANHOPE: My attention has been called to this article, and I utterly agree with my hon. Friend in reprobating most severely such an attempt to instigate the soldiers in Malta to justify a previous outrage by the commission of a later. Such language in a professional paper can scarcely fail to increase the ill-feeling which unfortunately exists, but I do not think that it actually caused the riots which took place on April 16th, as the article was only republished in Malta on the 18th.

THE BATTERING RAM AT FALCARRAGH.

MR. MAC NEILL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, whether he will permit an inspection of the battering ram, at present in the police barracks at Falcarragh, for the purpose of constructing a working model of that instrument?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I see no objection in adopting the suggestion of the hon. Gentleman. I believe he has already been allowed to see the ram.

MR. MAC NEILL: I wish Englishmen to see it; but I would ask the right hon. Gentleman whether, as there is so much mystery about the matter, he intends to take out a patent for the ram?

ROYAL COMMISSION ON MINING ROYALTIES.

MR. WILLIAM SINCLAIR (Falkirk, &c.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether the words "other minerals," used in the proposed terms of reference to the Royal Commission on Mining Royalties, will cover an inquiry into the Royalties payable on clay used for making brick or other manufacturing purposes; and, if not, will he amend the terms of reference so as to include all mineral substances, the raising or obtaining of which is made subject to a "Royalty" charge?

*THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH, Strand, Westminster): I am not aware that clay can be classed as a mineral, and, as I am of opinion that the Royal Commission on Mining Royalties will have a sufficiently onerous task without extending further the scope of their inquiry, I cannot consent to include clay for brick making in the reference to the Commission.

CIVIL ESTABLISHMENTS.

MR. JOHN KELLY: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he is in a position to state approximately when the recommendations of the Royal Commission on Civil Establishments, in so far as they have been accepted by Her Majesty's Government, will be submitted to the House for consideration; and, whether he will consider the desirability of giving effect to those recommendations from 20th December last, the date of the Treasury Minute

by which the system of duty pay was practically abolished?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I am not yet in a position to say when, having regard to the present state of business, the Government will be able to submit for the consideration of the House recommendations founded on the Reports of the Civil Establishments Commission, but no time shall be lost.

MR. J. KELLY: Will the recommendations be brought forward before Whitsuntide, or at least before the end of the Session?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I have every hope that that will be done in the course of the present Session and so as to give effect to the recommendations of the Royal Commission.

STANDING COMMITTEES.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether the Government propose to refer any and which of the Bills now before the House to Standing Committees, and are willing fairly to consider proposals of private Members in charge of Bills to refer those Bills to such Committees?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: Bills are not referred to Committees till after their Second Reading; and I am unable to state what Bills will or will not be referred to the Standing Committees.

SIR G. CAMPBELL: May I ask whether it is intended that the Bills of private Members should be referred to such Committees?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I do not think there is a strong feeling that private Members' Bills should be referred to Standing Committees.

ORDER OF BUSINESS.

MR. PETER McDONALD (Sligo, North): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury, whether, before fixing a day for the discussion of the Second Reading of the Intoxicating Liquors (Ireland) Bill, he will state whether he will afford facility for the Second Reading of the Land Law (Ireland) Acts Amendment Bill, the Counties and Boroughs (Ireland) Bill, the Piers and Harbours (Ireland) Bill, the Municipal Franchise (Ireland) Bill, the Poor Law Guardians (Ireland) Bill, and the National School Teachers (Ireland) Bill,

if they should not be reached on the days already named for Second Reading.

*Mr. W. H. SMITH: I am unable to give the hon. Member the pledge he desires.

COUNTS-OUT.

MR. G. A. CAVENDISH BENTINCK (Whitehaven): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he is aware that only two Members of the Government were in their places at 9 p.m. on Tuesday, when 39 Members were found to be present, and the House was counted; and whether he will produce any evidence or refer to any proceedings of the House to justify a contention that the Government are under no responsibility to assist in making a House on Tuesday evenings when the mornings have been appropriated by the Government?

*Mr. W. H. SMITH: I must refer my right hon. Friend to the answer I gave to him on the 7th inst., in reply to a somewhat similar question. The facts stated as to the count out on Tuesday are, I believe, correct, but I can only say that if hon. Members having Motions or Bills on the paper find that their proposals attract so little attention that it is impossible to make or keep a House, it cannot be expected that the Government, taking into consideration the vastly increased attendance to which hon. Members have already to submit in order that public business may be proceeded with, will exercise pressure on hon. Members to attend on occasions when business is not of great importance. My right hon. Friend challenges me to produce evidence in support of our decision. I, on my part, would ask him whether he can refer to any period when the calls on the time of Members of this House were so heavy as they are at present. If he is unable to do this, I hold that the position we have taken up on this question is a sound one.

MR. G. A. CAVENDISH BENTINCK: Will the right hon. Gentleman be good enough to answer the latter part of the question. Of course, the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian cheered the answer just given, because he always does his best to extinguish the rights of private Members.

Mr. Peter M. Donald

*Mr. W. H. SMITH: My right hon. Friend must accept my assertion of the universal practice of the House and of parties on both sides, unless he is prepared to adduce evidence of a contrary character.

MR. R. COOKE (Newington, W.): May I ask whether it is not a fact that there were hon. Members within the precincts amply sufficient to make a House?

*Mr. W. H. SMITH: I was not aware of the fact, but I think it is conclusive evidence that such hon. Members did not desire to take part in the discussion.

POOR LAW UNIONS—DANGEROUS DRUGS.

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether his attention has been drawn to the fact that last year upwards of 42 lbs. of chloroform-morphia was administered to the inmates of the Exeter Workhouse, and that it has been the practice to leave a certain quantity of this compound (undiluted) in other charge than that of the medical officer; whether he proposes to take any action in this particular instance; and, in any case, whether he will direct the Inspectors of his Department to inquire, as occasion may serve, into the conditions under which dangerous drugs are administered in Poor Law institutions?

*Mr. RITCHIE: I have communicated with the Guardians of the Exeter Union, and am informed by them that it is the fact that 42 lb. of chloroform-morphia were consumed at the workhouse during the past year. It appears that the medical officer, who has usually from 130 to 140 cases on his books, keeps the medicine in its original form in a locked cupboard, but that he leaves out a small quantity in a phial bottle for use by the nurses in cases of emergency. He does not consider that this practice is attended with danger. The Board are advised, however, that it is desirable that the tincture should only be given under such medical supervision as is possible, and they have informed the Guardians accordingly. It is the practice of the Board's Inspectors to call attention to any neglect of proper precautions in the use of dangerous drugs.

at a workhouse which may come under their notice.

THE SUGAR CONVENTION.

SIR LYON PLAYFAIR (Leeds, South): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, whether in stating that the Colonies approved of the Sugar Convention at the meeting of the Conference on 5th April, 1888, he alluded to the Draft Convention presented by himself on 19 December, 1887, or the final Convention, as altered by the negotiations, and signed 30th August, 1888: Whether the Draft Convention contained the severe penal Clause 7, or the prohibition to Colonies to place differential duties on beet sugar: And whether the Colonies have expressed their approval of the Convention in its final form; and if so whether he will furnish the House with the terms in which this approval has been given?

BARON H. DE WORMS: In answer to the right hon. Gentleman's question, I have to say that it is evident that I could not have submitted to the Colonies in December, 1887, the final convention, which only came into existence in August, 1888. At the close of the first session of the Conference in December, 1887, the Draft Convention was submitted to the Colonies together with the Minutes of all the meetings to that date. The Minutes of December 16 contain the proposal of the Spanish delegates relative to the penal clause afterwards, with some modifications adopted, and as I stated on April 5, India and all the Colonies with the exception of Tasmania and New South Wales, which had not then replied, accepted the Convention. After the Convention was signed on August 30, it, together with all the other Papers and Minutes, was sent to the Colonies, and no objection has since been raised by any of them.

SIR LYON PLAYFAIR: Do I rightly understand that no formal approval on the part of any of the Colonies has yet been received?

BARON H. DE WORMS: I can add nothing to the answer I have given, which is perfectly clear.

EGYPTIAN PRIVILEGED LOAN.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, whether in the event of its being determined to pay

off the Egyptian Privileged Loan, the Powers who are parties to the present arrangement will be consulted, with a view to obtaining their consent to placing another Privileged Loan at a cheaper rate, so that the greater part of the benefit may not go to the unified bondholders, promoted to the first place by the removal of the Privileged Loan, and the placing the new loan behind them?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: The Egyptian Government cannot raise a loan for the purpose of paying off the Privileged Debt without the consent of the Powers, but they have not yet communicated to the Powers their proposals with regard to the suggested loan, and its position with respect to other Egyptian stock.

KING JA JA.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Fermagh, N.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, whether he will give the names of the doctors who reported that King Ja Ja was not ill in St. Vincent; and whether in view of the King's statement, in a letter published in a London paper, that he has never been well in St. Vincent, the Government will allow him to visit England, if not, to return to Opobo?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: No medical report has been received relating to King Ja Ja, the officials apparently seeing no cause for anxiety. King Ja Ja cannot be permitted under present circumstances to leave St. Vincent.

MR. W. REDMOND: I wish to know whether, in view of the King's statement that he has suffered very seriously in health, the right hon. Gentleman will order a medical inspection to take place?

MR. JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.): Will the right hon. Gentleman consider the propriety of sending Dr. Kenny to make the examination?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: Ja Ja was commended to the care of the Governor, and the last reports received of him were that though he had complained of illness there did not appear to be anything the matter with him. Under these circumstances, I do not see that there is any cause for enquiry.

MR. W. REDMOND: I would ask whether the Governor is a doctor, and,

if not, whether he can state what doctor has enquired into the complaint made by Ja Ja?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: I do not know, but there will be no difficulty in making the enquiry.

ALLEGED OUTRAGES IN ARMENIA.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the attention of the Government has been called to the reports in the papers of outrages in Armenia; and whether the Government will take any steps towards putting a stop to these horrible occurrences, in view of the fact that England is empowered, under the Anglo-Turkish Convention of 1878, to interfere in behalf of good government in Armenia?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: I replied to a similar question on Tuesday. I can only repeat that Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople will not fail to represent at the Porte any occurrences of the kind which he may know to have taken place whenever by doing so he can hope to benefit the sufferers.

CHINESE EMIGRATION TO AUSTRALIA.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the Government are taking steps to conclude a Treaty with China on the subject of Chinese emigration to Australia, in accordance with the expressed views of the Australian people on the question?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: Her Majesty's Government are in communication, on the subject of Chinese emigration to Australia, with the Governments of Australia and New Zealand, and they hope shortly to be in a position to renew the negotiations with the Chinese Government which were commenced last year.

MR. W. REDMOND: Have the communications which were going on last year on the subject been broken off; and, if so, what was the reason?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: No, Sir, they were not broken off at all, but they had arrived at a stage when it was necessary to refer to the Colonial Governments, and the answers are only now beginning to come in.

Mr. W. Redmond

IRELAND—CONDITION OF DONEGAL.

MR. MACNEILL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in 1880, the Government, having regard to the exceptional distress prevailing in the district of Gweedore, were obliged to institute relief works such as road-making; whether in the same locality, in 1884, there was a partial famine, and 70 per cent of the Olphert tenantry receiving poor relief; whether, on account of the threat of Mr. Wybrant Olphert to evict 20 families receiving this relief for non-payment of rent, the arrears of rent and money for the defraying of the costs of legal proceedings were obtained by the charitable subscriptions of the public; whether W. L. Hicks, Esq., Local Government Board Inspector, has been recently investigating the cases of distress, with their accompanying circumstances; whether the Report and recommendations of Mr. Hicks will be laid upon the Table; and does he still adhere to his determination to take no special steps to relieve the distress in Gweedore and Falcarragh?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Loans appear to have been obtained under the Relief of Distress Act, 1880, for the purpose, among others, of roads within the Union of Dunfanaghy, in which the Gweedore district is situate. It also appears that in 1884 evictions took place on estates, one of which was that of Mr. Olphert, in the Gweedore district; that some of the tenants were reinstated as caretakers; and that, as regards those who had not been so reinstated, a proposal was made on their behalf to have the rents and costs due to Mr. Olphert paid or secured. I am not aware of the proportion of the tenantry then receiving poor relief, or whether the funds then proposed to be used in the settlement had been obtained by public subscription. The Local Government Inspector has recently made inquiry into the circumstances of the people in those parts of Donegal where destitution has been alleged to now exist. He reports, as regards Gweedore, that though there is poverty, as there always has been in the district, yet no exceptional destitution appears to prevail, and he draws attention to the fact that Dunfanaghy Union Workhouse was then almost

empty. It would be contrary to precedent to lay his Report upon the Table. There does not appear, so far as I can learn, to be any state of matters requiring special action at the present time.

THE LAND COMMISSION COURT— OLPHERT ESTATE CASES.

MR. MAC NEILL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, whether he is aware that not one of the 125 Notices by tenants on the Olphert Estate in Falcarragh and Gweedore, to fix a fair rent of their holdings, has come on for hearing, although all these Notices were served previous to the 1st November, 1887; and, whether he will be prepared to take any and what steps to expedite the hearing of cases in which the interests of the tenants are so vitally concerned?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: From the Report received from the Land Commissioners it appears that the applications to fix judicial rents from the Olphert Estate, received by them before the 1st November, 1887, and at the present outstanding, number not 125, as alleged in the question, but 82. All cases received from this estate up to the 31st of December, 1887, are on the list for hearing, which will be issued in a few days. It may be recollected that the landlord has offered 25 per cent reduction, on non-judicial rents, and that any tenant against whom proceedings in ejectment are brought, who has made application to have a fair rent fixed, can apply to the Court in which such proceedings are pending to obtain a stay of execution upon such terms as the Court may direct.

MR. MAC NEILL: May I ask whether the right hon. Gentleman is aware that some of the tenants who have lodged these notices have actually been evicted and that others are to be evicted next Monday?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am not aware of that.

TENANTS' HUTS AS BARRACKS.

MR. MAC NEILL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, whether he is aware that several mud hovels, from which tenants on the Olphert Estate, in Falcarragh, had been evicted, were occupied by Members of Royal Irish

Constabulary, by whom the hon. Member for South Donegal was informed on the 20th of April that the hovels were temporary barracks: How many of the evicted tenants' huts were so occupied as temporary barracks; and what were the terms of letting by Mr. Olphert of these cottages to the police, and who were the parties to the contract?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The Constabulary Authorities report that no mud hovels on the Olphert Estate, near Falcarragh, were, as is alleged in the question, occupied by the Royal Irish Constabulary as temporary barracks. Four good, substantial, evicted houses were taken as temporary barracks at a rent of 1s. per week. One of these houses was subsequently given up. The parties to the contract were Mr. Olphert and the District Inspector of the locality as representative of the constabulary.

LEVEL CROSSINGS.

MR. CLANCY (Dublin co.), on behalf of Mr. P. J. Power (Waterford, E.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade, whether he is aware that one of the principal approaches to the town of Atherstone (Warwickshire) is by a level crossing over the main line of the London and North Western Railway; and whether the Board of Trade has the power to compel the railway company to provide a safer approach; if not, whether, considering the accidents that have occurred at this crossing, the danger and inconvenience to the public of the present arrangement, and the number of fast trains passing Atherstone, the Board of Trade will represent to the company the advisability of providing a safer approach?

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: There is such a crossing as the hon. Member refers to; but, so far as I know, no accidents have occurred there. An accident did occur a short time ago at an occupation road crossing near; but the Board of Trade have no power to compel the company to deal with the matter.

MR. CLANCY: I was requested by my hon. Friend to state that he does not attribute any blame to the officials of the railway company.

MR. W. P. SINCLAIR (Falkirk, &c.): Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that several fatal accidents have occurred at a level crossing a few miles north of this.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: That is certainly not the crossing here. I am not aware of the facts the hon. Member refers to.

COUNTY REGISTERS.

MR. LEWIS (Anglesey): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board, whether he is aware that a great difficulty is felt by the clerks of the County Councils, in view of the great pressure to which they will be subjected in future by "The County Elections Act, 1888," in having to get the whole of the County Registers (including those of Parliamentary voters) prepared, printed, corrected, indexed, and bound between the 12th and 20th October; and, whether he cannot see his way, by legislation or otherwise, to extend the time allowed for the preparation and printing of such registers.

*MR. RITCHIE: I have already, in reply to other questions, stated the difficulty which will attend an alteration of the dates of the stages of registration, and the necessity in connection with the County Council elections, which are to be held on the same day as the municipal elections—viz., the 1st of November—that the registers should be completed not later than the 20th of October. I have also stated that I will endeavour, so far as possible, to arrange that the revision shall be promptly proceeded with by the Revising Barristers, so as to secure the completion of the revision at an earlier date than that permitted by the Act, and then to allow a longer interval for the printing, &c., of the registers. As the hon. Member is probably aware, a Bill has been introduced on this subject, and the measure will receive the careful consideration of the Government.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling, &c.): Can the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury give us any idea as to the time he expects to be able to proceed with the Scotch Local Government Bills, and whether the same course will be followed

as on their introduction, that is to say will they be discussed simultaneously, and whether such a procedure will be in accordance with the Rules of the House.

*MR. W. H. SMITH: It would be as well that this question should be put down. I may say, however, that we must take the Naval Defence Bill and the Budget Bill before proceeding with the Local Government (Scotland) Bills. I should wish to take them from day to day as soon as we get the important Bills I have mentioned out of the way.

MOTIONS.

PIER AND HARBOUR PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 3) BILL.

On Motion of Sir Michael Hicks Beach, Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under "The General Pier and Harbour Act, 1861," relating to Auchmithie, Balintore, Littlestone, Mostyn, and Sharpness, ordered to be brought in by Sir Michael Hicks Beach and Mr. Jackson.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 212.]

LAND DRAINAGE PROVISIONAL ORDER BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Stuart Wortley, Bill to confirm a Provisional Order under "The Land Drainage Act, 1861," relating to Goole Fields Improvements, situate in the Township of Goole, in the Parish of Snaith, of the County of York, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Stuart Wortley and Mr. Secretary Matthews.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 213.]

COURT OF SESSION AND BILL CHAMBER (SCOTLAND) CLERKS BILL.

On Motion of the Lord Advocate, Bill to regulate the number and duties of the Clerks of the Court of Session and Bill Chamber in Scotland; and for other purposes, ordered to be brought in by the Lord Advocate and Mr. Solicitor General for Scotland.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 214.]

WALTHAM ABBEY GUNPOWDER BILL (No. 273.)

Reported from the Select Committee with Minutes of Evidence; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 135.]

Bill re-committed to a Committee of the whole House for to-morrow.

WEIGHTS AND MEASURES [COSTS].

Committee to consider of authorizing the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of the costs incurred, and of the remuneration of the officer employed, in any local inquiry which may be held under the provisions of any Act of the present Session.

for amending the Law relating to Weights and Measures (Queen's Recommendation signified) to-morrow, at Two of the clock.

THE TRUCK ACT—PERSONAL EXPLANATION.

*SIR H. TYLER (Great Yarmouth): Last week, in the course of some remarks on the Home Office upon a Motion to reduce the salary of the Home Secretary, the junior Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh), as reported in the *Times*, made use of these words:—

"The Chairman of the Rhymney Iron Works, Wales, had boasted that it paid the company better to pay the fines that were inflicted and the expenses than to comply with the law."

There is not the slightest foundation for that statement; it is entirely and absolutely untrue. On the Wednesday after that statement was made I met the hon. Member and asked him what authority he had for it, and I told him that it was not true, on which he said that he had a justification for it in a statement sent to him by a Mr. Dixon, of Rhymney, and signed by Mr. Dixon and other gentlemen. I went down to Wales at the end of last week and saw Mr. Dixon, and he said that he had made no such statement; and that the only statement he had made, signed by himself and other gentlemen, was one which had been sent to the Home Office and also a copy of it to the hon. Member for Northampton, and that it contained no such allegation. I asked Mr. Dixon whether he could allow me to see the statement so forwarded, but he was not able to find his copy of it; and I also asked the hon. Member for Northampton to allow me to see it, but he declined to do so. I obtained, however, elsewhere a copy of the paper sent to the Home Office and the hon. Member—the only document of the sort sent by Mr. Dixon—and I find that it does not contain anything like the statement in question. But I have, further, positive proof that I never made such an unworthy boast. Every word which I have said at the meetings of the company has been taken down by a competent shorthand writer, and no such boast is to be found among them. I think, in such circumstances, I may fairly call upon the hon. Member either to justify or withdraw his statement. When I informed the hon. Member that I would bring the matter before the House to-day I re-

ceived a note which, as it seems to me to assume the form of a threat, I think I had better read to the House:—

"Mr. Bradlaugh presents his compliments to Sir H. W. Tyler, and begs to inform him that, on any explanation being made or statement offered in the House on Thursday, the Home Secretary will be asked to communicate to the House any reports made officially to the Home Office on alleged breaches of the Truck Act at Rhymney during the past 12 months."

The company will be quite prepared to meet, at the proper time and place, these further questions; but they do not affect the question whether I made the unworthy boast which I am alleged to have made and which I entirely deny.

*MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton): I can only say the statement I made was made on the authority of Mr. Dixon, of Rhymney, and I have a letter from Mr. Dixon, dated May 3rd, in reference to that. If the allegation that the hon. Member made the statement at a meeting of shareholders is denied by him, it would be my duty to accept that denial and not persist in the allegation; but when the hon. Member adds that the statement made by Mr. Dixon does not contain that allegation, it becomes my duty to read the following letter from Mr. Dixon, dated May 3rd:—

"Sir Henry Tyler called upon me last evening respecting a statement made in your speech in the House of Commons that the Chairman of the Rhymney Iron Company had boasted, at a shareholders' meeting, that he would rather pay fines than give up the Truck shop, and that you stated to him when he met you that the statement sent you, signed by Mr. Dixon and two other gentlemen in Rhymney, was your authority. As I have mislaid my copy, and cannot trust to memory as to the contents, I shall be glad if you would kindly favour me with a copy of it in order that I may know its exact wording."

I wrote at once to Mr. Dixon and to the hon. Member opposite stating that I would search for Mr. Dixon's letter, but that, as it contained other allegations as to breaches of the Truck Act by the Rhymney Company, I could not furnish him then with a copy. The letter I received a year and a half ago, and I have not yet found it. I am perfectly sure that I have it, as all my papers relating to the Truck Acts are tied up in one bundle. But I made the statement on written authority which was not the authority that was rendered to the Home Office. Unless Mr. Dixon

furnished a copy of his letter, I do not see how the hon. Member could have obtained it. As to the letter from myself, I did not know how far the hon. Member's personal explanation was intended to extend. The charge against him was also that he was now breaking the Truck Act, and I wanted, if the hon. Member had denied it, to prove that by the Reports of the Factory Inspectors. As far as the denial of words personally used is concerned, I am glad to accept—and I do accept—the disclaimer of the hon. Gentleman; but I justify myself to the House on the authority I have given and of Inspectors' Reports.

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE
(IRELAND) ACT, 1887 (PROCEEDINGS
AGAINST MEMBERS).

Return ordered—

"Containing (1) Names of all Members of the House of Commons proceeded against under 'The Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, 1887,' down to the 7th day of May, 1889; (2) The Section or Sections of the Act under which proceedings were taken; (3) The Date of the Hearing of the Case before the Magistrates; (4) The Result of the Trial; The Date of the Hearing of the Appeal in those Cases where the Defendant appealed; (6) The Result of the Appeal.

Name of the Member of Parliament.

Section of the Act under which proceedings were taken.

Date of Trial.

Result of Trial.

Date of Appeal.

Result of Appeal.

—(Mr. Alfred Pease.)

BANKRUPTCY (RECEIPTS AND
EXPENDITURE.)

Return ordered—

"Showing the Total Receipts and Expenditure on account of Bankruptcy Proceedings during the years ended the 31st day of March from 1870 to 1888."—(Mr. Chamberlain.)

WAYS AND MEANS.

Resolutions [2nd May] reported.

Resolution 1 (see page 995.)

Question proposed, "That the House will agree with the Committee in the said Resolution."

MR. GLADSTONE (Mid Lothian): The Chancellor of the Exchequer was kind enough to give time for the consideration of the Report, because at the

commencement of the previous debate, the House was not able to gather the full effect of the resolutions. It was only towards the close of the debate that we were able to understand their effect. With respect to the present resolution, I cannot say that our objection to it is weakened, and it will be the duty of myself and those who act with me to give effect to the opinion which we entertain. The Resolution is objectionable, inasmuch as it introduces fresh distinctions between realty and personalty to the disadvantage of personalty. I know that this is a matter which it is not very easy to deal with. But I think it will be for the convenience of the House, and will avoid all misapprehension, if we wait until we have the Bill in our hands before discussing the question and debating the matter either upon the Second Reading or in the Committee on the Bill. I observe that the Chancellor of the Exchequer has put down an amendment to the Resolution.

MR. PICTON: The right hon. Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. Gladstone) suggests that the discussion of the new distinction between Death Duties upon realty and those upon personalty should not be taken now, but there was an objection which I urged on a previous occasion which, I think, has not yet received adequate consideration. My objection is that the additional duty will press unequally and unfairly on people of small property, who by their labour and thrift have managed to save up more than £10,000, which is divided at their death among a family of children. Let me take the case of a shopkeeper in a small way of business in a provincial town, who, having one child, has managed to save up £9,500. When he dies the whole of his estate goes to his one child, paying only the ordinary Probate Duty of 3 per cent, the extra Probate Duty of 1 per cent not being charged. Take also the case of a professional man—say a clergyman—who by his living and by literary work has managed to save up £12,000, which has to be divided among six children. Each child, instead of receiving £2,000, will have the Probate Duty of 3 per cent deducted and the new duty of 1 per cent in addition, while the fortunate inheritor of the £9,500 will receive that sum without the additional tax being

deducted at all. It may be said that the 1 per cent upon £2,000 is not a very large sum, but when poor people, out of a small property, have to pay £80 instead of £60, they will feel inclined to make great complaints. I cannot help thinking that the Chancellor of the Exchequer might have avoided the difficulty if he had pressed a little further his principles of graduated taxation. If he had allowed divided estates of £10,000 to go without additional taxation, and had imposed a tax of 1 per cent upon estates to that amount which were inherited by one person, with an extra 1 per cent upon estates of £50,000, and a proportionate increase upon estates of £100,000 and upwards, I think the difficulty might have been met. I trust that the right hon. Gentleman will yet be able to avoid the injustice which his scheme now proposes to inflict, and which I can assure him is causing great irritation and grief to a large and respectable class of the community.

*MR. GOSCHEN: I quite appreciate the objection of the right hon. Gentleman opposite to discuss these questions now, and I agree that the best time for discussing them will be on the Second Reading or in Committee on the Bill. In reply to the hon. Member opposite I assure the House that graduation is not in the mind of the Government. The exemption is based on the same ground as exemptions in the case of small incomes. The hon. Member's suggestions might carry us much further than the hon. Member himself would desire. For example, a man might die worth £50,000 leaving ten children. £5,000 apiece would be but a comparatively small provision; but it does not follow that all the children would be in necessitous circumstances. These difficulties were only such as must occur wherever we have exemptions.

SIR W. HARCOURT (Derby): The Chancellor of the Exchequer put the case of a man dying and leaving an estate of £50,000 divided among ten children, or £5,000 each, and he says it would be unreasonable that those sums should not contribute to the Estate Duty. There is one question I should like to ask him, namely, whether if £50,000 were left in realty and divided among ten children so that each child should have £5,000, the children would

pay the new duty in the same manner as in the case of personalty?

*MR. GOSCHEN: The right hon. Gentleman's experience will suggest to him that the case he has supposed is a very rare and almost theoretic one. It is very rarely that such a real estate is divided up into five parts, or even into more than three parts.

SIR W. HARCOURT: Let me take the case of a man leaving five or six farms each worth about £5,000 to different persons. Would the duty then be paid in the same manner as in the case of personalty?

*MR. GOSCHEN: No, I admit that there is a difference between the two cases, and that difference I have previously endeavoured to explain. As the law stands in the case of succession to realty it is impossible to get at the total value of the *corpus*, and to treat it in the same way as the *corpus* of personalty. I admit that there is a certain amount of inequality in the matter, as well as in the case of settled personalty as compared with personalty that is not settled. The difficulty of getting at the total value of the *corpus* of realty is enormous.

SIR G. CAMPBELL: I am afraid that the right hon. Gentleman has not heard the last of his proposal to establish a system of graduated taxation. Although he disclaims having the idea of further graduation of taxation, he has put it in people's minds to think that if a man with an estate of £10,000 should pay one per cent, men with much larger estates should pay more. With regard to the distinction between personalty and realty, I confess that they are not things that I very well understand, but I think that something should be done to rectify the glaring inequality of requiring personalty of £10,000 to pay more than realty of the same amount.

*MR. GOSCHEN: I may point out to the hon. Gentleman that settled personalty stands on the same footing as realty; and the Amendment is to the effect that in the case of settled personalty the interest of each successor only and not the *corpus* is taxed.

SIR H. DAVEY (Stockton): I do not propose to discuss the Resolution at any length, at this moment, but I wish to point out that in my opinion the Chancellor of the Exchequer has exaggerated

the difficulty which would arise in ascertaining the *corpus* of a real estate. The right hon. Gentlemen proposes to put a duty of one per cent on the *corpus* of real estate that passes; and for that purpose he must ascertain the value of the *corpus*.

*MR. GOSCHEN: No, I only take the value of the succession. In the case of realty we tax the whole value of that which a man receives. In the case of personalty we take the value of the estate, but in the case of realty we cannot get at that, and must look to the value of each succession.

SIR H. DAVEY: I think I correctly understood the right hon. Gentleman, even without that explanation. What I want to point out is, that if an estate is left to one devisee, the whole value must be ascertained for the purpose of imposing the duty of one per cent upon it. Suppose a man leaves three estates and devises them to three devisees, the value of the three estates must be ascertained for the purpose of getting at the amount upon which the one per cent must be charged. Then what is the difficulty of ascertaining the value of the aggregate estate? Although I quite understand what the Chancellor of the Exchequer means, I cannot myself see the difficulty of adding together the total value of the items which constitute a man's real estate, where he leaves more than one, or where he divides his real estate into several parts.

MR. S. BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar): I trust that in the Bill of the Chancellor of the Exchequer he will show what the actual burden is in the case of personalty, and what it is in the case of realty. He has already specified the amounts that will be paid in each case, but it would be of advantage if we were furnished with a few details. I would, therefore, appeal to him to circulate some Paper which may supply us with information in this respect.

*MR. HALDANE (Haddington): The Act of 1853 recognized the principle of assessing the Succession Duty on the *corpus* of the estate in the case of Corporations, and so affords the Chancellor of the Exchequer a precedent for assessing realty in the same way as personalty. I wish also to point out that the new duty, as I apprehend, will be payable upon personalty wherever it is locally situated, even abroad, and is treated

constructively, as within the country, for the purpose of the Death Duties; whereas in the case of land that is never the case.

*MR. GOSCHEN: I will see what can be done in the matter, but I am not very hopeful about it, the subject being an extremely complicated one.

Resolution agreed to.

Resolution 2 (see page 996).

Question proposed, "That the House agree with the Resolution."

*SIR GEORGE TREVELYAN (Glasgow, Bridgeton): May I ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer a question arising out of Clause A? Now, I followed the Chancellor of the Exchequer's statement of the other day very carefully, but I was unable to understand how the "principal value" referred to in the Resolution is obtained. I have consulted an eminent lawyer on the point, but have received no light; and if the Chancellor of the Exchequer will explain, his words will probably have an important bearing on the discussion, which has been going on for the last quarter of an hour.

*MR. GOSCHEN: I propose to follow very closely the arrangement for ascertaining the principal value which was suggested by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Edinburgh in his Budget of 1855. The first step to take is to ascertain the annual value of the land, and this value is then capitalized, the number of years taken varying with the class of property. A larger number of years is taken for land than for houses, and for houses of a superior quality than for houses of an inferior quality. The Inland Revenue have to make these principal valuations for other purposes, and are quite familiar with the process. I can not give the exact words to be inserted in the Bill, but the right hon. Gentleman will see them tomorrow morning, when the Bill will be in the hands of Members. I now propose to move an Amendment which will clear up the differences which existed at the end of the last discussion. The Resolution as drawn would have placed the duty upon the entire value of the personal estate in the case of settled estate, instead of its being placed on the interest of each individual. It is desired that personalty and realty should be treated as far as possible in the same way, and the Amendment will

make the duty payable only on the interest of each successor in the case of settled personalty. This was my original intention in drafting the Resolution.

Amendment proposed.

"To leave out from 'of,' in line 2, to 'where,' in line 8, and inserting the words 'every succession chargeable with Duty under The Succession Duty Act, 1853,' upon the death of any person dying on or after the first day of June, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-nine, the following Duty (that is to say):"—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL: Are we to understand that the effect of this Resolution will be that settled property, whether real or personal, will have an advantage over other property? In the case of simple succession will the duty be levied on the whole property, and in the case of settled estate only on the value of each portion succeeded to? If so, it seems to me, that it will place a premium on entail.

MR. GOSCHEN: Settled property is not in the same position as property left absolutely, and therefore it should not be taxed to the same extent. A distinction in this respect has always been drawn in taxation. I think it is a fair argument which the hon. Member used, that persons may desire to escape the tax in the way he suggests; but I hold that the increase in the duty, is hardly sufficient to bring that about; at all events, the Government of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian did not think that such a distinction would be sufficient to increase the tendency towards entail when they proposed to increase the Succession Duty by putting 3 per cent on the principal value when property passed absolutely and on the life interest when the property was settled.

MR. PICTON: This alteration seems to me to aggravate the injustice that I complained of on the previous Resolution. Who are the people who usually come into settled or entailed personal property? It is not the lower class, but generally families of some consideration or distinction.

*MR. GOSCHEN: I do not wish to interrupt the hon. Gentleman, but marriage settlements, of the most humble character, will benefit by the alteration.

*MR. G. J. SHAW LEFEVRE (Bradford, Central): I should like the Chancellor of the Exchequer to say

whether or not I am right in this view of the case. Supposing a man gave £20,000 in a marriage settlement to a daughter on the understanding that the sum was to be equally divided among the children on the parent's death, the succession would only be paid if the portions exceeded £10,000.

*MR. GOSCHEN: Yes, such would be case. But there are hypothetical methods of avoiding the Death Duties in almost every direction. If persons act with the special object of escaping the Death Duties, and not as they generally act, it may be impossible to prevent their attaining their object. I think it is extremely difficult to shut the door against all such devices.

Resolution as amended agreed to.

Subsequent Resolutions (see page 1031) agreed to.

Ordered, That it be an instruction to the Gentlemen appointed to prepare and bring in a Bill upon the Resolutions reported from the Committee of Ways and Means on the 16th day of April, and then agreed to by the House, that they do make provision therein pursuant to the said Resolutions.

CUSTOMS AND INLAND REVENUE BILL.

"To grant certain Duties of Customs and Inland Revenue, to alter other Duties, and to amend the Laws relating to Customs and Inland Revenue," presented and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 215.]

WAYS AND MEANS.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee).

ESTATE DUTY—MIXED ESTATE UNDER WILL OR INTES-TACY.

Motion made and Question proposed,

"That where, in the case of any Probate or Letters of Administration granted in England or Ireland on or after the first day of June one thousand eight hundred and eighty-nine, of the estate and effects of any person deceased, or in the case of any Inventory of the estate and effects of any person deceased exhibited and recorded in Scotland on and after that day, the value of the estate and effects in respect whereof Duty is charged on the Affidavit or Inventory by Section twenty-seven of "The Customs and Inland Revenue Act, 1881," shall not exceed £10,000, but the deceased shall have been at the time of his death entitled to an absolute interest in any real property, or shall have had a general power to dispose of any real property, and shall have exercised such power by his Will, and the combined value of the said estate and affects and of the said real property exceeds £10,000, there shall be levied and paid to Her Majesty in respect

of the value of the said estate and effects a Duty of one pound for every full sum of £100, and for any fraction of £100 over any multiple of £100 of such value.

And, where the value of the succession of any person to any real property under the Will or Intestacy of a person dying on or after the first day of June one thousand eight hundred and eighty-nine, together with the value of any other benefit passing to him under such Will or Intestacy, exceeds £10,000, there shall be levied and paid to Her Majesty in respect of the value of such succession a Duty of One pound for every full sum of £100, and for any fraction of £100 over any multiple of £100 of such value.

The said Duties respectively are to be Stamp Duties, and the Duty in respect of the estate and effects is to be in addition to the Stamp Duties charged on the affidavit required from persons applying for Probate or Letters of Administration in England or Ireland, and on the Inventory exhibited and recorded in Scotland, but is not to be deemed to fall within the expression "Probate Duties," according to the meaning assigned to that expression by Section twenty-one of "The Local Government Act, 1888;" and the Duty in respect of a succession to real property is to be in addition to any Duty chargeable under "The Succession Duty Act, 1853," provided that Duty shall not be payable, in conformity with this Resolution, upon the interest of a successor in leaseholds in respect of the value whereof Duty has been charged on the affidavit or upon any succession upon the value whereof, by reason of the same exceeding £10,000, Duty is chargeable in conformity with the Resolution in relation to successions of a value exceeding that amount.

*Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE: Although I recognize the desire which the Chancellor of the Exchequer has shown to meet the objection which I ventured to point out on a previous occasion, yet I cannot think he has met the difficulty in a satisfactory way. In doing this, however, the right hon. Gentleman seems to have introduced further anomalies in the scheme. Supposing a man were to leave personalty and realty worth £9,000 each. Under the original scheme of the right hon. Gentleman I understood that neither of those amounts would pay the duty. The object of the right hon. Gentleman in the present Resolution is to provide that mixed estate should pay the full duty; so that if £9,000 worth of personalty and £9,000 worth of realty are left to the same individual he will have to pay 1 per cent on both items of property. But suppose the case of property so distributed being left, not to the same individual, but to two sons, the effect in this case would be that the son receiving the personalty would pay 1 per

cent and the son receiving the realty would pay nothing. That seems to me to be introducing a fresh anomaly. At present a son receiving £9,000 worth of personalty has to pay £270, while the son receiving £9,000 worth of realty would only pay £61. But under the new proposal of the right hon. Gentleman the son receiving £9,000 worth of personalty would have to pay £360, while the son receiving the same amount of realty would have to pay the original sum of £61.

*Mr. GOSCHEN: At what rate does the right hon. Gentleman calculate this?

*Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE: $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent on realty and 3 per cent on personalty.

*Mr. GOSCHEN: That is not right. It should be only $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent on personalty.

*Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE: But the charge is 3 per cent on personalty at present.

*Mr. GOSCHEN: The Imperial Tax is only $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent.

*Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE: I cannot draw a distinction between what is paid to the state and what to local taxation. My figures are based on what is paid in the aggregate; although the Chancellor of the Exchequer gives $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent to the local authorities, yet it pays substantially 3 per cent. Now under the new proposal the son who receives £9,000 personalty would pay £360 instead of £270, while the son receiving the realty would only have to pay £61. I venture to say that that is not a fair and equal distribution of these taxes. I could give many other illustrations to show what extraordinary anomalies will result from this different treatment of personalty and realty. Take the case of a man with an income of £1,000 a-year from land, and a personalty of £9,000. Suppose he leaves the personalty to one son, and the real estate to his widow for life and after her death to his eldest son for life; what will be the result? The realty which is practically worth £30,000 will pay nothing, while the personalty will have to pay 1 per cent. I believe that these figures cannot be disputed, and it only shows that the Chancellor of the Exchequer in his attempt to meet the difficulty of mixed estates has so drafted his Resolution that a large number of cases will arise in which an increased burden will fall on

personalty and not on realty; and when you come to consider that the personalty will probably be divided between several sons, while the realty goes to the eldest son in the entail then, I think, the inequality is still greater.

*MR. GOSCHEN: I must say I think that the right hon. Gentleman has not shown much gratitude after all that has been done. I told the right hon. Gentleman frankly that I was of opinion it was almost impossible to make a satisfactory proposal to meet the difficulty specified. You may attempt to equalize the duty, and you may charge land in order to bring it up to personal property, but even then you will defeat your own object, as you say I have defeated mine. This new proposal, however, will no doubt bring in a certain number of estates which otherwise would be exempt, and so far the right hon. Gentleman will admit that it will conduce to good by removing the inequality which at present exists. No scheme will be found to work quite satisfactorily where you attempt to add together two things of a totally different character. Whatever right hon. and hon. Gentlemen may say, personal property and land cannot be treated alike. I dispute the correctness of the right hon. Gentleman's figures. If it is insisted that the contribution of Probate Duty to local taxation shall be taken into account in this matter, then you are entitled to take into account on the other side the heavy burden which realty bears in the shape of rates. You must either take local and Imperial taxation together, or leave out local taxation on both sides when considering the burdens on property. I object to one particular tax being taken out of the account of local taxation and added to the burdens which are to rest on personalty for Imperial purposes.

SIR G. CAMPBELL: It seems to me that the effect of the first Resolution was to provide that no person should be charged if the combined estate of realty and personalty did not exceed £10,000. I regard the alleged impossibility of including in one valuation both the realty and the personalty as altogether a red-tape objection. In the United States all the property is lumped together, and I do not think that in realty there is such great difficulty in the matter.

*MR. GOSCHEN: The hon. Member will recollect that the whole *corpus* of an estate of £10,000 is charged already in the Resolution passed. This is a Supplementary Resolution to meet the difficulty which was pointed out at an earlier stage. I think that if the hon. Member had half an hour or an hour's conversation with any lawyer he would find that, whether red tape or not, the difficulties surrounding the treatment of realty on the same footing with personalty are extremely great.

SIR G. CAMPBELL: I want to know what is the effect on a combined estate exceeding £10,000.

*THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir R. WEBSTER, Isle of Wight): Suppose there is £9,000 of personalty and £5,000 of realty, the total estate being £14,000. That would have passed free from taxation and, as I understand it, under the Resolution already agreed to there would be paid 1 per cent on the £9,000 on the ground that the total estate was worth more than £10,000, and therefore, not one of the estates in respect of which the Chancellor of the Exchequer thinks there ought to be an exemption. In addition there would be such an amount of realty left that there would be 1 per cent paid on the succession.

MR. CALDWELL (Glasgow, St. Rollox): I must dispute the contention of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. You can no more say that, because a landlord receives the rent and pays the taxes out of the produce of the rent he pays the taxes, than you can say that if there be a lien on the property a landlord pays the duty. Suppose a man has £10,000 worth of property in a borough, and £10,000 of personalty. The heritable property probably yields him 4 per cent, and his personalty may not yield him 3 per cent. Now, upon what principle can it be said that the realty should be looked upon and treated differently in the case of Succession Duty to the personalty?

SIR G. CAMPBELL: I hardly understand the explanation the Attorney General has given; it seems to raise a most extraordinary anomaly. As I understand it if a man leaves £9,000 personalty, and £5,000 realty, total £14,000, he has to pay on the £9,000, but not upon the £14,000. I cannot conceive any possible reason why.

*SIR R. WEBSTER: The hon. Gentleman will remember that this difficulty arises from the limit of £10,000, and if the limit were swept away there would be no difficulty. I am afraid it will be always possible to point out anomalies, but that ought not to prevent us taking any step in the direction of removing an anomaly.

*MR. GOSCHEN: If hon. Members can suggest any method by which mixed estates shall pay in the same way as others, I shall be glad to consider it.

SIR G. CAMPBELL: As the right hon. Gentleman invites an Amendment which will remove this anomaly, I propose to omit the words "The said estate and effects," in order to insert the words "The whole property."

*MR. GOSCHEN: The hon. Gentleman will see that such an Amendment cannot possibly be accepted without seeing the full affect of it. Perhaps the hon. Gentleman will defer his proposal until Committee. Let me now point out, however, that the words, "The whole property" would have to be defined, which would be somewhat difficult.

*MR. H. H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton): The real point to be kept in view by the Chancellor of the Exchequer is that raised by the hon. Member for Leicester. I would suggest that when the Bill gets into Committee, the Government should assent to an Amendment which will provide that where any person under any will or settlement does not take combinedly—that is to say, out of both realty and personality—an interest amounting to £10,000 he should be entitled to claim a drawback or abatement from the estate.

*MR. GOSCHEN: I would point out again, so that false hopes may not be raised, why this suggestion cannot be adopted, and how, if it were, extremely wealthy people might claim exemption. A man may leave £60,000. He may have four children amply provided for, and if he leaves them legacies of £9,000 apiece probably a third of the duty will be lost. Then it would be necessary to impose fresh taxation, which might be as open to objection as the proposal now made.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: I am disposed to agree with the Chancellor of the Exchequer that the Amendment

suggested by my right hon. Friend would very seriously reduce the amount of the tax. But there is another way of meeting the difficulty, and that is by altering the system by which the duties are levied on realty.

Resolution agreed to; to be reported to-morrow at Two of the clock; Committee to sit again to-morrow.

SUPPLY—CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

CLASS II.

1. £82,388 to complete the sum for the Board of Trade.

SIR G. CAMPBELL: I desire to move the reduction of the Vote by £100, part of the salary of the President of the Board of Trade, in respect of what, I think, is the neglect of the right hon. Gentleman, and Her Majesty's Government, in not applying themselves to the great disturbance of trade, which, I think, is caused by the system of Trusts and syndicates which now prevails.

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (SIR M. HICKS BEACH): I rise to order. I venture to remind you, Sir, that on the Motion for going into Committee on the Civil Service Estimates generally, Mr. Speaker ruled a Motion by the hon. Gentleman, on this very subject, out of order as having no relation to any Vote in the Civil Service Estimates. I ask you whether the hon. Gentleman is in order in calling attention to the subject now.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Gentleman is exceeding very much the limits of the discussion of this Vote as his Motion does not relate to any part of the administrative duty of the President of the Board of Trade.

Vote agreed to.

2. £4, to complete the sum for the Bankruptcy Department of the Board of Trade.

*MR. H. H. FOWLER: I should like to know whether this £4 really represents the exact balance between the income and expenditure. There are a large number of items charged under this and other Votes, and, therefore, I should like it to be known whether the Bankruptcy Court is or is not completely self-supporting.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: A great deal of information on this subject is given in the Estimates, but I think a still better statement will be furnished to the House by the Return ordered yesterday upon the Motion of the right hon. Gentleman, the Member for West Birmingham.

Vote agreed to.

3. Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £35,374, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1890, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Charity Commission for England and Wales, including the Endowed Schools Department."

*MR. J. STUART (Shoreditch, Hoxton): I am glad the Charity Commissioners are about to send down a Commissioner to inquire into the local charities of Shoreditch. It is important to observe that such an inquiry has not been made since 1836, and that Mr. Walker, the vestry clerk, reports that since that time many alterations have taken place in the nature, value and application of the charities, and that at the present time there is no complete record of the charities. I understand, however, that the Webb's Charity, which is the principal charity in Shoreditch has been expressly excluded from the provisions of the Commissioners inquiry, as being one coming under the Endowed Schools Act. But there are points in respect to the charity which I think merit inquiry at the hands of the Charity Commissioners, and it is to urge upon them the necessity of inquiring into these points that I now rise. The Webb's Charity dates from as far back as 1661, when a certain Thomas Webb made a will devising his property to Christ's Hospital, for the purpose of maintaining six poor children at least from the parish of St. Leonards, Shoreditch. For a long time the property consisted of leases which had not fallen in, and about the end of the last century, there were three children being maintained by the Charity. In 1790, the Governors of Christ's Hospital refused to receive six children, but were compelled by the Court of Chancery to do so. Six children from that date have been maintained. In 1790 the annual income of the Charity was £130, but it has since

grown to £1,300. Still only six children from the parish of Shoreditch are maintained. Of course it costs more than £130 to maintain them, but the whole of the £1,300 is by no means absorbed in the maintenance of the children. The balance goes to the general fund of Christ's Hospital. That is a grievance to the parish of Shoreditch, one which is very keenly felt by the people, and which causes much recrimination. I would observe that it is no unfair claim of the parish of Shoreditch, because though the fund has increased ten times since 1790, the population has increased in proportion, the number of houses in 1790 were 3,000, they are now 15,000. But as there are an average of two families in each house the increase is ten fold.

THE CHAIRMAN: I am unable to make out how this is relative to the Vote. It does not appear that the Commission is in default.

*MR. J. STUART: The Commissioners have sent down a Commissioner to investigate the Trust, but they have omitted a certain part, and I am now urging that they ought not to omit that, and desire to give reasons for that. I am trying to show the claim of Shoreditch is a just one. But I have nearly finished my argument to show that the increase in population being equivalent to the increase in the value of the trust, we might fairly hope to get an increase in the number of children to be educated in Christ's Hospital. There is another point in respect to this charity which falls very immediately under the purview of the Charity Commissioners, and which this Commission ought to inquire into, and that is the method of selection of these children by the vestry of Shoreditch. I think some inquiry ought to be made as to what has been the method of selection of children of inhabitants of Shoreditch to receive the advantages of education in these schools. I hope I may have some reply from the representative of the Charity Commissioners in the House.

*MR. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith): I think I can explain shortly how the case stands. It is perfectly true that the land out of which this fund is provided is situated in Shoreditch, but the endowment is not applicable to Shoreditch parish, it forms part of Christ's Hospital endowments, subject to

one condition, that the Hospital shall educate a certain number of poor children from the parish of Shoreditch, and I believe for many years the number educated has been six. As the hon. Member is no doubt aware under the proposed Christ's Hospital scheme, it is proposed to continue that number. If the hon. Member has any complaint to make in regard to the number being insufficient, then that is a very proper complaint to make to the Privy Council, with whom the scheme now rests, or, indeed, it might be very proper ground for comment when the Christ's Hospital scheme comes before the House for deliberation. But I do not think the hon. Member has shown there is any good to be got from inquiry. We know all the facts in regard to the endowment which, as I say, belongs to Christ's Hospital, and as such, is actually being dealt with. With regard to the selection of the children, I may say that the Christ's Hospital scheme provides that in future these children are to be selected, not by the Vestry or the Churchwardens or any particular person, but are to be taken from among those educated at the public elementary schools of Shoreditch, by open competition. I might finally point out to the hon. Member that the case is almost identically the same as that of a Cambridge or Oxford College holding endowments in any particular locality. The sole condition under which Christ's Hospital is placed in respect to this is that it is to maintain six children coming from Shoreditch.

*MR. J. STUART: At least.

*MR. J. W. LOWTHER: Yes, six at least. If the hon. Member thinks that number is not sufficient, then it will be proper for him to raise that question in connection with the new scheme. If he thinks that legally speaking the Charity Commissioners have not properly dealt with the case, of course the proper method is to apply to the Privy Council. If he thinks that, morally, Shoreditch has a claim to more, then the proper time is if and when the Christ's Hospital scheme comes before the House.

*MR. JAMES STUART: May I ask has the point I have urged been before the Charity Commissioners? Has it in any sense been under consideration?

*MR. J. W. LOWTHER: Certainly the point has been considered carefully in the course of the proceedings, which have been somewhat long, that have led up to the framing of the Christ's Hospital Scheme, and a provision in that scheme deals with the education of six children.

*MR. JAMES STUART: Then the Charity Commissioners are satisfied with the proposal?

*MR. J. W. LOWTHER: Yes.

MR. A. H. DYKE ACLAND (York, W.R., Rotherham): Just a few words on the work of the Commissioners. They have lately begun a branch of work which is likely to prove very valuable if they get the assistance they ought to have. They have been able in one county in Wales to conduct an enquiry into existing charities, and they have already discovered certain charities which the Commissioners say are in immediate danger of being lost. It is perfectly clear that such inquiry is a most important matter, but it appears at present the Treasury is not able to give any encouragement for the development of the work. The Commissioners say they hope to make enquiry through South Wales, but at the same time they are disappointed by their failure to obtain the sanction of the Lords of the Treasury to the extension of the inquiries beyond the limits of a single county. I would like to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he recognizes the importance of these inquiries, and if so will the Treasury allow the work to proceed more rapidly than last year. Then, the Commissioners have made another new departure in the inspection of the working of the new schemes to see if the schemes are being properly carried out. The Commissioners say they have extended this inquiry to four counties and have discovered a variety of cases in which parts of the schemes were not being properly carried out. I think everybody must feel that if the Commission is to carry out its work properly it should have full power of inspection at least every three or four years to see that schemes are being properly carried out. From the Report of the Commissioners there appears some doubt whether they can make it a permanent part of their work, and I would ask the hon. Gentleman what he would

recommend in this direction. The Commissioners are empowered under a temporary Act, renewed from year to year. Their chief work has been the formulating of new schemes, and this is now drawing towards a close; but it appears there is permanent and useful work that might well fall to the Commissioners in looking after endowments to see that they are being properly worked, according to the schemes sanctioned, for there is no doubt there is a tendency among managers to drop out parts of a scheme with which they may have no sympathy. The assistance of the Commissioners in this way would be valued by all friends of secondary education, and I am sure that head masters especially would welcome such inspection. I trust that the Treasury will give encouragement to this work, making it effective and rapid throughout the country. There can be no doubt that here is a great want of a unified authority in questions of this kind, and until we have such, a great deal of the work of the Commissioners upon Endowed Schools will be wasted. We must all recognise the good work the Commissioners have done in London by encouraging the formation of groups of Polytechnic Institutions scattered throughout London. They have done this work admirably; avoiding the frittering away of large sums in petty schemes, they have framed a broad scheme, and managed to draw support from the liberal friends of education. I hope these Polytechnic Institutions may turn out successful, for education of a technical kind especially. But I have said before, and must say again, that it is of the first importance to secure properly trained teachers, and to this end the Normal School at South Kensington is of little use. At the proper time I shall point out, as I have pointed out before, that the state of this school is disgraceful, and until it is put into a proper state we shall not get the supply of teachers we require to make these Polytechnic Institutions as valuable as they ought to be.

MR. S. SMITH (Flintshire): I simply rise to support the request that the Commissioners may be encouraged to extend the inquiries they have commenced to all the endowments of Wales. Confined to one county, as the inquiry has been, the value of it has been shown.

Wales is a poor country, and has comparatively few educational endowments, the more necessary is it therefore that those we have should be fully availed of.

*MR. CHANNING (Northampton, E.): I take the opportunity of referring to the Pasture Charity at Belgrave, a suburb of Leicester, to which I have previously drawn attention. This is an old endowment which in its time was useful for a village of 300 or 400 inhabitants but has become wholly unsuitable for a large suburb of an increasing town, a suburb containing now from 12,000 to 15,000, largely artisan population. The terms of the new scheme were practically arranged before Christmas last, and with the exception of one or two points as to the future appointment of trustees, had the approval of those interested, and of the hon. Member for Leicester and the noble Lord the Member for the Melton Division who had, in conjunction with myself, brought the matter before the Commissioners. All the materials for a division were before the Commission a long time ago, and the people, I think, have reason to complain of the delay caused by one or two lesser points which should occasion no great difficulty. Will the hon. Gentleman opposite say when this matter is likely to be dealt with? The proposals include the conversion of some 40 acres of what is now pasture land into small allotments for the artisans of the suburb of Leicester, but this has been delayed for another year simply because a decision is delayed upon one or two points of comparatively small importance.

MAJOR RASCH (Essex, S.E.): I am sorry to trouble the Committee by moving a reduction of the Vote, but the point I desire to raise is of considerable interest to agricultural labourers in my constituency, and it affords a typical instance of the diversion of a fund towards objects in which this class have no interest. It concerns the agricultural labourers of Canewdon, in the South-East Division Essex. Application was made under the Act of 1887 for allotments, and not successfully, for the land was offered at £4 an acre. Now, the claim is that as there is a certain fund left for the benefit of agricultural labourers, they have a right that a certain portion of the money should be devoted to reducing the ex-

penses connected with allotment, and they applied through me to the Charity Commissioners with that object; but the Commissioners said they could do nothing in the matter, and met me with a *non possumus*. Money which used to be spent upon doles, coals, bread, &c., for the poor is now spent in payment of salaries, the purchase of books, and for other purposes in which the labourers have not the faintest interest. Under a scheme sanctioned by the Court of Chancery, the residue of the fund is to be spent upon the agricultural labourers; but I suppose I shall be reminded that, owing to the decline in the value of land in Essex, there is no residue, and also that the money is spent under an Act sanctioned by Parliament in 1852, and with which the Commissioners have nothing to do. But I venture to think we sit here to rescind and abrogate such obsolete schemes as have been passed almost entirely in the interests of the rich, and certainly to the prejudice of my poorer constituents. I venture to carry out my notice, and move the reduction of the Vote by £100.

Motion made, and question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £35,274, be granted for the said Service."—(*Major Rasch.*)

*MR. J. W. LOWTHER: Perhaps it will be for the convenience of the Committee if I answer my hon. and gallant Friend at once. He has correctly stated the facts, and correctly anticipated my answer. This matter does not rest with the Charity Commissioners at all. The scheme under which the Canewdon fund is administered was established by the Court of Chancery in 1852, and the income is appropriated to certain purposes, after which the residue is to be devoted to the interests of the agricultural labourers. A well is kept up, and I suppose that is not for the benefit of the rich. Then £70 is devoted to the salaries of the master and mistress of the school. The residue should go to the relief of the needy and indigent, but, as the hon. and gallant Member says, there has been no residue for a considerable time. If the hon. and gallant member wishes for an alteration of the scheme he should use his influence with the trustees of the charity and get them to apply for a new scheme. Until they make such an application to the

Charity Commissioners, the Commissioners are unable to do anything in the matter, however desirous they might be of assisting the views of the hon. and gallant Member.

MAJOR RASCH: After this answer I beg leave to withdraw my Motion.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Original question again proposed.

MR. F. S. POWELL (Wigan): I think a word of acknowledgment is due for the work of inspection the Commissioners have undertaken, and I am perfectly sure that if this work is carried out on a well-considered system, much benefit will arise from it. In too many cases, schemes are not fully carried out by the governing body, they being tempted to depart from the provisions laid down for their guidance, and carry out some favourite idea or policy of their own. I sincerely hope that the system will be carried out, and I may mention that it fulfils the recommendation of the Select Committee on the subject, which sat some two years since. I regret that there should be any hesitation on the part of the Treasury to sanction the work. After schemes have been settled with the greatest care and after the most careful inquiry, it is a great discouragement to find that still the benefit to the community is curtailed by mismanagement. I hope, however, that we shall have the advantage of the Commission being made permanent. It is most unfortunate, and limits the power for good, that the Commission should lead a doubtful and uncertain life, renewed year by year, and in the course of this or next Session I trust the Commission may be endowed with a permanent existence. I am sorry to see in this report some suggestions made as to parsimony on the part of the Exchequer, for I am sure that anything of the kind would be a fatal mistake. You are really gaining a pound where you are spending a penny or a shilling. My wish is that the Government should deal with the whole subject of the education of the people in a more liberal spirit. So far from gaining anything by being niggardly, they lose the opportunity of rendering their aid really acceptable to the community. I trust that some attention will be paid, if not now, at any rate in the future, to the remarks I have made. Let us have the Commis-

sion a permanent Commission, and let the Commissioners be encouraged by more liberal grants to go on with the good work they have so well begun. I believe that the reforms inaugurated in London, partly by the scheme for Christ's Hospital, and partly by the scheme of the City Parochial Charities, have been of the greatest advantage to the people who live in the Metropolis. Those who have benefited have been the poor and industrious among the labouring classes for whom these endowments were created by their Christian and benevolent founders.

*MR. H. H. FOWLER: I sympathize very much with the motives of the hon. Gentleman who has just addressed the Committee, but I must enter a protest against the recommendation he has made to the Government. I take this opportunity of asking the Secretary to the Treasury if he has had time to give some attention this year to the question I have brought before the House for several years past, and which, until it is dealt with, I shall certainly continue to bring before it—namely, the relative position of the taxpayers of the country and the cost of the Charity Commission. All Chancellors of the Exchequer, both Liberal and Conservative—Lord Beaconsfield, Lord Idlesleigh, the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. Gladstone), and Lord Sherbrooke—have agreed that it is absolutely wrong in principle to saddle the taxpayers of this country with the cost of working the Commission. I cast no imputation upon the ability of the Commission, when I maintain that those for whose benefit the work is done should pay the cost of doing it. The Commission will receive this year out of the public funds £48,000, against which there is a receipt of about £4,700. I know the question is one of great difficulty, but if the Government would entertain it and evince a determination to grapple with it, especially with the able assistance of the Chief Charity Commissioner, I have no doubt that every difficulty could be overcome. The charities exist for the benefit of certain localities and certain classes. They are in possession of enormous revenues. The Report of the Commission last year showed that there were between £11,000,000 and £12,000,000 sterling invested in

Consols. Lord Sherbrooke put the estimated income at something like £4,000,000 per annum. These funds ought to be under strict State control—strictly supervised and administered; and if they were, we should get all the educational advantages which the hon. Gentleman who has just sat down alluded to, and the charities themselves would be a greater national boon than they now are. But my point is this—that this enormous income should defray the £40,000 or £50,000 a year which represents the cost of supervision. I do not think anybody will say that I am wrong in principle. Nor will anybody who has studied the case deny the weight of authority is in favour of the position I am now urging. I wish to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he and the Chancellor of the Exchequer are able to do anything in fulfilment of the promises made to the House 12 months ago to make the charity funds themselves contribute.

*SIR J. SWINBURNE (Staffordshire, Lichfield): I wish to put a question to the hon. Member for the Penrith Division (Mr. J. W. Lowther). I wish to know whether the Charity Commissioners intend to continue the policy of setting aside the expressed desire of the inhabitants of a district in which a charity is situated for its representative administration. The Commissioners, where the inhabitants express a strong desire to elect a majority of the trustees, pay no regard to that desire, but continue to appoint a majority from London. Let me mention the case of the Charity at Colwich, in the County of Stafford. That Charity was mismanaged and the funds misappropriated in a most flagrant manner. The parishioners met together and investigated the whole case with the assistance of a gentleman sent down from the Charity Commission. A general scheme, in which all parties concurred, was come to and everybody expected that it would be carried out, when, to the astonishment of the parishioners, a scheme was sent down from London of an entirely different character, retaining as managers the very persons who had so grossly mismanaged the Charity in the past.

MR. W. JAMES (Gateshead): The point which has been raised by the right hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H.

H. Fowler) is a very important one, and I hope the Secretary to the Treasury will be able to give the Committee some information in regard to it. I wish to ask the hon. Member for the Penrith Division whether he can state when the appeal of the Governors of Christ's Hospital before the Privy Council is likely to be heard. The matter has now been going on for something like ten years.

*SIR L. PLAYFAIR (Leeds, S.): I wish to express, as Chairman of the Committee for examining the schemes of the School Commissioners, my warm appreciation of the experiment they have made. The House has always been exceedingly anxious that the public should be regularly informed as to the way in which the new endowed schools schemes of the Charity Commissioners are succeeding. The failure of the previous system was that the public had no information in regard to the working of the schemes, and we strongly pressed upon the Charity Commission the necessity of a thorough inspection. Until the charges are put upon the localities, as I trust they will be, I hope the Government will not be illiberal in allowing the scheme of inspection to be carried out, because without it the whole of the work of the Commissioners may be a failure. So far the schools have done their duty. They have welcomed the inspection and have agreed to carry out the suggestions which have been made to them, but unless they are watched they may lapse into indifference. I hope the Charity Commission will feel that Parliament fully appreciates the experiment, and, as it has been successful in these cases, I trust that it will be extended to the whole of the schools.

*MR. J. W. LOWTHER: Perhaps I had better reply now to the questions which have been put to me. First of all with regard to the questions of the hon. Member for Rotherham (Mr. A. Acland) I think that part of them ought to have been addressed to the Secretary to the Treasury. With regard to the continuation of the Welsh inquiry the matter rests entirely with the Treasury. The Charity Commissioners are perfectly satisfied with the progress that inquiry has made already, and they feel that its continuation would be as productive of good

results as hitherto. It may be of interest to know that from the latest accounts it appears that no less than 27 parishes in Denbighshire have been inquired into, and 148 charities have been investigated. Since the issue of the return, which is more than a month ago, more parishes have been inquired into, and still further practical results had been obtained. As to the administrative inspection of endowed schools, that work is still being continued by the Charity Commission. During last year schools in Lincolnshire, Devonshire, Staffordshire, and Northamptonshire were inspected; and orders have been given for the inspection this year of schools in Lancashire, Surrey, Sussex, Leicestershire, and Gloucestershire. If any hon. Member will look at the report issued from the Charity Commission, he will find the subject not only fully dealt with, but also some very valuable and interesting information with regard to the administrative inspection of schools.

MR. A. H. DYKE ACLAND: What steps are being taken to give permanent powers of inspection?

*MR. J. W. LOWTHER: That is a matter which rests with the Government to decide, and not with the Charity Commission. The general policy of making the Endowed Schools Act permanent is a matter which must necessarily rest with the Government, and I do not feel myself at liberty to make any proposal in regard to it. If I did it would simply come from one who has no power to give effect to his wishes. The delay which has occurred in carrying out the Belgrave scheme has arisen, I understand, from the fact that it has been necessary to make the land subject to the Allotments Act and to frame a scheme in order to bring it within the purview of that Act. Some progress has been made in the matter and I regret that it has not been more rapid. The hon. Baronet the Member for Lichfield (Sir J. Swinburne) has again brought forward the case of representative trustees. Last year I stated what had taken place in the Committee upstairs, which fully considered the hon. Member's Motion—namely, that representative trustees should always be in a majority; but the Committee reported against the proposal of the hon. Member, being of opinion that

it was impossible in all cases to constitute representative trustees a majority of the trust. As to the case which has been mentioned by the hon. Baronet, I believe that an Assistant Commissioner went down to Colwich. He met certain representatives of the parishioners there, and an agreement was come to by those then present as to the particular number of representative trustees to be appointed. But the Charity Commissioners, being responsible for the scheme, felt that they could not be bound by a decision which may have been a chance decision. [Sir J. SWINBURNE: No; this was no chance decision.] I do not say it was; only that a chance decision might be arrived at in a particular locality. The Commissioners are obliged to consider the representations which come to them from all quarters before finally determining the constitution to be adopted. In this case it was found that a body of trustees appointed in the manner suggested at the meeting to which the hon. Baronet has referred, would not have fairly represented some parts of the parish, and it was with the view of furthering the interests of certain outlying portions of the parish that the Commissioners in charge of the case altered the composition of the body of the trustees.

*SIR J. SWINBURNE: Everybody had full notice of the meeting, and could have appeared before the Commissioner. The case was thoroughly thrashed out on every side. Every interest and all classes had a full opportunity of representing their views. As I understood the report of the Committee upstairs, which sat upon the Charity Endowments, it was determined that there were only to be exceptional cases where the representative managers or trustees were not to be in a majority. The Commissioners, however, have reversed the whole thing, and have adopted, as a rule, what was to have been the exception only.

*MR. J. W. LOWTHER: I am sorry that I have not the Report with me, but I will be prepared with it next year if the hon. Member raises the same point again. So far as my memory serves me, in all cases a substantial share in the management has been given to representative trustees. The hon. Member for Gateshead (Mr. W. James) asks

me when the Christ's Hospital scheme will come before the Privy Council. I understand that the date of hearing the appeal has been fixed for the 28th inst. I understand that so far the Treasury has paid all the expenses during the years the City Parochial Charities Department has been at work. When the scheme for managing the City Parochial Charities comes into force, the Treasury will be repaid the money advanced. Mr. Anstie, the Commissioner, expects to be able to complete the scheme very shortly, and it will contain provisions for the repayment to the Treasury of the money advanced. The remarks of the right hon. Member for Wolverhampton rather require an answer from the Treasury than from myself. I think I have now answered all the questions that have been put to me.

*THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON, Leeds, N.): In reply to the right hon. Member for Wolverhampton, I regret to say that I cannot give him a very satisfactory answer to the question which he has put to me. The fact is that the Treasury have not had time to consider the subject, but I agree very much with what the right hon. Gentleman has said. No one knows better than himself that it is difficult to deal with such a question by means of legislation, but I think that the work which is done by the Charity Commission, and for which the charities would have to pay if they did it themselves, ought to be provided for by a charge on the various charities. The question will not be lost sight of by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and I hope that my right hon. Friend will soon be able to give his attention to it. As to the City Parochial Charities, I believe that at present there is a sum of £10,000 outstanding, and due to the Treasury. I think it would have been better if some provision had been made in the Act by which a portion of the money, at any rate, should have been handed over to the Treasury during the time the schemes were being worked out. There is, however, no provision of that kind in the Act, and not only is the Treasury paying all the cost, but it is losing interest upon the money advanced. It is expected that by the end of the year these schemes will be

completed and we hope that next year we shall be able to receive back the money which has been advanced.

MR. T. E. ELLIS (Merionethshire): I think the Committee generally will acknowledge that on the whole the reply of the hon. Member for the Penrith Division is very satisfactory, but I should like to ask the Government what reply they have to make to the two important questions which have been addressed to them. First as to the inspection of endowed schools. The interesting and valuable report of the Charity Commission shows that excellent work has been done. I hope that the Government will take some steps to render the Commission permanent, and to induce the Commissioners to extend this work of inspection to all the counties of England. I wish to know whether in next year's report a review cannot be published of the reports of the examiners sent to the Charity Commission every year. The inquiries into the Welsh charities have been begun with excellent results, and I should like to see the system extended, on two grounds—first, that the existing reports with regard to Welsh charities are very defective, and, secondly, that a need exists for precise and recent information regarding Welsh charities as an addition to effective legislation on the subject of intermediate education in Wales. For the last eight years, since 1881, the Charity Commissioners have not dealt with more than one charity throughout the whole of the 13 counties of Wales. They suspended their operations when the Departmental Commission was appointed, and they have not touched one endowed charity since, except the scheme discussed in the House before Easter. In England between 400 and 500 schemes have been passed by the Charity Commissioners, and the result has been that secondary education throughout England has been much extended and improved. It is deplorable, more than deplorable, it is criminal, that in Wales, where secondary education is very backward as compared with England, these eight years should have passed away without any attempt made to inquire into the charities of Wales, and especially of South Wales. I contend that at least four sub-Commissioners should be appointed, so that the work should be done immediately. There is nothing to be gained by delay, and every

advantage to be secured by immediate action. In their report the Charity Commissioners say that inquiries have already resulted in the due registration of charities hitherto unknown, and that their operations have sustained charities which otherwise would have been lost. These charities and doles in Wales disappear year after year, and I venture to appeal to the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury, that he will give us this year a promise that, at any rate, one Commissioner will be immediately appointed to inquire into the charities of South Wales. I will go further and ask that the Assistant Commissioner, as soon as he has finished in Denbighshire, will be sent to other counties in South Wales. The local authorities, I know, are taking steps to obtain as much information as possible, in order that the work of the Assistant Commissioner, when he comes, may be facilitated, and I think the words which appeared in the report of the Charity Commissioners that they have been disappointed by their failure to obtain the sanction of the Lords of the Treasury to have more Assistant Commissioners appointed should be considered.

*MR. JACKSON: Was that in last year's Report?

MR. T. E. ELLIS: In this year's Report. I admit that we had one Commission given to us to inquire into the Charities of North Wales, but I think the desire expressed that we should have at least two, one for North Wales and one for South Wales is one that might well have been granted. I do not wish to throw the whole blame on the Treasury. I think the Charity Commissioners themselves, in view of the fact that they have not spent one penny on South Wales for eight years, might spare some of their Assistant Commissioners to do the work for South Wales. Welsh education has suffered a great deal, and should not be permitted to suffer any longer. I would appeal to the Secretary to the Treasury to give us a promise in this matter—and we know that whenever he gives a pledge he carefully adheres to it. I would ask him to promise to bring pressure to bear on the Charity Commissioners to induce them to extend their very necessary and admittedly useful work in Wales.

*MR. JACKSON: I think the very high standard of good faith the hon. Member has been good enough to lay down for me—whether I deserve it or not—will be the best of evidences that I must be careful in making promises. As the hon. Member knows in pursuance of a pledge I formerly gave, certain inquiries have been made into the Welsh charities. A Commissioner has been appointed and investigations have been going on in the county of Denbigh. I do not know the details of what has been done, but I believe that 67 parishes have been inquired into, and in about half of them the inquiries have been completed in a way which has given great satisfaction. I ask, however, that the Treasury may be allowed to see the completion of the inquiries before the Department is pledged to additional expense. The work done by the Assistant Commissioners is extremely well done.

*MR. RATHBONE (Carnarvonshire, Arfon): The hon. Member's argument is rather inconsistent. He admits that the results of these inquiries have been very satisfactory.

*MR. JACKSON: No, I do not say that. I say I do not know what the results have been, but that some of them have given satisfaction.

*MR. RATHBONE: These Welsh charities have been neglected. Every year the Government delay the inquiry we are losing some of these charities, because many of them are of so small amount that if left alone they disappear altogether. They are not large prominent charities such as are many of those in England but they are exceedingly small and require careful watching. I hope the Secretary to the Treasury will be encouraged by the good result and great appreciation of what has been done to continue in the good course on which he has entered. We have at this moment before us a proposal for intermediate education in Wales, founded on these very charities, therefore for the very work we have now in hand we require these charities to be looked into. I do not think the fact that the matter has been left so long is a ground for further delay. On the contrary I regard it as a reason for pressing for something to be done.

MR. ABRAHAM (Glamorgan, Rhondda): I would further press on

the Secretary to the Treasury the necessity of extending the inquiry as to charities to South Wales. We have for a long time been unable to find out where the blame lies—whether with the Treasury or the Charity Commissioners; but whoever is responsible the fact is that Wales has always been neglected in these matters. We find from the Report of the Charity Commissioners that they are well inclined on this question, but that they have been disappointed, the Treasury having failed to supply them with the funds necessary to extend the inquiry to South Wales. I think there can be no doubt as to the result of the inquiry carried on so far. The Commissioners say—

"It was not until the end of the month of October last that the preliminary arrangements for the institution of a local inquiry into the charities of the County of Denbigh were completed, the holding of these inquiries being entrusted to a Commissioner especially appointed for the purpose, and possessing, among other qualifications, a competent knowledge of the Welsh language."

It is to be hoped that every Commissioner appointed to inquire into these Charities in Wales will have that qualification. The Commissioners further say—

"Inquiries into the Charities of 11 out of 66 parishes in the County of Denbigh have been held."

They also say—

"These inquiries thus conducted so far as they have at present proceeded, not only appear to justify the anticipations expressed in the Memorandum, but they have already resulted in the due registration of some charities hitherto unknown or imperfectly recorded, and in the taking by the Charity Commissioners of measures for the rescue of some charities that were in imminent danger of being lost."

We know that even in South Wales there are some charities in imminent danger of being lost, and I would press on the Government the point that some one may be at once appointed to carry on this inquiry in South Wales. South Wales is in very great need of education that can be supplied by these charities, and we hope that the Secretary to the Treasury will reconsider his position and give us immediate aid in the matter.

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.): I have to complain of the remissness of the Charity Commissioners in respect of one important charity, and I should like on the other hand as a

Metropolitan Member to commend them for the wise and liberal spirit which has characterized their action in connection with the City Parochial Charities. It seems likely that their efforts will issue in providing a complete system of recreational and educational institutions of which the people of the Metropolis may be justly proud. My complaint, however, refers to a different class of charities—namely, the prisons charities—a class of old trusts coming down from the middle ages and originally intended for the purpose of discharging poor debtors from prison and similar purposes now obsolete. The consequence is that the trustees are squandering and in many cases misapplying the income. A schedule of these charities was issued so long ago as 1878, showing a total income of £3,000, and in 1882 an Act was passed by Parliament giving power to the Charity Commissioners to frame new schemes. My complaint is that since the Act of 1882 the matter has been bandied about from pillar to post, represented on the one hand by the Charity Commissioners, and on the other by the Prison Commissioners, or in other words the Home Secretary. It would appear that there is some kind of friction or misunderstanding between the Prison Commissioners and the Charity Commissioners. In their last report the Prison Commissioners give a return of these charities. They show what has been done under the Act of 1882 as regards reappropriation. I will read one of these statements which may be taken as a sample of a large number. The statement I refer to relates to a Charity in the County of Chester, and it is made by a Prison Commissioner apparently by way of complaint. It says:

"The Secretary of State moved the Charity Commission on the 27th March, 1886, to make a new scheme, but no Report has yet been received."

That is apparently putting the Charity Commissioners on their mettle, and they appear to desire to throw the blame on the Home Secretary. In the last Report of the Charity Commissioners, only published a few weeks ago, they say—

"It was not until the month of April, 1886, that we had before us the application sent by the Home Secretary necessary to enable us to take proceedings for dealing generally with Prison Charities."

Now, I should like to obtain from the hon. Gentleman who represents the Charity Commissioners, or from the Home Secretary, some explanation of the delay which has occurred. The Commissioners say that in December, 1886, they submitted a draft scheme to the Secretary of State, and that, owing to the correspondence which took place, it was not until January, 1888, that they were finally enabled to complete a scheme. I think that those who are interested in the subject have a right to complain of the delay. It appears to me that under the Act of 1882 the responsibility lies with the Charity Commissioners, and therefore it is to their representative opposite that I address my appeal. The original beneficiaries were poor debtors. That particular form of benefit having become obsolete, I think the benefit ought now to be transferred to poor prisoners, and that the Charity Commissioners cannot find better almoners than the Discharged Prisoners' Aid Society. That society, if properly supervised and managed, could effect incalculable good by setting upon their feet again persons who may have once lapsed into crime. In order to obtain some explanation I will move the reduction of the Vote by £100.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £35,274, be granted for the said Service."—(*Mr. Pickersgill*)

**Mr. J. W. LOWTHER*: I am afraid I cannot give the hon. Member a very complete answer, as I was not aware to what particular subject he intended to address himself. I understand that the delay which occurred between 1882 and 1886 rests with the Home Office, and the only Gentleman who can explain the matter is the right hon. Member for Derby, who was at the Home Office the greater part of that period. The reason of the delay from 1886 to the present time, I understand, is that the Prison Commissioners and the Charity Commissioners tried to agree on one typical scheme which, with very little variation, would be applicable to a great number of the Prison Charities scattered over the country. It was owing to this scheme having to go backwards and forwards that delay arose. I am glad to be able to inform the hon. Member that a

scheme was finally agreed upon not very long ago, and since then the matter has been taken up by the Charity Commissioners, who have already completed two or three schemes drawn with the necessary modifications upon the lines of the typical scheme. In these cases, as, I believe, in all others, it was proposed that the funds should be handed over to the Discharged Prisoners' Aid Society, the trustees of the charities being, as a rule, the Visiting Committee of Justices of the respective prisons. I am afraid that is all the information I am able to give the hon. Member. If he desires further information on any particular point, and will put a question on the Paper, I shall be glad to supply him with whatever information I can obtain.

MR. AUSTIN (York, W. R., Osgoldcross): I desire to know when these funds are to be disbursed. Prisoners are being daily discharged without deriving any benefit from the charities, and we think the time has now arrived when some definite scheme should be agreed on, and poor prisoners should be benefited. The Charity Commissioners and the Home Office ought to deal with the funds with as little delay as possible.

*MR. CREMER (Shoreditch, Haggerston): For the last two or three years when this Vote has been under discussion, I have felt it to be my duty to call attention to the funds of St. Katharine's Hospital in the Regent's Park. We have recently seen in the Press that a scheme for St. Katharine's Hospital has been agreed upon, but unless I hear now that the existing scandal is about to be terminated, I shall vote with the Motion for a reduction of the Vote. This is one of the oldest charities in the Metropolis. It was originally on the site now occupied by the St. Katharine's Docks. When the St. Katharine's Dock Company was formed in 1826, they bought out the trustees of the Hospital, and they gave them, if I remember aright, £127,000 for the site which the Charity then occupied, and the new building was erected in Regent's Park. The Building is there still. A considerable amount of waste and extravagance took place in the building of the Hospital, and it practically had to be reconstructed, I believe, a few years

after it was built. It is governed by a Master who takes the largest possible amount of salary which he can manage to get out of it, for the very smallest amount of labour which he can perform. Some years ago this scandal had attained such magnitude that the Charity Commissioners inquired into it, and I have a Report dated 1866, from which, perhaps, the Committee will bear with me while I read one or two paragraphs. It is signed by Mr. Skirrow, a Charity Commissioner. He says, in regard to the Master, that upon his first appointment to the Mastership, he visited the Hospital four times a week—

“the brethren then being aged persons; but since that period his visits have been less frequent, as it has happened of late years that the brothers in residence are comparatively young, and upon them, therefore, devolves the more immediate charge of the Hospital. The Master attends the meeting of the Chapter, which, comparatively speaking, is a rare occurrence, but seldom or ever the chapel in which divine service is performed on Sundays or saint's days. He occasionally visits the Schools, but these are considered to be sufficiently superintended by the brothers and sisters in residence.”

Well, Sir, these are the onerous duties which the Master of the Hospital is expected to perform. It is, however, by no means clear whether he discharges to-day the very trifling duties which he discharged in 1866. The Commissioner himself, indicates that since then the duties have grown smaller by degrees and beautifully less. Now, the Committee will perhaps be surprised to hear, that for the discharging of such very trifling duties, the Master in residence receives the following emoluments:—In the first place, his stipend is £1,200 a-year. The fines have averaged in 27 years £228 6s. 4d.; income from Blackwall dividends, less property tax, £28 6s. 8d. Then there is the magnificent residence which is provided him in the park in which he does not reside, that park not being sufficiently aristocratic for him, his preference being for the aristocratic quarter of St. James. He lets the house and ground adjoining for the amount of £542 10s. per year. The total from salary and emoluments which the Master received was £1,999 2s. per year. I think I am justified in denouncing this as a scandal which ought long since to have been ended, and which would have been terminated years ago, if the funds had been appropriated to the education

of the poor ; but because they have been swallowed up in the manner which I have indicated, this monstrous scandal is allowed to continue in existence. Then, in addition, we have three brothers, who each receive £300 a-year from the charity, and a sum of £76 2s. 1d., of which I confess I do not know the meaning ; compensation for fees, £24 3s. 10d. ; Blackwall dividends, about which there is a mystery, "less property tax," £4 14s. 4d. Then the brothers have a house in which they do not live. They prefer to imitate their Master, and they let it at £100 a-year ; so that these three brothers have each £505 0s. 3d. a-year. They give little or nothing in return for that sum obtained from the endowments. Then there are three sisters, each of whom receives a stipend of £200 a-year and other emoluments of a similar character to those which I have just read—making £370 16s. 10d. They, like their brothers, do little or nothing for their money. A few boys and girls are fed, clothed, and educated out of this endowment, and they are paraded in the neighbourhood occasionally so that the public may be led to believe that there are some tangible benefits connected with the institution. There are also an organist, and some beadsmen and some beadswomen. Nobody can tell exactly what their duties are, and I believe there are sermons that have to be preached to somebody. Well Sir, the income for this endowment in 1866 amounted to £7,097, and at that time the Commissioners anticipated that ere long it would be gradually increased, and that it would reach £14,832. I want to know, first of all, what is the actual income of the endowment now, and how the money is expended ? Does the master still receive the same large sum for doing no work ? Do the brothers and sisters and beadsman and beadswomen continue to receive the sums which I have referred to ? Has any scheme been formulated by the Charity Commissioners ? Is anything likely to be done to bring about those reforms which in 1866 the Charity Commissioners said were absolutely necessary ; and in reference to which the School Board for London, in the early days of its existence, appointed a Committee of Inquiry. The Report of that Committee fully confirmed the statement of the

Charity Commissioners. Yet the Charity is still unreformed, and the abuses to which I have referred, I believe are still going on. I hope the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Lowther) will make it clear to the House that the Charity Commissioners at least have made an effort to put an end to this scandal, and to apply this endowment to some useful and beneficial purposes.

*MR. J. W. LOWTHER: I am afraid I shall not be able to satisfy the hon. Member. He seems to be labouring under a misapprehension as to the law. The Charity Commissioners have no power to initiate any change of administration in any charity the income of which is above £50, unless the trustees of the charity apply to the Commissioners for a new scheme.

*MR. CREMER: Am I to understand that unless the trustees of a charity request the interference of the Commissioners, the Commissioners have no power to interfere with a charity the income of which is above £50, unless the trustees apply to have a new scheme ?

*MR. J. W. LOWTHER: The hon. Member is perfectly correct. The case to which the hon. Member for Haggerston refers is a very exceptional one, because in this case Her Majesty is the patron of the Charity, and claims to exercise full jurisdiction. I am afraid that I can only give the hon. Gentleman the same answer as I gave him last year, namely, that Her Majesty was considering a scheme for the alteration of the administration of the Charity. I believe it is under Her Majesty's consideration now, but I can give the hon. Member no further information with regard to it. As to the Master's House, I may inform the hon. Member that it has been sold recently, and it is no longer in the power of the Master to let it. I am not able to give him the actual figures as to the amount of the endowment, but if the hon. Member will put a question on the Paper, I shall be very glad to have the matter looked into and give him the figures. The hon. Member quoted from a report which was made some 30 years ago by Mr. Skirrow. I might remind him that since that time rules were framed by Lord Cairns, acting of course for Her Majesty, and the Charity is at present under the rules of the Lord Chancellor of 1878.

*MR. CREMER: I am afraid I have misunderstood the hon. Gentleman, or else I have been in a lamentable state of ignorance for a long time with regard to the schemes which the Charity Commissioners from time to time propound. Two or three times in the course of this Session we have been called upon to consider schemes of reform, if you so please to term them, of certain endowments. These schemes were promoted by the Charity Commissioners, and certainly, unless the House has been misled, the statements made and the explanations given in reference to those proposals led us to believe that the incomes of those endowments were far above £50.

*MR. J. W. LOWTHER: These were endowed Schools Schemes, an entirely different branch, and originated under separate Acts.

*MR. CREMER: Then, perhaps, the hon. Gentleman will answer this question. Of course, the Charity Commissioners must have been perfectly aware of the state of the law to which the hon. Gentleman refers. The Report from which I quoted was not made 30 years ago but 22 years ago, and what I want to know is why the Charity Commissioners permitted one of their body to inquire and report, if they had no power to interfere. If the hon. Gentleman's interpretation of the law is correct, it was an absolute farce to inquire into an endowment over which they had no control and had no power of interference in the slightest degree. In the Report, from which I have already quoted, Mr. Skirrow says:—

“I have directed attention to the existing administration, and I have directed attention to several proposals submitted to them for adoption, and whatever the merits or demerits of such proposals may be, I certainly think that the age and the increasing resources of this institution should by competent authority be made productive of more extended benefit than they are at present.”

The Commissioners did not repudiate that Report by a member of their own body, and I think it goes far to water down—though I have no wish to deny it—the view which the hon. Gentleman has endeavoured to lay before us of the powers and duties of the Commissioners. I am surprised the hon. Gentleman has not given a definite answer to the questions which I just now addressed to

him and which I have asked in previous years. Unless the Charity Commissioners are prepared to take some steps, and to give some clear and definite promise to the country that something shall be done, steps will have to be taken to expose the existence of this scandal, for I consider it very little short of a scandal, and that it fully deserves the language which I have applied to it.

*MR. J. W. LOWTHER: The hon. Member should not pour the vials of his wrath upon the heads of the Charity Commissioners. He has failed entirely to point out what steps the Charity Commissioners should take. I have proved conclusively that they have not the power.

*MR. CREMER: Then, why did they make an inquiry? That is my point.

*MR. J. W. LOWTHER: I have proved to the hon. Member that he was not aware of the Act under which alone we can act. The hon. Member says, “Why did the Charity Commissioners send an Assistant Commissioner to inquire in the year 1866?” I am not aware what was in the mind of the Charity Commissioners at that time, but I should think it very likely that they thought by sending an Inspector to inquire, they would bring some pressure to bear on the Governors to make application. It seems to me that is the natural view to take of the situation. The Inspector's visit did not have the result expected, and the Charity Commissioners are powerless to do anything in the matter. If the hon. Member will bring in a Bill widening the power of the Commissioners, that might enable them to do something. If after that they failed, then perhaps they might justly incur some of the hon. Member's criticism.

MR. PICTON: The Report quoted by my hon. Friend suggests a mode in which the Commissioners might take some steps. A Commissioner was sent in 1866 to bring pressure to bear, and it that could be done in 1866, why is it not done now? A long time has elapsed, and perhaps the Commissioners, if they tried the experiment, might have more influence now than they had then. In past days there is no doubt this institution exercised a beneficent influence in the neighbourhood where it was placed—just beyond

the walls of the City of London. But since the Reformation, so-called, was triumphant, since modern manners have been introduced, this institution has simply become a place for a few people, who are favoured with an income and residences for life, and the charity is positively of no public benefit whatever, except in the case of a few boys and girls, who are paraded, as my hon. Friend says, for the sake of show. It is my lot to pass that institution almost every day, and I never pass it without reflecting afresh upon the apathetic folly of the public of this day who tolerate such a scandal. Here is a foundation which certainly in equity belongs to the people of the Metropolis, and which ought to go to their benefit in some way or other. Yet we stand by while this abuse goes on from one point to another, and no one, except my hon. Friend, seems to have been stimulated to call public attention to it. Sir, I do hope that the Charity Commissioners will find some way of bringing pressure to bear upon those who have been asked for information in vain. At any rate, we are glad to hear there is some prospect of a scheme, and I hope when it is produced it will be such as the Commission can approve. The hon. Gentleman has shown in one part of his speech that the Charity Commissioners are not so powerless as he would have us believe, and I do hope they will exert themselves to put an end to this scandal.

*SIR. J. SWINBURNE: Surely it is the duty of the Charity Commissioners rather than that of a private Member to bring in a Bill; and I am sure Her Majesty would be guided by a Bill brought in by the Charity Commissioners. When it has been shown year after year that this Charity has been misapplied in the most flagrant manner, the Charity Commissioners have sat still, and now they ask a private Member to bring in a Bill, knowing well that it is a very difficult thing for a private Member to carry a Bill.

*SIR J. GOLDSMID (St. Pancras): I should like to protest against the view expressed by the hon. Member who has just sat down. The Charity Commissioners have no right whatever to bring in a Bill to increase their own powers. If their powers are to be in-

creased, let some hon. Member or let the Government bring in a Bill.

*MR. J. ROWLANDS (Finsbury): I wish to ask the hon. Gentleman whether he has any information to give us respecting the City of London Parochial Charities Department, and whether it will have completed its work by the time its powers expire, on the 31st of next December?

*MR. LOWTHER: I was speaking to Mr. Anstie, who, as the hon. Member knows, has charge of this department of the work of the Commissioner, and he certainly hopes most fully to be able to get the scheme complete in the course of two or three months, and he trusts to get this work done before the end of the year, and before the powers expire.

MR. ROWLANDS: Does Mr. Anstie think he will have settled by that time the whole of the question of the technical and recreative institutions for the North of London. No doubt the hon. Gentleman is aware that the Department is under some obligation to the people of North London to give out of this Fund a certain sum towards the erection of four technical and recreative institutions in North London.

*MR. J. W. LOWTHER: Mr. Anstie, the Commissioner, knows perfectly well, of course, the state of affairs in North London; yet with that knowledge in his mind, he certainly does hope to be able to complete this scheme by July or August, taking all the steps necessary under the Act. Of course, if subscriptions come in more rapidly from North London than at present, they would to a very great extent assist Mr. Anstie in the formation of his scheme, and enable the whole of the Metropolis to benefit at an early date by the action of the Commissioners under the Act.

*MR. BARTLEY: With reference to North London, supposing it happens, as is very probable, that this £200,000 is not collected locally, and supposing that in July this scheme was completed—which is referred to as Mr. Anstie's scheme by the Commissioners, which I think is rather a mistake—would the North of London be cut out of it, because if it were, I think there would be a very strong opposition on both sides of the House. It is quite impossible for many of these poor districts in the North of London to raise the amount

of money which is required in order to secure the sum offered by the Charity Commissioners.

*MR. LOWTHER: I cannot on the spur of the moment give an answer which my hon. Friend may take as official, but I think I may safely say that what he suggests will not occur when the scheme is complete. Of course, the provisions made cannot be so munificent and so useful as they would be if a large sum of money were subscribed by the locality, but I think I may say that in the scheme to be propounded by the Commissioners, North London will certainly have a place.

*SIR J. GOLDSMID: One thing ought to be remembered, that in South London, where a large amount was raised, the money was not collected in the locality. Rich people from other parts have also subscribed largely to South-East London, and North London, which was last in the field, has not had that advantage of outside assistance. North London, which is quite as poor as South London, has in consequence to suffer. The people of North London are just as much in need of technical education as the people of other districts of the Metropolis, and I do urge upon the hon. Gentleman who represents so ably the Charity Commissioners, to see that the people of North London have a fair share of this sum, which is intended for the benefit of the whole of London, and not one portion.

MR. ROWLANDS: It will be in the recollection of the Committee, that last year, I raised some criticism on the Scheme of the Charity Commissioners. I then expressed the opinion, that, suppose we were not able in North London to raise pound per pound with the Charity Commissioners, we should demand our fair share of these Parochial Charities. Now we have been unfortunate in trying to get this money. Much public money has been called for in Educational matters. First there was the Polytechnic in Regent Street; then there was application for the People's Palace in the East end of London, and none of the means have been drawn from the localities themselves. The movement in the South of London has obtained large sums of money from the giving public, and the City Companies, whereas we in the

North of London have been very unfortunate. We represent a district of London which is excessively poor, because we have not in our midst any large residential people who can give money. The only persons from whom we can at all look for large sums to be given towards the scheme, are the large manufacturers and city people, north of the Thames, but up to the present time, none of these have given at all liberally, so far as my information goes. There is the North of London Scheme, and we distinctly want to know, if we pass the Vote, in what position we shall be placed. I hope the hon. Gentleman will give us some satisfactory answer, which will indicate to us that we shall have our fair share of the public money. Of course we admit that if we are not successful in getting outside money, we cannot expect the same result as those who have got it from the sharing of the City Parochial Charities, although they may have got their subscriptions augmented by voluntary subscriptions from the outside public. But we have a right to demand, at any rate, our fair share of the public money which is now in the hands of the Charity Commissioners for distribution over the metropolis. I want to ask the hon. Gentleman whether he can indicate to us in what way we can express our opinion upon the scheme with regard to North London. Must we do it before the Vote is passed, and if the Vote is passed shall we be helpless? Will the Charity Commissioners be able to formulate any scheme they like, leaving us only the satisfaction next year of complaining that we have not been liberally and justly dealt with?

MR. PICTON: The hon. Gentleman said that the house in Regent's Park had been sold. Perhaps he will tell us now what is going to be done with the money, and whether it is still to continue to form part of the income of the Master. There is another question which is worthy of consideration, seeing that St. Katherine's Hospital is in North London, I would suggest whether it is not possible by some legislative process to get some of the funds, which are now being wasted, devoted towards the erection of a Polytechnic Institution for London. Such a scheme, I think, would meet with public approval. At any rate, I should like to

know what is to be done with the money which has been realized by the sale of the house in the Park.

*MR. JAMES W. LOWTHER: I am afraid that I cannot answer the hon. Member straight off, but if he will put the question down on the Paper, I will have the matter of the disposal of the funds obtained from the sale of the house in Regent's Park inquired into. I was only aware a short time ago that the house had been sold. Now with respect to the question raised by the hon. Member, for Finsbury, I may point out that the proposed distribution of City Parochial Funds is to be made in two ways. First, it is to be devoted towards the creation of open spaces, and secondly towards the creation of polytechnics and libraries. North London has had a large share of the money allotted for the purpose of open spaces. £50,000 has been allotted to North London in respect of the extension of Hampstead Heath, and £47,500 towards the acquisition of Clissold Park. South London seems to have had only £12,000. With respect to Notting Hill, the Commissioners have allotted the sum of £2,000 for open spaces there. Altogether North London has had £97,500 allotted to it out of the City Parochial Funds in respect of open spaces. Then the hon. Member asks what he will be able to do if this Vote passes to-night. I think he will be in exactly the same position in the future as he now is in regard to this scheme. The proper time, as I understand it, to object to a scheme is when it comes before the House, and this scheme, unless it goes through unanimously, will probably come before the House at some time, probably next year, and it will then be open to the hon. Member to make such objection as he may think fit. I will convey to the Commissioners the expression of opinion which has fallen from the hon. Member in regard to the claims of North London, but I am afraid I am not in a position this evening to make any definite statement as to the exact amount which it is intended to allot out of the City Parochial Funds.

*MR. JAMES STUART: There are one or two matters in the Report of the Charity Commissioners to which I should like to call attention. I notice that in the fifth paragraph there is a Return

showing the number of charities which have sent in their accounts to the Commission during the past year, and the number is given at 32,213. Might I suggest to the Charity Commission that it would be advantageous in another Report if they could give us the total amount of the capital dealt with in these accounts, and if they could divide them into counties. I should also like to know what the Commissioners do with these 32,213 accounts. I suppose that under the Act of Parliament they have a right to demand that these accounts shall be sent them, and would it not be desirable that they should insist on the accounts being drawn out on some uniform plan which would assist in the task of comparison. Are these accounts all duly audited, and if so, by whom? It appears to me that the mere sending in of these accounts gives a false sense of security. I take it, however, that the Charity Commissioners do not, as a fact, go through these accounts and assure themselves that they are correct. I do not see how it is possible for them to do so. There are only fifty-seven persons altogether engaged in the Charity Commission, and I fail to see how they could go thoroughly through all these accounts. I am not blaming them for this. I am merely suggesting that something might be done to secure a satisfactory audit. As I understand it, most of these accounts are audited locally, and in many cases the auditors are appointed on the spot by the trustees of the charities. The audit therefore is not really in the hands of the Commissioners. This is a very important matter affecting an extremely large annual income, and I would urge upon the Charity Commission that some step ought to be taken to secure the proper audit of these accounts, and, at any rate, they ought to have some control over the appointment of the auditors, for I believe that that would tend not only to a more efficient and trustworthy system of audit, but would also help to secure that the accounts are presented in a correct form. I hope the hon. Gentleman will be able to tell me what is the capital amount involved in these accounts, and how far the auditing has been supervised by the Commission; also how the accounts are dealt with by the Commission. As to the disposal of the City Parochial Funds,

I may say I think that the Charity Commissioners' scheme for establishing Polytechnic Institutes, and promoting Industrial education is on the whole well devised. I might be able to suggest one or two alterations in it so far as it affects Clerkenwell, Finsbury, and Shoreditch, but I feel sure that the idea of the scheme is a good one. In conclusion let me say that I believe the information for which I am asking, would prove exceptionally useful at a time when we are considering how far the County Council should interfere in the management of charities, how far these charities, large or small, might be placed under their control. There is at this moment a mass of information which must be in the hands of the Charity Commissioners, and I trust they will give it to us in a subsequent report. I think it would be better if the charities in the country were in a large measure at any rate, relegated entirely to the management of County Councils. It would largely preclude the necessity for such debates as this in the House of Commons, which useful as they are, take up time urgently required for other business.

*MR. J. W. LOWTHER: The fact of the matter with regard to the accounts which come into the hands of the Charity Commission, is that they have no power to audit them. I believe that in the Charitable Trust Act Amendment Bills of 1878, 1881 and 1883, such a power was proposed, but it was struck out because the Government of the day, or the House did not see their way to conferring the power on the Commission. While therefore the accounts do come in, they are not audited by the Commission. They are very useful, however, in cases where complaint arises, and in dealing with applications for power to sell or purchase land, or to deal with other securities. I believe I am right in saying that all the accounts come into the hands of the Commission in one form. There is I think a regular form upon which they are returned. With regard to whether the Commission should have the power of auditing these accounts, that is a question for the Government and for the House. I do not think I am called upon to express an opinion upon it. Of course it would be extremely useful for the Commission to have some such power, but let me

point out that it would necessitate an increase of its staff to a very considerable extent to deal with the thirty-two thousand odd accounts, a number which increases year by year, because almost every year we are able to find out some new charities. I am sorry I am not able to give the hon. Member the total amount of the capital value of the charities, and I do not think it could be arrived at without a very great expenditure of time and labour, with which the utility of the return would hardly be commensurate.

*MR. JAMES STUART: If the accounts are returned on a uniform plan, I think it would scarcely be so difficult to give me the information I ask for.

*MR. J. W. LOWTHER: I will consult the Commission with regard to the matter. I am sorry I cannot give the hon. Member the information he desires.

SIR WALTER FOSTER (Derbyshire, Ilkeston): I wish to raise the question of the recovery of rent charges in connection with rural charities. Is there any chance of the Charity Commissioners succeeding in recovering any of these rent charges of the loss of which we have complained more than once in the House? I have myself more than once endeavoured to bring in a measure to give the Charity Commissioners more powers with reference to these matters, but last year my Bill was opposed by hon. Members opposite, and unfortunately I was unable to secure a favourable opportunity this year. There are a good many of these charities in the country which it is desirable that the House and the country should hear of. A large number of them have been lost year by year, because the Commissioners have no power of enforcing payment of certain rent charges upon certain lands. The present process, as I understand it, is an extremely difficult one. They have to obtain practically the authority of the Chancellor of the Exchequer in order to institute prosecutions, for in most cases the rent charges are so very small—in some cases not exceeding £2 or £3 and in some cases not as many shillings—that they would entail far more cost to recover than the local trustees are justified in expending. These local trustees distribute the property as long as they receive it, but the land passes into other hands, and the

people buying the land, being unaware of these rent charges refuse to pay them, and the local trustees having no property in hand and no means of prosecuting or enforcing payment, the charity tends to lapse and thus becomes lost. This has happened to a very large extent throughout England. The hon. Gentleman the Member for Penrith, who represents the Charity Commissioners in the House, has been good enough to grant me a Return of charities lapsed in several counties, and when that Return is laid before the House I believe it will create a large amount of interest in this question, which materially affects the poor. We should also be glad to know whether during the last year the Charity Commissioners have been endeavouring to recover any of those properties, and, if so, whether they have had the co-operation of the Chancellor of the Exchequer to prevent this property of the poor being lost.

MR. T. E. ELLIS: I think the least satisfactory part of the work of the Charity Commission is that relating to the collection of annual Reports of charities throughout the country. Some of those Reports are meagre and some are misleading. Without an audit it seems impossible to know whether they are accurate or not, and the only means the Commissioners have of verifying the reports is to send down an Inspector. This is most costly and in most cases is not worth the expense. Now, if the Charity Commission and the Government will bring forward some measure by which they can elicit the co-operation of the County Councillors, I believe an excellent work will have been performed and that something like a business-like audit will have been secured. I would also urge on the hon. Member (Mr. J. W. Lowther) the facilitating of the work of inquiry in the Welsh counties by obtaining the co-operation of the County Councils. I think the adoption of such a course would not only facilitate the auditing of the charities, but would enable the Commission to obtain very necessary further information with regard to them.

*MR. J. W. LOWTHER: I think the House will appreciate the way in which the hon. Gentleman has addressed it. I am sure the Charity Commission always feel that they have derived great assistance from

him, and I shall take care to convey his suggestion to my fellow Commissioners. As to the question raised by the hon. Baronet (Sir W. Foster) I am informed that some rent charges have been recovered, though I am at present unable to give the exact figures.

*SIR J. SWINBURNE (Staffs., Lichfield): May I ask Her Majesty's Government and the Charity Commissioners whether they will combine together to take active steps to prevent these small rent charges being lost in the future? Every year land is sold subject to small rent charges, but in many cases these rent charges have not been collected for years; and the vendors sell the property, concealing the fact that it is subject to such charges. Subsequently, when the new owner is applied to by the managers of the charity for the arrears and current rent charge, he declines to pay it, on the ground of having purchased the property free of all incumbrances, and demands the authority of the managers to claim such a charge, and asks them to produce their title deeds to such a charge. These deeds are seldom to be found, and the law costs of endeavouring to enforce the claim would far exceed the value of the charges; the result being that these rent charges are lost to the charities for ever. It is only by the combination of the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Charity Commissioners that the stealing of these charities can be stopped.

*THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH, Strand, Westminster): The Government will undoubtedly confer with the Charity Commissioners and see if any measure can be framed which will secure that these endowments shall not be lost. I am sorry to hear the hon. Baronet give so bad an account of Staffordshire and the North of England.

Question agreed to.

4. Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £33,168, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1890, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Civil Service Commission."

MR. MOLLOY (King's County): A considerable number of complaints have been made with regard to the delay in

giving the results of examinations, more especially the military examinations. I have had several letters complaining of this delay, mentioning that in some cases there has been a delay of six weeks, and in one instance there was an interval of two months. This causes a great amount of inconvenience to candidates, who do not know meanwhile whether it is necessary for them to make further arrangements to go on with their studies, or whether they are in the happy position of having passed their examination. I merely mention this in the hope that inquiry will suggest a remedy. I believe the third unpaid Commissioner is still unappointed. Last year the First Lord of the Treasury mentioned the difficulty found in getting anyone to undertake the onerous duty, more especially as no salary is attached to it, and I believe that difficulty still exists. I would like to suggest to the Government that they should have in view the selection of some gentleman who will be able to effect a reform in the whole system of examinations which some of the highest authorities in educational circles think it necessary. The complaint made is that the system of examination in vogue is based absolutely on the practice of cram. This is not due to the gentlemen who carry out the examinations, but to the Commissioners. If you compare the system with that carried out at the great Universities, you must conclude that one of them must be absolutely wrong, so different are the two in principle. The cram system does not obtain at the University examinations, but in the Civil Service examinations that system is absolute, and for Indian appointments, for instance, the examinations are utterly useless, or to a very large extent I should say. The men who should be sent out to England are those of the highest education, but the result of the cram system is seen in the falling off in this class of appointments. The system is purely one of getting so many marks. You are to get a certain number of marks in certain subjects, but if you fail in any one you can make up the deficiency in another subject, perhaps of no earthly use in India. History I take to be important for the Civil Service in India, but it only obtains 300 marks, and with the books of skilled crammers the amount of cram required

to secure this number of marks can be got through in six weeks. History is a branch of knowledge in which those who are to take high places in India should be well founded, but if candidates fail in that they can take up another subject.

THE CHAIRMAN: The subjects are presented by the Secretary of State in Council; the duties of the Civil Service Commissioners are simply those of administration. The hon. Member therefore would be travelling beyond the scope of discussion of the Vote in criticizing the character of the examinations.

MR. MOLLOY: What I wanted to draw attention to was the desirability of some change being initiated, more especially by the gentleman whose appointment is still in the hands of the Government. But I will not go into the character of the examinations, which as you say is in the hands of the Secretary of State; but I was under the impression that the method of examination was in the hands of the Commissioners who formulated the system and arranged the details. I will not deviate from your ruling, but will simply point out to the Government the desirability in the appointment of a third Commissioner of securing the services of a gentleman capable of going into the whole subject; with a view to a change being made, which, if I had been permitted to go on, I would have shown is demanded by the highest educational authorities. I am sorry I cannot go into the subject, it is a very interesting one, and some good would have been effected, I hoped, by raising the discussion. I confine myself to the expression of a desire that in the appointment of the third Commissioner selection should be made of one capable of taking a greater interest in the subject from a higher standard of education and experience than is to be found in the two Commissioners who are now carrying out the whole of the work. It must be admitted that these two gentlemen are deficient in knowledge upon certain subjects most necessary to carry out the system properly. I will not go further into the subject now, but I hope the Secretary to the Treasury will not refuse the suggestion, but secure in the new appointment qualifications in which, I am sorry to say, the Commissioners are now utterly wanting.

*MR. JACKSON: I am not in a position

to say anything as to the appointment, but I will take care that the views expressed are put before my right hon. Friend.

*MR. J. STUART: I do not think the Commissioners can be fairly credited with the encouragement of a system of cram. As far as investigation into the result of the examinations has gone it shows that under the method pursued the best pupils win, those best taught are successful. There are so called crammers who teach badly and those who teach exceedingly well, but in either case there is more success among the pupils trained in well managed institutions. It would be a great mistake, however, to put all crammers into one class. I think the Civil Service Commissioners have followed a very sensible line, laid down originally in the Indian Civil Service, as to subjects to be examined in, and that the age of examination should be such that a young man who fails in examination should not feel that his life is from that moment a failure. The object is to make selection from candidates according to measure of general education. I hope that in spite of all criticism they will persevere in the line they are now going, although, of course, I do not deny there are many details that might be modified. The method, I think, compares favourably with other examinations. A couple of months is certainly too long an interval between examination and publication of of result. Such a time could not be absorbed wholly in the work of examining papers, but must be partly occupied in something anterior to, or following after that work—official correspondence or something of that kind. I am sure if the examiners take up this time in the examination of papers, then the system is not so satisfactory as it should be. I observe there is a decrease on the Vote this year, an unusual characteristic, of which perhaps the Secretary to the Treasury can give some explanation. It may be that a reduction has been made in the payments to those who are called in to assist the permanent staff of examiners; or there may be a reduction in the number of examinations, or of candidates. I think there is room for saving money in the multiplicity of papers that are frequently set. As to the point raised by the hon. Member who pre-

ceded me, I can say that I should not object to the appointment of a third paid Commissioner, if we could secure certain qualifications that are not possessed—though it is not their fault—by the existing Commissioners. It is matter of regret to everyone who reviews the position of the Commission. It was said by the First Lord of the Treasury last year, when I made some remarks on this subject, that the Commissioners did not require to set the papers, and did not require to know all subjects upon which the examinations they superintended took place. I admit that, but it is no answer to my question, for subjects group themselves, and one of these groups should certainly be of scientific subjects, and the foundation of a correct opinion as to scientific papers may be fairly made by a man who is fairly acquainted with one branch of science but not of others. But he has a fair idea of the relative merits of papers that might be set. There should be a correlation of various scientific subjects, and how far either of the branches of science should be employed as an engine of examination, how far it should be used as a test of general culture and for discrimination, are matters to be taken into consideration in framing a scheme of examination for any particular group of candidates. The Commissioners rely on their subordinates for information on such matters, and though they certainly are well served by them, yet, of course, the responsibility attaches to themselves. Last year I found fault with the appointment they made, though not with the individual appointed or with his ability; but I feel that I must again urge on the Government the extreme necessity there is of supplying this want among the Commissioners, the best plan, probably, being the appointment of a paid Commissioner, who should be placed on all fours with the rest. I ought, also, to express the confidence I feel in the action of the Civil Service Commission, not only in regard to the work it does, but the spirit in which it is done.

*MR. JACKSON: The hon. Member has alluded to the decreased cost of the Department, and I desire to point out that it is not due to any decrease in the remuneration paid for the work, but to the fact that examinations have not been held when there has been no like-

lihood for vacancies. The examiners are paid for what I may term piece-work—that is to say, they are paid for the work they do.

MR. CLANCY (Dublin, North): I wish to draw attention to the fact that the Government advertisements in Ireland are given to newspapers supporting the Government, and not in accordance with the position or circulation of those journals. On a former occasion when I called attention to this matter, I was fortunate enough to obtain a promise from the Secretary to the Treasury that this system should be revised, and that if it were shown that a newspaper received advertisements to which it was not entitled by reason of its circulation, a change should be made. It was unfortunate, however, that I placed any reliance in that promise, for I find that no change whatever has been made in the system. I have a letter from a newspaper proprietor in Ireland complaining that Government advertisements are given to a paper in county Clare which has only a circulation of a couple of score or so, while a paper circulating 3,000 or 4,000 copies fails to get them. The only reason for this is to be found in the politics of the newspapers—whether it is a Nationalist journal or an organ of the Tory or Unionist Party. I invite the hon. Gentleman to explain whether any change has been made, and if not, why not?

*MR. JACKSON: The explanation I have to give is that since the time the hon. Gentleman refers to there has been a very complete change in the method of giving advertisements. Of course, the Secretary to the Treasury can know nothing about the wants or requirements of the parties to whom the advertisements relate or of the particular papers which get them; and at the present time, instead of the advertisements being sent out as was formerly the case from the central office, they are issued by each particular Department in regard to matters relating to its own particular work. For instance, the War Office sends out its own advertisements, the Board of Trade do the same, and so on through all the public offices, and I believe they endeavour to select the papers most likely to give effect to the advertisements so sent out, as it would be absolutely useless to advertise in

papers not likely to reach those for whom the advertisements are intended.

MR. CLANCY: The hon. Gentleman can hardly suppose I shall be satisfied with the answer he has given. The only change that seems to be made is to allow the separate Departments to send out the advertisements instead of letting this be done by the Central Department, and if the same system is still pursued I am afraid the change made is no improvement. It is very different in England, where public opinion has greater influence. Under the system which prevails in Ireland every littlerag of a Conservative or Unionist paper gets the Government advertisements, while no Nationalist journal, however large its circulation, ever gets one. It is useless to deny the facts, as I can give them from my own knowledge, and I am not disposed to pass this matter over or allow it to go without protest. I shall certainly divide the Committee, unless the hon. Gentleman gives me some assurance that the several Departments which he can influence on the part of the Government shall make a change in the direction of giving the advertisements to those papers which have the largest circulation, irrespective of Party politics.

*MR. JACKSON: I believe the hon. Gentleman is absolutely and entirely wrong. He says there has been no change, and I assert, as a matter of fact, that there has been a change. With regard to the advertisements of the Civil Service Commissioners, the list has been revised. If any case can be brought forward showing the necessity for further revision I have not the smallest objection to consider the circumstances and lay them before the Commissioners, who, of course, have only one object in view—namely, to advertise in those papers that will best circulate their advertisements. I do not think the hon. Gentleman can reasonably ask more than that. He has made a general statement that no Nationalist paper receives any Government advertisement, and I believe that that is incorrect. If he will put before me a case in which there is a grievance, I will bring it before the Commissioners, but he must see that otherwise it is very undesirable that I should interfere with the action of Departments charged with the responsibility of selecting the newspapers.

MR. CLANCY: I accept the invitation of the hon. Gentleman and will bring before him specific cases, although I may remind him that the same process has been gone through before without result. Many of the Nationalist newspapers have applied for the Government advertisements again and again, and have always got the stereotyped answer that the names of their papers are not on the list. The hon. Gentleman now, however, invites me, and I suppose other Irish Members, to bring forward specific cases of papers that do not get the Government advertisements, and I suppose he intends that they will hereafter have them.

*MR. JACKSON: I did not say that.

MR. CLANCY: Then I hope the hon. Gentleman will be more specific.

MR. BIGGAR (Cavan, West): It seems to me that the position in which the hon. Gentleman leaves the question by the offer he has just made as to the bringing forward of specific cases is simply this—that instead of having our heads cut off all at once, we shall have them cut off in detail. The hon. Gentleman has said there has been a revision, but he does not promise any reform. As it is, wretched little papers with no circulation at all get the Government advertisements, while others that have large circulations are passed over—which is manifestly unfair. With regard to the system of examination under the Commissioners, it seems to me to come to this, that certain men, by cramming, may pass with distinction, but they are like some men I know who, possessing an immense amount of information, have got it all so mixed up that if you were to put them up to speak on one subject they would be sure to speak on another. I think it would be well to consider whether some better system than the present could not be adopted.

MR. CLANCY: I beg to move the reduction of the Vote by £400—the amount put down for advertisements next year. The promise made by the hon. Gentleman was bad enough, but he is not sticking to it. I think the hon. Gentleman ought to extend his promise to all the Departments of the Government, as they are all under the control of the Government, and a single word from him would of course have weight with each. In the absence of any satis-

factory and specific pledge, I beg to move my Amendment.

Motion made, and Question proposed, “That Item C, of £1,320, Incident Expenses, be reduced by £400, for Advertisements of Examinations:”—(Mr. Clancy.)

*SIR WALTER FOSTER: I think the complaint of the hon. Member behind me is well founded, and that the tendency on the part of the Government is to run these advertisements in a certain groove and to give them to a certain class of papers, regardless of their circulation. Advertisements should of course have the largest possible amount of publicity, and, therefore, should be given to the papers with the largest circulation. I think the hon. Gentleman ought to give a promise that this shall be the case. I have heard of cases in which papers have been kept alive by these advertisements after their circulation has almost disappeared—and this has happened, not only in Ireland, but in England.

MR. MOLLOY: I think the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury would save the trouble of a Division if he would promise to use his influence that in future public advertisements, paid for by public money, shall be distributed as far as possible according to circulation.

*MR. JACKSON: What I intended to convey was this. I explained that we had made a change in putting the responsibility on each Department, because they would be better able to select the papers that would meet their requirements, and this being so, it was not desirable that I should interfere with the action of the Departments. I also stated that the Civil Service Commissioners had made a revision of the list, and that if the hon. Gentleman would bring before me specific cases they should be duly considered. It is not necessary in my opinion to give instructions to the departments as to how they should act in this matter, as we want to put the whole responsibility upon them.

MR. CLANCY: I will withdraw the Amendment if the hon. Gentleman will undertake on behalf of the Government to do with regard to other Departments something similar to what he will do

in relation to the Civil Service Commissioners.

*MR. JACKSON: Presently the Vote for the Local Government Board will be before the Committee, and I am not responsible for that, but I will undertake to call the attention of all the Departments to the matter.

*SIR J. SWINBURNE (Lichfield): I hope we shall have some assurance from the Government that in future the advertisements shall be given to the papers having the largest circulation, and those which constitute the best medium for promoting the public service.

*MR. W. H. SMITH: Her Majesty's Government have given evidence of their desire that advertisements should not be used for political or Party purposes. They have for the first time, abolished the Government list—a thing which no preceding Government has done. They have left to each department the responsibility of inserting its advertisements in the papers that will best attain the object in view. But it does not always follow that in every case that will be the paper with the largest circulation. The principal object in view must be that of reaching the persons to whom the advertisements are addressed—those who could supply what was required. The Government desire to secure the interests of the country.

MR. CLANCY: I beg leave to withdraw my Amendment.

Motion by leave withdrawn.

Original Question again proposed.

In reply to a question by MR. STUART as to the copyists,

MR. JACKSON said: Those persons thought that they were not sufficiently paid, and when the matter was inquired into the result was that a small bonus was given, which increases year by year for a number of years, and there is a further one on retirement. The bonus is given during service as an addition to salary, and it has grown to a much larger amount than it was anticipated it would when it was established.

*MR. STUART: Are the wages of copyists included in other items?

*MR. JACKSON: Yes, the wages of copyists are spread through all the Votes, but the payment of bonuses and

gratuities to all copyists has been entrusted to this Department.

Original Question put, and agreed to.

(5.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

“That a sum, not exceeding £45,882, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1890, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Department of the Comptroller and Auditor General of the Exchequer.”

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON (Dundee): I find on reference to the Statute 29 and 30 Vict. what the work of this Department is, and I wish to call the attention of the Secretary to the Treasury to Section 21 of that Act. I am sorry the Chancellor of the Exchequer is not present, for what I am going to say relates to a controversy we had the other day with regard to the audit of the Civil List. Section 21 of the Statute provides, under the head “Appropriation Accounts”:—

“That the Treasury shall cause an account to be preferred and transmitted to the Comptroller and Auditor-General for examination. They shall show the issues made from the Consolidated Fund of Great Britain and Ireland in the financial year ended 31st March preceding, for the interest and management of the public funded and unfunded debt, for the Civil List, and all other issues in the financial year for services charged directly on the said fund. The Comptroller and Auditor-General shall reply and report upon the same with reference to the Acts of Parliament, under the authority of which such issues have been directed.”

I have, in the first place, to ask the Secretary to the Treasury why, seeing this to be the enactment defining the duty of his Department, it is considered necessary to have a separate audit for the Civil List? The salaries of the Judges form part of the charges on the fund, and I wish to know if a separate audit is provided for this or for any of the other charges in the Consolidated Fund. I have examined the account presented to Parliament from the Auditor-General relating to the Civil List. I find, for example, in the report for 1888, there is the statement, “Payments into the Consolidated Fund in respect of the Civil List during the year 1887, £380,000; balance outstanding on the 31st March, 1887, £96,845 7s. 2d.” Then in the report for 1889, the Auditor-General begins with the state-

ment: "Issued on 1st April, 1887, £96,845 7s. 2d." That is a coincidence I will not attempt to explain—that a sum of £96,000 remaining unissued on the last day of the year is issued the very day after. I want to ask the Secretary to the Treasury what this means, and whether there is any connection between this unissued balance and the sums alleged to be savings in the various branches of the Civil List, reminding him at the same time that the duty of the Department is declared by Statute to be to report to the House as to issues made on account of the Civil List, with reference to the Act of Parliament under which they are issued. Why has the Auditor-General not reported in respect of this sum? Why has he not told us what the balance means, and under what provision of the Statute the issue has taken place? There is another matter to which I wish to call the hon. Gentleman's attention. We had some controversy about the amount of information it is the duty of the Government to lay before the House on this matter, and I alleged it had been the practice of the House in former years to state every year the amount of the saving which had accrued in the various branches of the Civil List. I will now read the passage from Lord Brougham's speech which put an end to this system. Lord Brougham, asking for information, said:—

"He held in his hand a paper which had been presented to Parliament being the Revenue Returns for the year which showed the saving effected in the expenditure of the Civil List to be £38,000."

I suppose the revenue accounts corresponded with the Report with reference to the Consolidated Fund which the Auditor-General annually presented to Parliament. Why should this not have continued? Why should the House not be put in the possession of the information which it had up to 1850? Although I have had considerable difficulty in ascertaining the meaning of the items in these financial accounts, which seem designed to baffle Members of this House, I think I have made clear the information I solicit from the Secretary to the Treasury on the present occasion.

*Mr. JACKSON: I believe, though I will not pledge myself definitely, that the explanation of the point raised by

the hon. Member is that the year of the Civil List ends, not on 31st March, with the ordinary financial year, but on 31st Dec. Since the matter was last discussed I have carefully inquired into the manner in which the accounts are audited, and I am able to assure the Committee that the accounts for the past five years show that the total sum of £385,000 has been issued, and the position of the Government is that so long as the sum is not exceeded there is no surrender of any portion of it. The position the Government have taken up in the matter is the position that has been always held by various Governments—viz., that if the amount which is issued from the Exchequer does not exceed £385,000 in the year there is no surrender.

Mr. E. ROBERTSON: With reference to the statement that the financial years do not coincide, I would point out that Section 21 of the Act says that the Treasury shall cause an account to be prepared showing the issue made from the Consolidated Fund in the financial year ended 31st March. My question is, how it comes about that the amount of the unissued balances on the Civil List is so abnormally large, whereas it is so trifling, and sometimes non-existent, on other accounts? I also ask whether the unissued balances being paid out at the beginning of a new year has anything to do with savings on any branches of the Civil List?

*Mr. JACKSON: No, Sir; what the hon. Gentleman says is not inconsistent with my statement. The unissued balance on 31st March relates to a year that ends 31st December. If the amount issued does not exceed the £385,000 the Government hold that they have nothing to do with the Expenditure beyond dealing with it in the manner in which the statute lays down. The accounts are audited by the auditor of the Civil List, and the amount the hon. Gentleman has referred to is a balance no doubt outstanding at the 31st March in the Paymaster General's hands. I think everything is satisfied if the Committee is assured that the issues do not exceed £385,000, and whether on a particular day there was an amount outstanding or not does not seem relevant to the question. I am not able to give any information as to what the actual balance in any par-

ticular year may have been but the total sum I have mentioned has not been exceeded.

MR. E. ROBERTSON: The hon. Member has given me an answer which is relevant not to the question I put to him but to the question the Government were unable to answer on a former occasion. I do not admit the accuracy of the contention that the duty of the Government is limited to seeing that the total expenditure is not exceeded; but that has nothing to do with the question. The hon. Gentleman has not explained how the audit of this Department does not extend to the Civil List in the same way as it does to other Items. He has not explained the anomaly that a very large outstanding balance at the end of the year is immediately paid out at the beginning of the next year. Because my questions have not been answered I shall move to reduce the Vote by £1,000.

Motion made and Question put, "That a sum, not exceeding £44,882, be granted for the said Service."—*(Mr. Edmund Robertson.)*

The Committee divided; Ayes, 81; Noes, 161. (*Div. List. No. 101*)

Original Question again proposed.

*MR. BARTLEY (Islington, North): I should like to have some information or explanation as to the large proportion of the non-effective Vote which stands at £16,900 while the salaries are £56,000.

*MR. JACKSON: I have not the details at hand, but I would point out that the sum named by the hon. Member goes back a considerable number of years.

*MR. BARTLEY: Does the hon. Gentleman mean that the non-effective live so very long that they never disappear from the list?

Original Question put, and agreed to.

6. Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £6,887, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1890, for the salaries and expenses of the Registry of Friendly Societies."

*MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton): In moving the reduction of this Vote by the sum of £1,000 from the salary of

the Chief Registrar I have to submit to the Committee an exceedingly curious state of things. Under Section 10 sub-Section B of the Friendly Societies Act of 1885, among other things the Registrar was authorized to collect from the Returns made to him under the Act information which he was to communicate to particular persons. In the examination of the Registrar last year before a Committee of the House, he admitted that from 1875 until that moment he had never done anything whatever under that section of the Act. At first in answer to a question from myself he said it was doubtful whether the section would bear the construction of authorizing him to communicate to particular persons, but on being pressed by me, he admitted in answer No. 943, that there was no doubt he might have done it if he had thought fit; but he suggested that funds had not been forthcoming. Examined as to whether he had ever applied to the Treasury for funds and had been refused, he admitted that he had never done so, and in another answer he said "It is entirely on my own responsibility that this has happened." Under a most valuable provision of the Act, the Registrar might have communicated to the working men whenever he had knowledge of a society being in a state of insolvency, but he has over and over again neglected to perform that duty. He admitted that "in 1875 a society called the United Insurance Society returned a deficiency of over £53,000." The Registrar admitted it was brought to his knowledge in 1877, and it was as a matter of fact brought to his knowledge with a view to a prosecution. The society numbered 148,000 members, and in 1883 all those people lost every farthing they had invested in it. Mr. Sutton told us that he had specially reported the matter to the Chief Registrar in the hope that something of a stringent character would be done. Year by year returns were made to the Registrar of Friendly Societies, and the people, knowing those returns were being made, presumed, and rightly presumed, that if there had been evidence of insolvency the Registrar would have made it known. Unfortunately this case is only a sample. There have been forgery and stealing of bonds, and those things were brought to the notice of the Chief Registrar and

ultimately to the Solicitor to the Treasury, but there has never been any prosecution. I feel very sorry to make an attack upon Mr. Ludlow, who for many years has done much for the good of working men in this country, but it makes it worse when a trusted man neglects his duty. It may be that that gentleman is too old for his office. I believe Mr. Sutton, who investigated the accounts, has done everything that could be done, but I do not understand the helpless inaction of Mr. Ludlow. That gentleman had, no doubt, done much to encourage thrift among the working classes, but there could be nothing more fatal to the encouragement of thrift than the continued existence of insolvent societies like the one he had referred to. Mr. Tomkins is sent down to examine into the society, and the only result is that 148,000 men's subscriptions through a long series of years are all lost. I move the reduction of the Vote.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That item A be reduced by £1,000, being part of the Salary of the Chief Registrar:"—(*Mr. Bradlaugh.*)

***MR. S. HOARE** (Norwich): Mr. Courtney, I am not surprised at the hon. Member for Northampton calling attention to this subject, only I cannot but regret that he should have taken this opportunity of doing so. Like many Members of this House, I am deeply interested in the working of our Benefit Societies, and I have the pleasure and privilege of being associated with the hon. Member for Northampton in a Committee upstairs, now sitting with reference to this question. I could have wished, therefore, that the question of the Department for the registration of Friendly Societies had been postponed until the deliberations of that Committee had been brought to a close. Already a great deal has been brought before our notice, to which I cannot allude. I am one of those who want, when we do take into consideration the work of this Department, to have every fact before us, and we who serve on the Committee ought not to have our mouths closed, but ought to be able to lay before the House the whole of the facts that are laid before the Committee. The hon. Member has alluded to the shortcomings

of the Department, but those who have seen the working of the Department must feel satisfied that if it has not been as efficient as it should have been, a great deal is owing to the want of legislation, giving it sufficient power to act in the case of insolvent societies, or in the case of societies which do not show a satisfactory balance sheet. The hon. Member has alluded to the powers already given to the Department, but it must be remembered, that in order to obtain actuarial investigation, it is necessary for 500 Members of the Society to apply for the actuarial investigation, and I think when the time comes for discussing the matter in the House, it will be seen that there is great difficulty in obtaining these 500 signatures, and that this circumstance constitutes a great obstacle to the Department being as efficient as it ought to be. I speak with a little experience of the subject, for a near relative of my own undertook the very bold task, for the sake of a vast number of working people, of exposing a Society which was in a most unsatisfactory position. In a very humble way I had the privilege of supporting him in the steps he took; and we no sooner tried to get the 500 signatures, than the society brought an action for libel with very heavy damages against the gentleman who undertook the work. I may mention that every facility was afforded by Mr. Ludlow, and by the actuary, Mr. Sutton. But they were powerless to take any really active steps, without the signatures which the Committee will understand it was exceedingly difficult to get. It is not easy to get workmen to sign a paper for investigation. They feel, perhaps, that possibly the society may last their time; at any rate, they do not like to do that which might leave them without the support from the society, to which they look in case of illness. I think a great deal is wanted in this Department, and I am quite sure that both the Chief Registrar and the Actuary have been most desirous themselves for the inquiry which is now being held. They have not been desirous that the inquiry should be in any way shirked; they are anxious that the Committee should fully see what their present position is, and fully realize what their difficulties now are. I cannot but think that one result of the inquiry will be suggestions such as will obviate for the

future any necessity for moving the reduction of the Vote, and the working people of England will feel that in the Department they have some safeguard, that the money which they with great difficulty put aside will be forthcoming with interest when the time comes that they require it. I hope, therefore, the hon. Member for Northampton will not press his Amendment for a reduction to a division.

*MR. BRADLAUGH: The hon. Member has stated with the utmost fairness that 500 signatures have to be obtained, but that only goes to the question of investigation under another section, and it does not at all apply to the duty which I say is imposed upon the Chief Registrar under sub-Section B, sub-Section 10. They are two entirely different matters relating to other societies, and I confined myself solely to the United Brothers reported upon last year.

*SIR. HERBERT MAXWELL (Wigton): I do not wish to make any complaint that the hon. Member for Northampton has selected this opportunity for making an attack upon one who is a very valuable public servant—one who has grown old in the public service, and who has, in the course of his service, done a great deal for the true interests of the working classes. Mr. Ludlow, I think, has hardly merited the harsh expression of opinion which has been passed upon him by the hon. Member for Northampton. What is the case, Mr. Courtney. In 1875, the Friendly Societies Act was passed. It was an entirely new field, and it was not easy to find one duly qualified to fill the office created; and I venture to say of all the Departments there is not one in which the business to be transacted has increased so largely as that of the Registration Department, while at the same time the staff has not been increased. Other departments, the Post Office for instance, has had a vast increase of business, but then the staff has been proportionately increased. Mr. Ludlow has received no assistance to enable him to discharge his onerous duties.

*MR. BRADLAUGH: My complaint is that he did not discharge one of his duties at all under this Section, and he so admitted under pressure.

*SIR H. MAXWELL: I am quite aware that the hon. Member has limited his complaint of the Chief

Registrar to the 10th Section, but the Act consists of a great many sections, and this particular Section is open to the construction put upon it, rightly or wrongly, by the Chief Registrar. Mr. Ludlow will appear again as a witness before the Committee sitting upstairs, and I do ask this Committee of the whole House to consider whether this is a fitting opportunity to go into the Lobby for what will practically be a Vote of Censure upon Mr. Ludlow. In common fairness let us wait until the inquiry has been concluded. I admit that so far as the evidence has gone, it seems to point to a certain inadequacy or possibly inefficiency in the office, but although I have paid great attention to the evidence given before the Committee upstairs, I have been unable—perhaps because I am slow—to form an opinion as to what that Report will be or what is necessary to be done. Therefore, I think I will best perform my duty now by asking hon. Members to stay their judgment. They will have ample opportunity before long, and I cannot help thinking a much better opportunity, to discuss the whole matter.

*MR. BRADLAUGH: I have been appealed to not to anticipate the Report of a body of gentlemen who will have to pronounce upon this very question, and I agree that it is hardly fair to ask the Committee upon my *ex parte* statement to give a Vote which would be a difficulty in the way of the Select Committee if their decision should be other than that of the House given suddenly on my Motion. Therefore, I will not press the matter to a division, although I do think it was my clear duty to raise the question on this occasion.

Motion by leave withdrawn.

Original question again proposed.

*MR. WILLIAM WOODALL (Hanley): There is a question not of very large importance, but, no doubt, of sufficient importance to those who have the administration of friendly Societies. They are exempted from income tax, on their investments. Their complaint is that this exemption is attended with much unnecessary inconvenience, inasmuch as the payments have to be made, and subsequently formal claims have to be made for repayment. I am urged to ask the attention of the Treasury

to the matter, and to ask whether they cannot see their way to making special exceptions in the case of Friendly Societies; or, at any rate, to bear in mind that the conduct of these societies is entrusted to working men who cannot be always relied upon to be perfectly quick in the assertion of their claims, and that they will modify and simplify the process of claiming exemption as far as possible.

*MR. GOSCHEN: The attention of the Treasury has been directed to the matter, but the Committee will see that it is difficult to deal with a particular body of men. There are various ways in which working men are associated together, and in which they possess investments, and the question has caused considerable anxiety in the Inland Revenue Office as well as among working men. I can assure the hon. Gentleman that we are anxious to save the working men all the trouble possible.

Original question put, and agreed to.

7. £10,934, to complete the sum for Land Commissioners for England.

Motion made, and question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £133,823, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1890, for the salaries and expenses of the Local Government Board."

*MR. JAMES STUART: There is a matter which I wish to bring under the notice of the President of the Local Government Board. I have already asked several questions in regard to the inspection of workhouse schools. At one time in the 640 or 650 unions in this country there were schools connected with the workhouses, but gradually of late years they have become separated from the workhouses so that now considerably less than one-half of the Poor Law schools are workhouse schools. That operation is going on pretty rapidly. Something like five years ago there were 300 workhouse schools, now I think there are not many more than 200. The schools that have been established in lieu of workhouse schools are called separate or district schools. In the metropolis I believe, with the exception of Mile End, they are all separate or district schools. The children connected with the workhouse are

taught in the schools, which for the most part have distinct masters and mistresses. In many places homes are now being erected in connection with Poor Law unions, and in these homes the children are maintained and are sent from them to these separate or district schools, just as they would go to any public elementary school if they were not paupers. Now I wish to call attention to the position of the teachers in connection with separate schools and with workhouse schools. The children are actually under four Inspectors. There is the Superintendent Inspector of Local Government Board; there is his assistant, there is a Medical Inspector and there is a School Inspector. Some years ago, in the year 1874 or thereabouts, a recommendation was made that the schools should be wholly placed under the Education Inspectors of the Poor Law Department, and of course, under the Medical Inspector, but it was not carried into effect, owing, I suppose, to the change of Government which took place at the time. So far, as Medical Inspector is concerned, it is not necessary to take that into consideration. We all agree that the children should be under Medical Inspection, but the object of my remarks is to ask that the children so far as the school is concerned, should be placed wholly under the Inspector of the Education Department of the Privy Council. Now that is the proposal which I put in the question I asked of the Local Government Board a short time ago. The proposal that has been made by certain Boards of Guardians, or rather, by the Committees of certain Boards of Guardians, is that separate or district schools should be placed, so far as the schools and children in them are concerned, under the inspection of the Education Department, and that their schools should be treated in all respects as if they were public elementary schools. The difference in their position would think that the Inspector who looks after the education in these schools would not be answerable to the same Department as other Inspectors, namely, the Poor Law Department, but that he would be answerable to a different Department, the Education Department. The President of the Local Government Board stated that difficulty might

arise from the clashing of the two Departments, and that the experiment has been tried and failed. I admit the force of the former argument, but I deny that any proper attempt has been made in the direction I suggest. What was done in that direction was not an experiment. It was due to the natural growth of things that the inspection in early days should be under the Education Department. Under the Poor Law of fifty years ago, workhouse schools were practically non-existent, they were created under miserable circumstances, the teachers were of a very poor class, and very often were paupers fit for nothing else, and the children were consequently taught nothing. There was no way of getting anything like order into this miserable system except by the intervention of the Education Department of the time. That was, of course, before the Act of 1870. The Education Department did intervene in order to secure that there should be competent teachers. The system was abandoned because of departmental difficulties. But now you must remember, in dealing with the teachers, that you are dealing with a set of persons who are fulfilling their special functions in special buildings, and who can without difficulty be under a different Department. There are now only 200 schools practically of the workhouse type, and of this number many of them are connected with small workhouses where matters could be very easily arranged. The majority of children, as I have indicated, are being educated in separate or district schools under the management of Boards of Guardians, whose Committee stand in exactly the same position as the School Management Committee. Now, therefore, if you have an Education Inspector under the Education Department, you have only a residual number in which any departmental difficulty could arise. The question may be asked, What is the reason of this proposed change? Now, first, what I want to impress upon the Committee is this—that the matter I am bringing before it refers to a very considerable number of children, I think something like 30,000; and, if I am not mistaken, to something like 800 teachers. I will first take the case of the teachers. We have considerable difficulty in getting good teachers

for the Workhouse Poor Law Schools under the existing arrangement. I believe that up to the present the Education Department have refused to give teachers their parchments until they have left the Poor Law Department, and have come under the Education Department, and the result is that when a Committee of Guardians or of a separate or district school seek, as I am sure they do, to get good teachers, they are met with the difficulty that the teacher has not been with them many months before he finds that he cannot get his parchment, and that he must either remain a member of a limited and narrow and less well paid section of the educating community, or that he must leave his appointment as quickly as he can in order to come under the Education Department. This makes it difficult not only to obtain, but also to retain the service of teachers of the best kind. I believe I am right in saying that the President of the Local Government Board has received from the North Surrey School managers a memorial which sets forth that the salaries paid to teachers in Poor Law Schools are practically the same as when they were originally fixed more than 40 years ago; that the highest salaries obtainable by these teachers are £60 a-year with board and lodging; that since the passing of the Education Act in 1870, teachers under the Education Department have been able to command salaries of £400 a-year and upwards for doing precisely the same work as is done by teachers in Poor Law Schools, and the result is that the Poor Law Schools have to be content with such teachers as fail to obtain the better appointments under the Education Department, and who are unable to obtain parchment certificates unless they leave the Poor Law Schools and take service under the Education Department. The managers of the North Surrey Schools, therefore, ask that the salaries of these teachers should be brought up to the standard which exists under the Education Department, and that the Poor Law teachers should be placed on the same terms as regards certificates as teachers under that department. The object of these gentlemen is to obtain the services of really competent teachers, and their proposal in part covers the ground of the proposal which I am now making, and

which has also been made by the Shoreditch Board of Guardians, who are establishing one of those cottage arrangements in the neighbourhood of London for their children, and who are putting up a school which they desire to be in every way of the best character. They say that the services of teachers in Poor Law Schools are not recognized by the Education Department in the same way as those of the Department's own teachers, and the result is that the most efficient and best trained teachers will not take appointments in these schools, which consequently have not the advantage of that contact and touch with the general educational sentiment of the country, which it is desirable that they should have. Now, my proposal is that these schools should be placed under the Education Department. The Shoreditch Guardians—and I agree with them—want to bring the whole of these schools under the same system as the public elementary schools on this account, that you would get the same inspection and the same standard of teaching. And we advocate this in the interests of the children themselves. We desire—and, I believe, hon. Gentlemen opposite also desire, for this is no party matter—to see the workhouse taint removed from these pauper children. I appeal in this matter to the President of the Local Government Board, who has very large and wide-minded views on subjects of this nature, and I am sure no one desires more than he to secure the removal of this workhouse taint. That is now being done as much as possible, for a number of unions send their children to public elementary schools in the neighbourhood, and thus, as far as education is concerned, bring them entirely under the control of the Education Department. And again, where the children are maintained in cottage homes provided by the Poor Law Authorities you have precisely the same state of things, viz., the children going to school and coming back to the Workhouse Authorities as to their home; and no more argument can be urged against putting these separate schools under the Education Department than against allowing the children to go to schools under that Department. It seems to me it would be a lamentable thing if departmental difficulties with permanent

officials were to be allowed to stand in the way of carrying out this reform, and I do urge on the President of the Local Government Board to take steps with a view to providing for the Poor Law children education which shall be on a level with the general elementary education of the country, and which shall enable them, as far as possible, to rise out of the situation into which, through no fault of their own, they have fallen. I urge upon him and upon the Education Department the careful consideration of the step I have indicated. It will make no difference ultimately in the charges that come upon the nation. It may be that the charges for Education of pauper children would come under the Education Vote instead of the Poor Law Vote, but that makes no real difference, for in both cases the charges have to be paid by the nation. And while there would be no increase of cost, you would ensure the employment of a more efficient class of teachers. In order to give the matter a definite form, Sir, I beg to move the reduction of the Vote by £100.

Motion made, and Question put, "That Item G, Inspector of Workhouse Schools, Salaries, be reduced by £100."—(*Mr. James Stuart*).

*MR. J. G. TALBOT (Oxford University): I rise to support the suggestion of the hon. Member opposite. The time has come when there should be only one standard for the education of all children of the same class. It is, in my opinion, an anomaly that the children of one section of the labouring classes should be under one Department for educational purposes, and the children of another section under another Department. It is no doubt a departmental difficulty which has caused the present anomalous condition, but I believe that if the heads of Departments would put their heads together they would easily arrive at a solution of the difficulty. I may just add that this is a matter which affects not only the interests of the children, but also those of the teachers, who ought not to be placed under the disadvantages which now affect them. The teachers of these large pauper schools—male and female—are, as a class, very good; and if any class of teachers needs

encouragement from the Government, it is this class who have to deal with children where education requires especial vigour and brightness. I should be very glad if the present state of things could be altered.

*MR. BARTLEY (Islington, N.): It is true that there are some 30,000 of these children now being brought up in workhouse and district schools; in the former 22,500, and in the latter 7,500, I believe. I have felt for many years that these children should be taken from complete living, so to speak, amongst themselves. You get a number of these children of the same unfortunate class; they live in the workhouse by themselves; all their surroundings contain the pauper element; they become listless and apathetic, and it is extremely difficult to instil into them the feelings and aspirations of children more happily circumstanced. I consider the step of taking these children from the workhouse and sending them into elementary schools is one of the best possible steps. I believe those who have studied the Reports of the Inspectors of Poor Law schools will bear me out when I say that one great effort is to make these children at all like ordinary children. This is the effect of their pauper surroundings, and I therefore strongly urge on the President of the Local Government Board that much more active steps should be taken to remove the children from the workhouses and bring them more into contact with ordinary children both for instruction and for play. I believe the system of boarding the children out in houses on the small village system is infinitely the better plan than even that of separate workhouse schools, and I am anxious to see these 30,000 children brought under the influence not only of education, but of other children. I hope, therefore, the President of the Local Government Board will see his way to get rid of these 200 workhouse schools.

*MR. RITCHIE: It is hardly necessary for me to assure the Committee that my sympathies are entirely in the direction of those who have expressed their great desire that children who unhappily come within the scope of the Poor Law should, as far as possible, be removed from the unfortunate influences which surround them in our workhouses. I entirely agree with my hon. Friend who

spoke last, that it is most desirable that the educational means to be adopted in reference to these children should not only be removed from the workhouse and workhouse schools as far as possible, but that every encouragement should be given for the education of these children in public elementary schools, so that they may associate with other children, and have no connection whatever with the Poor Law, but assimilate themselves both in education and enjoyment with children who are in a more fortunate position of life. It is satisfactory to know that there has been a great increase in the separate and district school system, and it is also a satisfactory feature that the number of children who are educated in the public elementary schools has also largely increased. I can conceive nothing more unsatisfactory than that young children should be kept within the bare and blank walls and dreary surroundings of the workhouse; the more they are removed from such an atmosphere the more good will be done to them and the general community. As far as the policy of the Local Government Board is concerned, we desire to give every encouragement to the system of district and separate schools, and to extending and developing education in the public elementary schools. It has been argued with considerable plausibility that there should be only one system of inspection and one Inspector, that the Inspector of the Education Department should have control of the connection of children both in Poor Law and other schools. But everybody must admit that it is very unsatisfactory to have a sort of dual control over the children who are committed to the charge of Boards of Guardians. The result would be that instead of Reports on the condition of these children being sent direct to the Government Department, who are responsible for the administration of the Poor Law in all its branches, the Reports would have to go to the Education Department and be transmitted from the Education Department to the Local Government Board. That is not a system which would work well or be satisfactory to the Local Government Board. If the Local Government Board is to be the controlling body with reference to Poor Law matters, I do not see how Parliament can judiciously or pro-

perly take away the control which that Board has with reference to schools which are, after all, Poor Law institutions. Of course, if I imagined that the advantages to be derived from changing the system would outweigh the disadvantages, it would be my duty to make arrangements by which the system proposed by the hon. Gentleman should be carried out; but if I may venture to say so, the education given in these Poor Law Schools will bear favourable comparison with that given in the public elementary schools if you take into account the character of the children to be educated. I say, if you take into account the character of the children with whom we have to deal, because you must remember that in the ordinary schools you have children who are constantly resident in the locality, who go to school regularly; but in the case of the Poor Law schools the children are constantly shifting. On the whole, we have every reason to be satisfied with the education given in these schools. There is a valuable society in London which makes special inquiry into the condition of all the children who go out to service from these schools, and I am glad to see that the account they give of the children is entirely satisfactory. Of 1,704 children who went out to service from the London pauper schools, 1,358 were returned as very good; 183 as satisfactory—that is to say they were accused of no serious fault; 37, or about two in the hundred, as bad; and the remainder were accounted for as having either emigrated, married, or died. I say that, looking to the class of children and to the circumstances you have to deal with, the results of the education given in these schools must be regarded as extremely satisfactory, and I do not think that if you were to adopt the proposal of the hon. Gentleman the condition of things would be rendered much more satisfactory than it is now. At any rate the adoption of the proposal would in my opinion be attended with very grave disadvantage and the hon. Gentleman has not given any good reasons why the present system should be departed from. As to the teachers, there is no doubt whatever that the amount of salary which teachers in poor law schools are able to earn is not so large as is earned in public elementary schools.

Mr. Ritchie

I myself think that perhaps the earnest and most laudable desire to constantly increase the standard of education in the elementary schools and to obtain more highly qualified teachers has led to the payment of very high salaries; and I am not going to dispute the fact that those salaries are well earned. At the same time this question of salaries ought to be considered altogether apart from the question of inspection. If the hon. Member can assure me that the teachers in the Poor Law schools are underpaid, I can only say that the matter will receive my careful consideration, and I will undertake that any representation the hon. Gentleman may make will be fully considered. As to the general question of the change advocated in the method of inspection, I do not think the hon. Member has shown any good reason which would induce the Local Government Board to discharge themselves of their present responsibility for the education and training of children in these schools.

MR. COSSHAM (Bristol, E): I think the polar star of the situation is that we should not keep up the system of hereditary paupers, and I am sure that the more we aim at taking children away from the influence of the workhouse the more we shall be likely to obtain that result. The system of hereditary paupers is a very expensive one, and a great many of our paupers are created by being brought up under it. In my part of the country we have an institution in which 2,000 or 3,000 children taken from the same class as pauper children are brought up, and the result of the education they receive is that only three per cent ever reach the workhouse. The training they receive enables them to earn an honest living and to become ornaments and useful members of society. I hope the right hon. Gentleman will pursue the object he has evidently at heart, and will succeed in freeing us from the hereditary tendency of keeping our children from the workhouses.

*MR. McLAREN (Cheshire, Crewe): I should like to express my satisfaction with what the right hon. Gentleman said with regard to the schools and to the way in which he thinks the children are educated. I wish, however, to ask him whether he will instruct the Inspectors

whenever they have an opportunity to discourage the guardians from building those very large schools. Some years ago when the Lambeth Guardians were about to build new schools they had almost decided to adopt the cottage system, and it was through the influence of the Government Inspector that they unfortunately determined upon the barrack system. It is clear that the Local Government Inspectors have very great influence with the guardians in these matters, and I therefore trust the right hon. Gentleman will instruct the Inspectors to try and dissuade guardians from building these large schools.

*MR. RITCHIE: Of course a great deal must depend upon the peculiar circumstances of each case. If an arrangement has been made under which districts join together for the purpose of building a large school to keep the children out of the workhouse of course I would rather have a large school than the workhouse. I somewhat sympathize with the hon. Gentleman, and am not inclined to encourage the building of what are called barrack schools, as I am sure smaller schools are preferable.

MR. COSSHAM: I see that £22,900 in the Local Government Board Account, or one-seventh of the whole is set down as expenses of travelling. These expenses seem to me to be on a very extravagant scale, and I think something ought to be done to check them. It must not be supposed that these travelling expenses are spent in connection with any educational establishment, and I do not know whether I should be in order in giving the explanation that is desired. I shall be glad to do so subsequently.

MR. BRUNNER (Cheshire, Northwich): I am extremely anxious that the right hon. Gentleman should come to the conclusion that workhouse children should not be educated alone, but should always, where possible, be sent to schools with children not connected with the workhouse. My experience in this matter has been a very happy one. I have induced my colleagues on the Board of Guardians I have been connected with for many years to send the workhouse children out to the neighbouring schools. They have not at all the appearance of workhouse children, and they are very much brighter and happier and turn out to be much more useful

when they leave than ordinary workhouse children. I have found that children educated in workhouse schools are dull in the extreme. I believe this has been the experience in other parts of the country too, and I trust the right hon. Gentleman will therefore discourage the building schools of any kind for workhouse children alone, and that the guardians may be induced all over the country to mix the children up with other children and take away from them as far as possible the taint of the workhouse.

MR. STUART: I am not satisfied with the right hon. Gentleman's explanation and I think I must go to a Division. I want to have the whole of our workhouse children and teachers put under the Education Department, and I can see the right hon. Gentleman does not want to do this. The right hon. Gentleman has endeavoured to make out that there is a difference between the question of the teachers and that of the children, but if so, what does the right hon. Gentleman make of the fact that the teachers are getting their salaries, and that the Boards of Guardians are complaining that they cannot get as good teachers as they want, and are getting the leavings of other schools? Unless the right hon. Gentleman can give us a little more encouragement I must ask the House to divide.

Question put "That item A be reduced by £100."

The Committee divided:—Ayes 71; Noes 187. (Div. List No. 102)

Original Question again proposed.

It being after midnight, the Chairman left the Chair to make his report to the House.

Resolutions to be reported to-morrow at two of the clock. Committee also report progress, to sit again to-morrow at Two of the clock.

ASSIZES RELIEF BILL. (No. 167)

Considered in Committee and reported, without amendment.

Read the third time and passed.

COUNTY COURT APPEALS (IRELAND) BILL. (No. 128)

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. MADDEN, Dublin University): I did not object to the Second Reading of this Bill. The objections the Government entertain are met by the Amendments of which I have given notice. I desire that these should be fairly considered, and now beg to move that you, Sir, report progress.

Committee report progress; to sit again on Monday next.

SUBMARINE TELEGRAPH CONTRACT (HALIFAX AND BERMUDA).

*THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON, Leeds, N.): In moving the approval of this contract it may be convenient that I should make a short explanation to the House of the circumstances that led to its being made. It is proposed to subsidize a cable which is to be laid from Halifax to Bermuda, so providing a means of rapid communication with the Island of Bermuda, which is very important from a military a naval and a Colonial point of view. The question has been considered for a good many years and by several Governments. The War Office, the Admiralty, the Colonial Office, and the Royal Commission on National Defence which sat in 1880 have all strongly reported in favour of the absolute necessity of providing this means of communication, and one of the conditions laid down is that the communication should be direct between the two points of British territory, Halifax and Bermuda. At present the only means of communication is by the fortnightly mail service. In former times the mail service was subsidized at a cost of £17,500 a-year, and when it was proposed that telegraphic communication should be obtained, it was pointed out that this question could hardly be considered so long as the large subsidy to the Mail Service was continued. Tenders were invited on the expiration of the Mail Service contract which resulted in a reduction of the £17,500 to £14,500 a-year. This was not thought satisfactory and the service was discontinued in 1885 when tenders for a cable were called for and several received. At that time, however, it was felt that the subsidy demanded, was higher than ought to be paid, and the question was allowed to sleep for a

time until further pressure was brought to bear showing the necessity for some means of communication, because as the House is aware, there is a very large naval and military establishment at Bermuda, and in cases of emergency and indeed, even in times of peace, the necessity is obvious, for Bermuda is the central point of the North American and West India stations. The occasion often arises for rapid communication between these two points. I have no desire to detain the House or I might give several instances. In one case a ship was leaving Bermuda and it was desired to order her to Venezuela, but she could not be communicated with until she arrived at Halifax and then there was all the delay of the voyage back. It is not necessary for me to insist on the point of necessity, it is admitted by all authorities concerned. Tenders were called for in 1885, and those received are set forth in the Treasury minutes before the House. The question has been considered by successive Governments, and all have agreed in the necessity of establishing telegraphic communication between Halifax and Bermuda. The subject has received the most careful consideration, not only of the Treasury but of the Post Office and Telegraph Department, the War Office, the Admiralty, and the Colonial Office. After considerable discussion, they all agreed it was desirable this cable should be laid, and that it should be offered to public competition. It may be that some hon. Members will hold the opinion that the Government might have laid the cable and worked it themselves, but I think that anyone who carefully considers this question will see that there are very strong financial objections to that course. It is true, no doubt, that the Government could probably borrow money on better terms than a company could obtain it, but at the same time it must be obvious the cost of maintaining and working a cable which only forms a link in a complete service must be very much greater than the cost of working a cable by a company in connection with other services; and I believe that it is proposed to carry this cable on to the West Indies for the purpose of enhancing its commercial value, and making it available for revenue from commercial sources. The final tenders obtained are

set forth in the Treasury Minutes, and I think the House will agree that after tenders have been invited by public competition, unless there are very strong reasons against it, it is the duty of the Government to accept the lowest tender. In this case the Government have taken, I think I may say, unusual precautions in endeavouring to provide ample and complete security, not only for the construction and laying of the cable, but also for its maintenance in good working order. The subsidy of £8,100 which it is proposed to pay will only be payable from the time when the cable is first in working order, and only as long as it is so maintained. I do not think it can be expected that this particular link of cable will produce any very large commercial revenue, and I believe after having had a great deal to do in the negotiations, that the terms which were offered, and which were accepted by the Government are as satisfactory as the Government could have hoped to obtain. I do not know that I need say more on the subject, it has been most fully and carefully considered. I may point out also that we have taken care after specifications were made of requiring to have a sample of the proposed cable submitted, and this being submitted to the experts of the Telegraph Department, has been pronounced satisfactory for the purpose. I believe the subsidy is reasonable, looking at the work to be done. The cost of maintenance will be considerable, and I believe the work will be much better done by a Company independent of the Government, than it would be done by a Government Department. It will be necessary to provide the means of repairing accidents, and I believe it will be necessary to have a cable ship in that part of the world available at all times in case of accident to the cable. I think the Contract is one the House may accept without hesitation. Every precaution has been taken to make the conditions such that we have complete security, not only for sufficiency of capital to lay the cable, but for its maintenance in good working order.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That the Contract, dated the 12th day of April, 1889, for the Construction of a Submarine Telegraph Line from Halifax, Nova

Scotia, to the Island of Bermuda be approved."
—(Mr. Jackson.)

DR. CAMERON: The amendment I have to propose does not in the smallest degree traverse that position the hon. Gentleman has laboured to establish. I am perfectly aware that various Committees and other bodies have pronounced it to be of great strategic importance to establish telegraphic communication between Bermuda and Halifax, and that cable communication should not traverse the dominions of any Foreign Power. I admit that, and the hon. Gentleman might even have gone further and have pointed out the importance of this means of communication to the shipping interest. I am prepared to admit that, but the matter is not of such pressing importance that it should be brought on the day after the papers are in the hands of members. According to the hon. Gentleman's own showing, Estimates were submitted in 1885. Among the tenders then received was one from this very Company to lay the cable for £8,000. Then the hon. Gentleman said the tenders of 1885 were considered excessive, and no tender was accepted. So that in 1886 the offer of this Company to do the work for £8,000 was rejected as an excessive demand, but in 1889 the hon. Gentleman recommends us to accept a still higher tender. In April, 1888, tenders were invited, and the Submarine Company offered to do the work for an annual subsidy of £6,925 instead of the £8,100 they are now asking us to pay. Subsequently they applied to be allowed to modify their tender in consideration of rise in prices since they sent it in. As everybody knows, the copper market was rigged at that time, and copper went up to an enormous price, and there was good reason to allow the Company to withdraw their tender, which they did. They then sent in a higher tender—higher than that of 1886—this tender for £8,100. This offer has been accepted, although the copper ring has long since collapsed and the price of copper has considerably fallen. The hon. Gentleman speaks of the great precautions taken, and it is stipulated in the Contract that the capital of the Company shall be at least £100,000, and that the amount expended in laying the cable shall be not less than

£80,000. I asked this evening what is the capitalized value of the annuity we are asked to give to this Company, and I was met with one of those sitting down answers which sometimes succeed in preventing discussion and do not give you the information you desire. But I am sufficiently near the mark when I say that the capitalized value of this £8,100 for 20 years at 3 per cent is something like £130,000. We are actually asked to pay £130,000 or £140,000 to this Company, whose entire capital is stipulated to be only £100,000, of which £80,000 is to be expended on the work of manufacturing and laying the cable. Another point to which I wish to draw attention is this, that the strategical reasons which now exist for laying this cable will exist 20 years hence when the Contract expires, and the Government will then have either to enter into some new arrangement or continue to pay the subsidy. The fact is, therefore, we are undertaking to pay a perpetual subsidy which represents a capital of £250,000.

MR. JACKSON: The minute says, "There shall be a paid-up capital of £100,000." It does not say that that is the capital.

DR. CAMERON: There is no sense in the stipulation unless that is considered a sufficient sum.

MR. JACKSON: So far as capital is concerned.

DR. CAMERON: Of course, that is what we are concerned with. The Government have sanctioned the principle of owning and maintaining cables themselves, and I do not think the Postmaster General would agree that he could not conduct the service as efficiently as a Company, and that a Company not of the first class. Why, the right hon. Gentleman has lately come into possession of submarine communication with the Continent, and if it is desirable that Her Majesty's Government should have this international communication in their hands, it is surely all the more desirable they should have intercolonial communication under their control. I do not think the Postmaster General should submit to such a slur upon his Department. According to the agreement, if this cable fails and the Company do not repair it, then Her Majesty's Govern-

ment may step in and repair it for themselves, charging the Company with the expense. But does not that contemplate a state of circumstances under which the Postmaster General, the leading telegraphic expert of the day, will be called in to do the work which the Company cannot do for itself? If the line is to be extended to the West Indies, so the much more is it necessary we should have possession of it; this suggestion of the hon. Gentleman justifies my argument. I do not want to detain the House a moment longer than is necessary, and, putting the case briefly, the sum asked for is larger than the sum which in 1886 was rejected as excessive. The Company were allowed to withdraw a much lower tender a year ago when copper was high, and they have not returned to the original figure now that copper has fallen. Further, the capitalized value of the subsidy, even for 20 years, is greater than the amount of capital which is fixed by the Government as necessary for completing this link of cable. More than this, there are strong reasons to suppose that the subsidy will have to be continued beyond the twenty years. The contract has not been ratified by the House nor by the Company's Shareholders, and no hardship would accrue from refusing it. It is most important that a line for strategic purposes should be worked by official persons. In fact, the Government stipulate that in time of war they will take and work the cable. It would be worked, I maintain, more efficiently and cheaply by the Government; and it is important that our engineers should have training in submarine telegraphy, as they have in land telegraphy.

Amendment proposed,

"To leave out from the word 'That' to the end of the question, in order to add the words 'the proposed telegraphic communication between Halifax, Nova Scotia, and Bermuda would be better and more economically secured by a cable owned and controlled by Her Majesty's Government than by that provided to be laid by the International Cable Company, under the Contract between that Company and Her Majesty's Treasury, dated the 12th day of April, 1889, which this House is asked to approve.'"—*Dr. Cameron.*

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the question."

Dr. Cameron

MR. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury): I believe the Contract is a good one, but my objection is that the British Government, responsible as it is for the Empire, should cease paying subsidies, and take these cables into their own hands. We have of late years been drivelling away large sums of money on subsidies, and the House will be astonished to learn what we are now paying for cable messages. No less than £190,000 was paid last year in subsidies to submarine companies. There is £50,000 a year to the Cable Company and £49,500 to companies having cables to South Africa and along the West Coast. In addition to these sums, the Indian Government must, I think, pay about £60,000, and the Australian Government £33,000, or £35,000 to Cable Companies every year, and besides all these subsidies I find that enormous sums are being paid by the British Government every year to Cable Companies for the cable messages they send to various parts of the Empire. If the Government would only take the matter in hand and deal with the subject as a whole in connection with the trade and commerce of the Empire, I think they would affect an enormous saving by constructing the cables themselves and making a complete net work of Government cables throughout the Empire. Last year I find that the Colonial Office paid £5,000 for messages; the Foreign Office £9,500; the Diplomatic Service, £12,000; and the Circular Service £6,000. In connection with the Army and Navy £12,000 were paid for cable messages, and in addition to that, enormous sums have been paid by the Indian and Colonial Governments for cable messages to England. It will, therefore, be seen that in place of tying ourselves down to continue these subsidies for twenty years, the better policy would be to make a continuous cable connection with all parts of the British Empire, and cease paying these subsidies. Now, Sir, I must leave this matter for a moment, and call attention to two or three defects in the contract which, I think, need explanation. I find in paragraph six it is stated that Government messages are to be sent at a rate not exceeding one-half the rates charged to the general public. Perhaps the hon. Gentleman will tell us whether the rates charged to the general public are fixed, and what they are fixed

at. I cannot find them fixed in any part of the contract, and I think it is ridiculous to state that the Government shall be charged one-half the rate, without, at the same time, fixing what the rates to the public shall be. In the contracts between the Colonial Governments and the Eastern Extension Cable Company, the rates to be charged to the public are expressly laid down. That seems to be a serious defect in the contract, and I have called the attention of my hon. Friend to it in order that he may look into the matter. I should also like to ask him to inform us the distance from Nova Scotia to Bermuda, so that we may have some idea of the cost of maintaining the cable service.

*MR. JACKSON: I think I shall be able in two or three words to show the hon. Member who has moved the Amendment that he has left out of his calculation some very important items. He has contrasted the capitalized value of the subsidy with the cost of constructing and laying the cable, and I believe the figures he has given are pretty accurate. But there are other considerations which the hon. Member appears to have lost sight of. In the first place there is the very important question of the cost of working the cable over a period of 20 years. That is a very considerable sum. Then again you will have to set aside a Sinking Fund. A cable is not perpetual. I think a fair life of a cable is not more than 15 years. The hon. Member has also left out of his account the cost of the maintenance, which again, if conducted by the Government would be a very considerable sum. I have said that in my opinion a company work cheaper than the Government. I do not mean to imply by that that the Government under the same conditions would not work as cheaply as a company, but I say they cannot work under the same conditions as a company which undertakes the contract as part of a general system. I believe if the hon. Member's Amendment were adopted it would involve the Government in an additional cost of at least £5,000 a year. I think the House, therefore, would hardly be likely to adopt the Amendment, but would prefer to give some time to the consideration of the general principle that the Government should take upon itself the responsibility of laying cables to different

parts of the world. In reply to my hon. Friend the Member for Canterbury I may say he will see in the agreement that the Government messages are to be sent in priority to other messages, and that the rates are to be approved by the Treasury. I think that point is therefore sufficiently safeguarded. I believe as a matter of fact that the usual rate is 4s. per word, and in that case the Government would have to pay 2s. I hope that now hon. Members will allow a Division to be taken.

*MR. M'LAREN (Cheshire, Crewe): I think it is obvious that the hon. Gentleman has not really answered the speech of my hon. Friend the Member for Glasgow, especially on the important point of the price to be paid. My hon. Friend stated that the contract is higher than before, although the price of copper has fallen. So many points have been raised by my hon. friend and by the hon. Member for Canterbury that I do not think the House is in a fit state to come to a decision, especially as I can count at least 25 Members fast asleep. It would be a great advantage if we could further discuss the matter, and I beg therefore to move the adjournment of the debate.

Motion made and question proposed: "That the debate be now adjourned"—
(*Mr. Walter M'Laren*).

MR. GOSCHEN: I trust the hon. member will not insist on pressing his motion. I think it is the general sense of the House that the Division should be taken. I think the Secretary to the Treasury has answered all the points raised.

DR. CAMERON: I do not agree with the right hon. Gentleman, for I think the Secretary to the Treasury has completely failed to answer me. I think, too, we ought to have some expression of opinion from right hon. Gentleman, on the Opposition side, who refused to enter into the contract on a previous occasion.

The House divided:—Ayes 29; Noes 152.—(Division List, No. 103).

Question put, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

The House divided:—Ayes 148; Noes 30.—(Division List, No. 104).

Mr. Jackson

Main Question put and agreed to.

Resolved, That the Contract, dated the 12th day of April, 1889, for the Construction of a Submarine Telegraph Line from Halifax, Nova Scotia, to the Island of Bermuda be approved.

CIVIL BILLS IN EJECTMENT AND WRITS FOR RECOVERY OF LANDS.

So much of the Order [25th February] as relates to Return No. 2 read, and discharged; and, instead thereof,—

Civil Bills in Ejectment and Writs for Recovery of Lands,—Ordered,—

Return No. 2.

"Numbers of Writs issued in Actions for Recovery of Rent or Possession in Queen's Bench, Exchequer, and Common Pleas Divisions of the High Court of Justice from 1879 to 1888, for the County of [Cork], [Clare], [Kerry], [Mayo], [Galway]:—

Year.	Number of Writs issued.			Observations.
	Issued for Rent.	Judgments entered.	Issued for possession.	
1879				
1880				
1881				
1882				
1883				
1884				
1885				
1886				
1887				
1888				

MINING ON CROWN LANDS (WALES AND IRELAND) BILL.

Order for second reading read and discharged.

Bill withdrawn.

House adjourned at 20 minutes after one o'clock

—(*Mr. Arthur O'Connor*.)

HANSARD'S PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES.

No. 16.] THIRD VOLUME OF SESSION 1889.

[MAY 18.]

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Friday, 10th May, 1889.

COMMITTEE OF SELECTION FOR STANDING COMMITTEES.

Report from, That the Committee have added the Lord Revelstoke and the Lord Hillingdon to the Standing Committee for Bills relating to Law, &c., for the consideration of the Factors Bill [H.L.]. Read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

ASSIZES RELIEF BILL (NO. 60).

Brought from the Commons; read 1st; to be printed; and to be read 2^d on Thursday next—*(The Lord Herschell).*

THE EDUCATION CODE, 1889.

*THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY, in rising to call attention to the Code of Regulations, with schedules, by the Committee of the Council of Education, 1889, said: My Lords, in calling your Lordships' attention to the new Code, it is in no spirit of hostility to that Code that I am acting, but at the request of a very large number of voluntary school managers and others interested in education, who are in considerable doubt as to the effect upon voluntary schools of several provisions in the Code, which, without more time for consideration, it is not very easy to fully understand. The object of calling the attention of the House to it in this manner is to suggest that further time should be given for consideration. Others who will very probably follow me may say what sort of time they think would be sufficient, or otherwise it may be left to the discretion

of those to whom we are so much indebted. The Code, like other measures, lies upon the table for the purpose of its being considered, and in this instance the period is extended to two months to give more time for consideration. But it is a very important document. The changes recommended in it are very complicated, and the managers over the whole country feel that they really have not time to take them in or see what their working will be. It would be easy for the Lord President and the officers of his Department to say almost at a glance, with the great experience and great knowledge that they have what they conceive that the working would be, but it is not so easy for managers with their more limited range; and there is a real cry over the whole country from those managers—not an unfriendly cry at all, but just an anxious request for more time. It is the voice, not merely from what we should naturally call struggling schools, but it comes also from very large bodies of important schools, which cannot be said to be struggling, but which are properly anxious to give cool review to the circumstances, and especially the financial circumstances, in which they will be placed. Thus I hold in my hand a very important document from the Birkenhead School Attendance Committee, which has worked in this matter with all the School Managers of Birkenhead. Then I have another document from the Church Day Schools Association, a very important Association in Manchester and Salford. The Salisbury Diocesan Board of Education has just telegraphed to me that they unanimously beg for some delay. The Teachers' Guild of Great Britain and Ireland, whose list of Presidents, Vice Presidents, and Council

contain a very large number of the best teachers of all ranks, from public school masters down to elementary school teachers, have also sent in an important criticism which certainly proves concern. Besides these bodies a number of the most experienced educationalists—perhaps that is a bad word—but I mean persons versed in all subjects connected with education, are of the same opinion that this Code requires more time to consider. I might mention, lastly, the great National Society which has held two meetings, presided over by the Bishop of London, who has perhaps had a wider experience of education of all kinds than any person in England, and certainly would not be unfavourable to the Code as the product of the Commission in which he took so much interest. Then, my Lords, I will quickly endeavour to state what are the grounds of anxiety which seem to me to make it reasonable to ask for time. I will ask your Lordships' attention first of all to Clause 72. That clause estimates what is the minimum school staff that will be required, and according to that estimate a smaller number of children are allowed a teacher of every kind, from the provisionally certificated teacher down to the pupil teacher. At first sight it would appear that there must everywhere be a great increase of staff, but a great many schools at present are staffed above their requirements. Those that are not staffed above their requirements, or up to their requirements, would consider it abstractedly a good suggestion, but they are, many of them, not clear how it would work out, nor how they are to pay for it. It is true enough that many schools have more than the number of teachers that are required, but the question for us at this moment is, what hope have those schools which are not properly staffed of getting assistance to enable them to increase their staff up to the right number. How is the additional staff to be provided if no relief at all is given? If these schools cannot meet the requirement, are they to be left to perish? That is the first ground upon which I feel it is not unreasonable to ask for time. The next point to which I will call your Lordships' attention is in Clause 100, by which the grants made to schools are 12s., 14s., or 15s. 6d. Now, as I said,

it is a very simple matter for the Department to run through the necessary calculations, but I venture to say that it is almost impossible for a school which is only acquainted with its own working to see in a moment how this new mode of assessing the grant will affect it. School managers are really in a state of perplexity at this moment as to what their finance is under the new Code, and as to what means they will have for carrying on their schools. The point is this: That all the different items being merged together, it is not clear what schools will get the 12s., or the 14s., or the 15s. 6d. The school managers do not see how they themselves are to be quite sure on which scale of grant they are likely to receive help, and, of course, where every pound is of importance, this makes a very great difference to them. Then, if your Lordships would look at paragraph 4, under Clause 100, it will be seen that,

"If any general grant has once been made, it may be reduced to 12s., but shall not be wholly withdrawn on the ground of inefficiency until after warning that it may be withdrawn at the next annual inspection if the report then made is not satisfactory."

Now what does that mean? It means that there is positively nothing between 12s. and no shillings at all. If they are unfortunate enough to fall below the 12s., they are then left without any resources from this general grant at all; there is nothing between that and starvation except a year's warning. That is a very great change indeed. But there is another point; the conditions, as I have said, are not laid down upon which the 12s., the 14s., or the 15s. 6d. grant may be made, and it is impossible for managers to foresee what the conditions will be. On the contrary, there is a new element of uncertainty introduced. Under paragraph A 1 of Clause 100 we read this:—

"Whether the school should receive any of these sums is determined by the Department after considering the report and recommendation of the Inspector."

Hitherto the schools have felt safe in looking to the Inspector, and the Inspector could give them advice; they might act upon the recommendation of the Inspector, and bring their school or their teaching up to the point. But now, after all, when they have done their

utmost, and the Report of the Inspector has gone into the Department, it still may be revised upon they do not know at all what principles. In the mysteries of the Department there may be a view taken of the school and of the Inspector's Report, and the edict may go forth that after a year's time they are not to receive even the 12s. a year. This produces a very important element of uncertainty, and the managers ask time to learn, in some way or other, what the conditions are on which they are to proceed. I will not detain your Lordships further upon that point. The third point is the creation by a stroke of the pen of day training colleges. Clause 108 says:—

“A training college is an institution either for boarding, lodging, and instructing, or merely instructing students who are preparing to become certificated teachers in elementary schools. The former are called ‘residential,’ the latter ‘day training colleges.’ The same college may be both a residential and a day college.”

So far as I can see, the day training colleges are called into existence by that definition. I thoroughly approve of the creation of day training colleges, but I do not at all approve—for reasons which I need not detain your Lordships with now, because that is not the point before us—of training colleges being made mixed—partly residential and partly day. I think there are very serious objections to that, but of the creation of day training colleges I thoroughly approve. I think it will be a great advance in all education. But the question arises, how are the day training colleges to be provided? How are the funds for them to be raised? when it is under the direction of School Boards, are they immediately to create? What they want in the way of day training colleges out of the rates, and will the voluntary day training colleges be left without any such assistance? If so, of course the competition will be sufficient absolutely to destroy them. That is how it appears, and if it is not so, then here, too, both time and information are wanted. The fourth point is on Clause 85, and that is the last. It is the ambiguity which attends the definitions of what may be required as area and cubic space. By the definition in paragraph A,

“The school premises shall be constructed in general conformity with the rules for plan-

ning and fitting up public elementary schools issued by the Department. This shall be the general rule, unless there are special circumstances. In every case the Department will endeavour to secure at least 100 cubic feet of internal space, and 10 square feet of internal area for each unit of average attendance.”

The area which has been hitherto required is 8 square feet, and the internal space 80 cubic feet. The question that arises upon this paragraph which increases the area to 10 feet and the cubic space to 100 feet is whether this is to be retrospective or prospective only; if it were retrospective, or if it were left possible that some day the literal interpretation might be acted upon, or acted upon with a short notice, then that would be absolute ruin and destruction to a very considerable number of schools. It is quite true that many schools have a great deal more area than is required for their average attendance; but on the other hand there are a great many that have not, and we do not know what consideration is to be shown them, if any. My Lord President was good enough to answer the question when it was put to him the other day in the very plainest terms, but I regret to say that his answer, which was all that anyone could expect, has not circulated through the country. For some reason it was not properly reported. Perhaps the full importance of it was not perceived, and it was put so shortly and so obscurely that I think the great majority of school managers are not much the wiser for it. I have no doubt the Lord President will again answer the question, and then I hope the information may be diffused in such a manner as to give satisfaction. If the rule were in any degree retrospective, great injustice would still be done, because there have been schools built on plans sanctioned by the Department, and which have complied with all the requirements of the Department. There are, indeed, instances where at the time the school was built, the managers were willing to give 10 square feet of internal area, and 100 cubic feet of internal space, and the Department declined to grant permission on the ground that 8 feet and 80 feet were sufficient. Of course, it would be a gross injustice if any of those schools were now interfered with. We know that there is not the slightest intention on the part of the Department that any-

thing of that kind should be done, but as the words stand they could at any future time be interpreted, and must be interpreted if taken literally, so as to effect that injustice. Therefore it is hoped by those who have commissioned me to speak to your lordships that an assurance on this head will be given in very clear and definite form. Then besides that there is the very earnest request on the part of school managers that they may be allowed time to ascertain their condition and their own prospects. The Manchester and Salford Committee, which is a very important one indeed, have sent a table showing what would happen to them. It appears by that table that a very large number of their schools, which are not likely to be inadequate in instruction or anything else, would have a reduction made in the number of children allowed to attend them, which would have very unhappy consequences in the carrying on of the schools. My Lords, I shall not detain the House further by entering into details, but I ask your lordships whether I have made out a case for granting the request that there may be more time given for consideration of the Code. There are only nine days now left.

*THE BISHOP OF LONDON: My Lords, I join very heartily with the most reverend Primate in expressing a very strong hope that nothing that I should say should be considered disloyal to the President of the Council or to the Department over which he presides, because I am most heartily convinced that the President is desirous of improving education and of maintaining the voluntary schools in the position they hold as supplying a most important part of the education system of the country; and in what I have to say about this Code, I desire very much to follow in the lines which the right reverend Archbishop has marked out, and simply support his contention that sufficient time should be allowed thoroughly to apprehend how the working of this Code will affect the schools. The Code is founded upon what seems, at first sight, to be a most reasonable principle. After a large Commission had been appointed and worked for some years, and had made their Report or Reports, it appeared that on certain points they were unanimous and on certain points they were

divided. Nothing seems more natural than to say, "Let us adopt the recommendations in which the Commission were unanimous, and let the recommendations upon which they were divided wait for further consideration." But the state of the case makes that principle work out very hardly to one of the two parties, because the Commission were thoroughly unanimous in one thing—they were unanimous (and every member of the Commission felt this very strongly) in the desire to improve education, and everything that seemed to them likely to make education more thorough and more complete and more suited to the purpose for which it was intended, received very warm support from both the majority and the minority. Further, there was in a certain sense a unanimous desire that the education should be a religious education. I say "in a certain sense," because there stepped in of necessity a considerable difference of opinion as to the proper means of providing that religious education; and when you go a step further and look to see what the Commission had to say about the supply of the necessary funds for the carrying out of all these improvements, then you see that the Commission were altogether at variance, because there can be no doubt that one side was very anxious indeed that the voluntary schools should still maintain their place, and the other side while tolerating the voluntary schools and not desiring altogether to sweep them away, indicated plainly enough that they would on the whole prefer that they should gradually die out. All the recommendations, therefore, that touched upon this question of how the schools were to be maintained fell under the head of not being unanimously recommended by the Commission, and therefore the very principle on which the Code is drawn, has a natural tendency to lean towards the views of the minority rather than the views of the majority with regard to this part of it. Now I have premised this as pointing out where it is, as it seems to me, that the very principle upon which the Bill is based cannot be entirely trusted to represent the aim of the Commissioners. It is not quite the case that the Commissioners made those recommendations in which they were unanimous

absolutely without any relation to those recommendations in which they were divided. On the contrary, it was stated that the recommendations in which they were unanimous were made in the hope that the other recommendations would be adopted with them. It was intended that they should all go together as a whole, and that as a whole the propositions should be worked. This has a very important bearing upon the relation of the Code to voluntary schools. Now, my Lords, when I first read this Code I thought it embodied a very great advance, and that there would be very considerable advantages from it, but I confess that even at first I was rather startled at many of the details of it, which seemed to me to be somewhat dangerous. To come at once to the detail that is perhaps the most important of all, I will refer to Article 100 which effects a change in the nature of the grant. The grant is to be 12s., 14s., or 15s. 6d. per child, and whether the school is to have 12s., 14s., or 15s. 6d. is to be determined by the Department after considering the Report and the recommendation of the Inspector. No definition is here given—I do not suppose a definition could be very easily given—of the standard which would be required in order to bring the schools up to 14s. or 15s. 6d. Here I want to call your Lordships' attention to what, in my opinion, is the most important point. I desire to point out what, unconsciously perhaps, but very really is constantly influencing all the officials of the Department, namely, the feeling that they are the guardians of the public purse in a certain degree, and they must look to economy and see that no more money is spent than is really wanted to do the thing that is to be done. With that feeling in mind there is the tendency to make this amount of 12s., 14s., or 15s. 6d. a matter of competition, and you will observe it makes a very considerable difference. Here is a school which hopes to get 14s., and perhaps just succeeds in getting 14s., and another school which is a little way below it only gets the 12s. The 12s. school is immediately stirred up very much to a race with the 14s. school and tries to raise itself up to earn 14s. also. There is nothing objectionable in that, and if the result were that when the 12s. school got up to the 14s. level it

got the 14s. that would be a very good thing; but if the result is that it gets the 14s., and the school which had the 14s. in order to make room for it is lowered down to 12s., then, I say, that such a course of proceeding must seriously impair the working of the schools. Yet the temptation to this will be very strong. There will be certainly a strong temptation to pull up the standard a little higher in order that the Department may not be obliged to give so many schools the 14s. grant for fear that there will be largely increased demands upon the Revenue of the country. It is a most natural thing, and it will certainly work in the way that I have described unless you are constantly on the watch against it. It is very easy to raise the standard without in any degree whatever seeming to do anything unfair, and sometimes the standard may be raised for the express purpose of not having to spend so much money. It would be very easy, for instance, to put harder questions in the arithmetic paper on the ground that so very many schools answered the questions that they really could not be hard enough, and that the fact that there were so few failures was sufficient to prove that the questions were a great deal too easy. I confess that I myself have always felt that the tendency is to make the questions too hard, and I think so still. I still think that the tendency is to ask questions rather for the purpose of finding out what the children do not know than of seeing that the children do know what they ought to know. And I think that this tendency is secretly but steadily encouraged by the desire to prevent anything like extravagance. In my view the Inspector should put his questions in such a way that if the school has been well taught the children will feel that the questions are such that they are able to handle—a good many of them would still make mistakes, but the questions should be such as to test the knowledge of the children. I am confident that the tendency of any Department which is honestly trying to serve the country by preventing extravagance will be in the direction I have indicated. I do not object to any attempt to save money by the Department, provided you do not save money in such a way as to damage the teach-

ing. What I myself should very much prefer, instead of these 12s., 14s., and 15s. 6d. grants, would be that the Department should fix a certain grant, and say that is the normal grant; and, having fixed that as the normal grant, go on to say that there may be a shilling struck off from it, or even 2s. in cases where there is some grievous deficiency, as a warning, and if the warning be not taken, the time may come when no grant will be given at all; and in the same way I should not object to the Department having power to say to a school—"This is really a very remarkable and exceptional school, and it shall have, on that account, an extra grant, to be spent in whatever way the school managers think fit for the improvement of the school." But I should limit both the diminution on the one side and the merit grant on the other side to such clear circumstances as to leave the school, as a whole, in no doubt at all about the money they would get. A system of that kind, it is obvious, would work quite in another way from a system such as we have here, where there is—under the idea of improving education and raising the standard—a perpetual tendency to make the work of what is called "earning the money" more difficult. I do not at all mean to say that I do not think, as it stands, this is not a great improvement on the former system. I think it is a very considerable improvement. I only desire to point out, for the House and for the Government, a danger which I think of very grave importance. I do not desire to dwell further upon this, because I do not think it is necessary for the House or for the Department that it should go into minute details. There is, however, another point which has been impressed upon me a good deal, on which I have been asked a great many questions which I have not been able to answer, and that is with regard to the day training colleges. I have been asked over and over again who is to supply these day training colleges? Are they to be paid for out of the rates? Is there anything which would enable a School Board—say the School Board for London—to set up a day training college here in London? That would be a completely new departure. There is nothing said of that sort here, neither is there anything said as to when or where

these training colleges are to be set up. It is left entirely in the air, and the authorities of training colleges and the members of voluntary schools are under a good deal of anxiety on this subject. If the matter is left as hitherto, and these day training colleges are to be set up by the efforts of private individuals, the Education Department merely recognizing them and giving them grants on this footing, I think it would be better that that should be distinctly stated; but I cannot find anything that clears up the point. For myself, I confess I do not consider that we ought to fear the competition of any of these day training colleges. I think they ought to be set up, and I think they will be a very useful addition to our educational system when they are set up; but it is another thing entirely if they are to be set up at the cost of the country to enter into competition with all those which have been set up at very great cost to private supporters, and to put them to considerable difficulties in maintaining their position. It is possible of course on these points there may be much clearer explanations given than I am able to give. I am only speaking as the mouth-piece of a very great many besides myself, and though I have said what I have said about Article 100 more fully on account of my own acquaintance with the matter, yet I think that is the only point upon which I, myself, very strongly feel the alarm which has been expressed all over the country. With regard to the other points, there are a great many criticisms which I might make on the Code, which I do not think I could urge upon the Government as grounds for delay; but I do feel very strongly, that in as far as this requires the schools to incur additional expense, it would be right that those measures of relief which were recommended for the schools should go *pari passu* with the demands that will be made upon them. We did very earnestly recommend that the schools should be exempted from the payment of rates, and we did recommend that the 17s. 6d. limit should be raised to at least 20s.; and I think those recommendations are of a nature that might very well go side by side with the recommendations which the new Code has adopted and embodied. I will conclude by saying for myself,—

speaking only for myself—that I do look upon the Code as a real advance; I look upon it as a real gain; and if the choice be between having this Code now at once, and not having this Code at all, or anything in the nature of this Code, I for one would rather have it at once, I confess. But I cannot say that those who have asked me to take this matter up, would at all concur in this. They rather feel they would prefer that the whole thing should wait, at whatever cost or risk. I have ventured to put my criticisms before the House and the Government. There are other points which I should otherwise and in other circumstances have noticed. Particularly, for instance, I would rather wish that the provisions for evening schools were made more distinctly to bear upon our continuation schools, as we call them in our Report. I think that continuation schools are wanted in many cases to relieve voluntary schools from doing work for which they are not properly fitted, and on the other hand, in order to give boys who have left the elementary schools some chance of pushing their particular steps further on, without of necessity going through what would amount, if properly called, to a course of secondary education. Again, I think that amongst our recommendations, was one for the employment of organizing teachers to set to work upon various schools at once—to take a group, and to organize the teachers now at work among them. I do not see any distinct provisions for meeting that recommendation, and I think that is of very grave importance. On all grounds however, I concur with the desire of the members throughout the country, that there should be some delay before a Code effecting such important changes as does this, passes into actual law.

THE EARL OF HARROWBY: My Lords, I venture to say a few words upon this subject because I have been consulted by people in different parts of the country a good deal—perhaps naturally, having regard to the many years during which I was Vice President, and to my connection with the Royal Commission on Education. With regard to the Code itself, it is impossible not to see that the change, as I have said before in this House, is by far the largest one in the whole education system that has been

proposed since Mr. Forster's time. Every education authority will agree with that—that the change is of the largest character, and will affect for good or for evil the schools in the strongest possible degree. We are put at a certain disadvantage in arguing this matter, because, unfortunately, the usual Returns from the Education Department as to the schools for the last year are not on the Table of Parliament. I exceedingly regret that my noble Friend did not take that step, and, before the Code was discussed, give us the latest details as to the condition of the schools. Anybody who has to do with education is aware that we discuss the Code under a great disadvantage. It is exceedingly difficult to estimate what the effect of the Code will be. At first I confess I was more in favour of the Code than I must acknowledge I am now. I see a marked change of opinion all over the country. I observe that one of the best education critics that we have—the gentleman, whoever he may be, who writes for the *Times*, and who wrote very enthusiastically at first, is beginning, from all I can find, to be now a little more doubtful as to the effect of the Code upon the future of voluntary schools. I see that his estimate is now that the cost of voluntary schools will clearly be increased by about 15 per cent. With regard to this Code, do let us remember that when changes such as are proposed by my noble Friend are made, they cannot be reversed. Certain of the changes proposed are absolutely irreversible when once made, so that we should be strictly careful to accompany them with all attendant safeguards which may be wise and good for the Education cause. Then I would ask the House to remember one other very important point as to the Royal Commission. That Royal Commission pressed nothing more strongly than this: that frequent changes in the Code and in the Education System are disastrous to education. I confess I was somewhat guilty as to that very point when I was at the head of the Department, but the years that have passed have convinced me more and more that nothing is so mischievous for the children, as well as to the teachers and managers, as constant changes, even if they are good, in the Educational System. I would therefore press upon your Lord-

ships, as this is probably the last word during the term of the present Parliament that we shall hear from the Government Benches upon the Education question, that very careful study should be given to the present proposals. As to the Royal Commission, everybody who knows what the recommendations of that Commission were, will see that a number of the most important ones have not been taken any notice of at all. I think it is a very significant fact that the under-current of the speeches of the two right reverend Prelates was undoubtedly one of very considerable alarm; and what makes the ground for alarm still greater, to my mind, is the total uncertainty in which we are as to the effect of the new provisions on the schools. Neither the most reverend Primate nor the right reverend Prelate could give us any opinion, experts as they are, how the Code would affect the existing schools. We have heard that instructions are to be issued which will explain to us how the Code will be worked, but until we have those instructions before us we are still in the dark. I would entreat noble Lords to remember that no assurances of a Minister are of any avail whatever, except during his own tenure of office. They do not bind his successor, nor do the instructions that he issues bind his successor; and, as showing the extreme uselessness of this sort of assurances, I would call attention to what the right rev. Primate mentioned—that the speech of my noble Friend, which was supposed to assure voluntary school managers upon a most important point, was hardly reported at all; so that if anybody in future years wishes to refer to it they will look in vain for any Report of what was said—

VISCOUNT CRANBROOK: Except in *Hansard*.

EARL OF HARROWBY: Still, if it was in *Hansard*, everybody knows these assurances are absolutely waste paper when the Minister leaves his Department. I, therefore, hope that no friends of education will give too much force to any of these assurances. Hearty and absolutely genuine as we know they will be coming from him or any other Minister, they do not affect in any way whatever the future of the education system as soon as there is a change of Government. I own I regret very much that the very excellent precedent that

was set by Mr. Mundella or by my noble Friend opposite, Lord Aberdare, was not followed, and that a Code involving such enormous changes should not have been allowed to remain before Parliament during the whole of one Session. I referred the other day to Mr. Mundella's speech upon that Code. He said—

“He could only say that the Code brought out categorically all the minute changes that he proposed to make in the following year, and during the Recess he would be very glad to receive suggestions on the subject, which would receive his most candid and most careful consideration during that period. His own object was to treat this thing as free from party, in order that the best possible system of National Education should be arrived at.”

As I said before in this House, I think nothing gave such confidence to the administration of my noble Friend as giving that entire year for consideration of the large changes he proposed; and the changes proposed in this Code are tenfold larger than those that were proposed then. It was with some regret that I heard the explanation of the noble Lord the President of the Council, which he gave to the House the other day—that the reason for the incompleteness of the Code was that its aim was simply to effect those changes which the Royal Commission were unanimous in recommending. If your Lordships will remember that all the most conflicting opinions were represented upon that Commission, most rightly and wisely, I would ask whether it is possible to confine the changes which should be made in the Education system to those only which were agreed upon by all the members of that Commission. It is just as if you said that you would never legislate until you got the unanimous opinion of every Member on every side of the House of Commons. I would also ask your Lordships to remember that in the recommendations of that Commission a distinct reservation was made by those who drew up the Report, which was signed by 15 gentlemen of very different opinions, that the recommendations should only be taken as a whole and not separately. That, I think, is a very important point in considering this Code. If I were asked to say what I thought the leading features of this Code were, after carefully considering it I should say that I see first of all a most earnest

desire to advance education. I most gladly say that, because I cannot so generally approve of the Code. I am quite sure that my noble Friend below me, Viscount Cranbrook, was most anxious to do the very best on this great subject. I see also that there is a very excellent object kept in view—namely, to give more freedom to the teachers, which, I believe, is very important to the cause of education. But after saying what it seems to me are the leading features, it seems to me that the Code will lead to greater expense all round for every school. It is impossible not to see, however you may try to avoid the conclusion, that it does mean much more expense to all schools. Then, I do not think that you can say generally that the education in our schools as a whole will be raised by it. I am afraid that the effect of the monetary arrangement will be that the best schools will be heavily fined, and will, therefore, be discouraged from pursuing their higher operations. Then with regard to the rural schools, which the Commission were very anxious to put on a satisfactory footing, I confess I do not see that the curriculum will be improved in any way. But the leading features of all you cannot escape observing to be these: that the Inspectors will be more powerful than ever with regard to the schools—that the Inspectors will have the fate of schools to a very great extent in their hands; and more than that, the Department, which has hitherto been very powerful, will now become the absolute masters of the future of all schools under the clean sweeping clauses, whereby so much is left to the discretion of the Inspector and the Minister. That, my Lords, is, I venture to say, against the whole spirit of the Education Commission. The Education Commission wished rather to decentralize and to diminish the power of the Department, rather than to increase it. My own impression is that there is a very serious peril that the voluntary system will be unintentionally but certainly injured by the operation of the Code. With regard to the notions which are current in the country as to the Code, the right Rev. Prelates have spoken very fully. I would only ask your Lordships just to listen while I read an opinion to which I attach very

great importance, not as to the educational effect, for it does not bear upon that; but as to the monetary effect of the new provisions. I casually saw this in the newspapers two days ago. It is from the annual report of the Home and Colonial School Society, one of the most excellent and advanced educational bodies that there are in the country.

"The recently issued Education Code proposed changes of greater importance and more sweeping operation than any that had been introduced since the passing of Mr. Forster's Act in 1870. . . . By the new Code . . . in no case whatever would the cost of maintenance be diminished. In all thoroughly well-staffed schools there would be little extra expense, but in the poorer schools the terms of the Code indicated very plainly much additional cost. Viewing this enhanced cost alone, both in the matter of staff and for improved premises and apparatus, the committee concluded that the smaller and poorer classes of voluntary schools unable to bear the increased pressure upon their resources would soon be put an end to. But this was by no means the design of the Education Department nor of the Government. . . ."

That I hold to be a very important and perfectly impartial testimony, coming from a body which is not connected especially with the Church, but is connected with all denominations. Then I would quote the opinion of a legal Member of the Commission, whom I will not name, but he is probably one of the best authorities on this subject. He writes:—

"I am very unhappy about the new Code. It is clearly framed in such a way as to destroy many many voluntary schools, at least that will be the result of it even in the present hands. I am afraid that the noble Lords and the Vice President hardly see this. It cannot, of course, be their aim or wish, but I am afraid that the result is absolutely certain."

That opinion with me had very great weight, I confess. I will now ask your Lordships to observe not only what are the dangers of the working of the Code, but what to many is quite as important with regard to this Code—what are the serious omissions it makes with regard to the recommendations of the Royal Commission. I take it that many of these recommendations if they had been treated would have made the whole difference in the present Code with regard to its safety, and its educational advantages. The first serious omission which I notice is that with regard to the pupil teachers. The pupil teachers, as

everybody knows, are the very basis and foundation of the teaching, and the Commissioners strongly pressed that every encouragement should be given to improve their teaching. We pressed strongly that some extra grant should be given to enable pupil teachers to have central instruction in the towns, and in the country to have certain groupings arranged, so as to secure better teaching for the pupil teachers. We recommended that provisions should be made to diminish their own labour in the schools, so that they might have more time for instruction. With regard to this most important point, I am sorry to say that I see no provision in the Code. So with regard to the curriculum, we strongly urged that the curriculum of all schools should be raised. I am afraid I miss any treatment of that very important subject. Then with regard to the moral training, I do not see any fresh provisions to enforce any more direct attention to the moral training and discipline of the schools, which the Commission were so anxious about. Also with regard to the teaching in the rural schools, we pressed strongly that more should be done in the way of elementary science, drawing, and cooking, and with regard to meeting the extreme difficulties in those cases in the country, we urged that contributions should be made to itinerant teachers. That is a point on which, I believe, the Commission were quite unanimous, and I am sorry to say that it is altogether omitted in the Code. Then with regard to the organizing masters, I believe nothing in my experience has proved to be more advantageous than an organizing master having charge of a large number of schools, and looking in upon them once or twice in a year, recommending improvements of every kind, educational and otherwise. In parts of Yorkshire, in South London, and in various other places, the benefit has been very great. We recommended a small grant for that purpose, and I am sorry to see that that recommendation has not been acted upon. Then with regard to the question of enlargement, the Department takes large powers of enforcing an increased size of schools. Well, there is a great deal to be said on both sides of that matter, but it should be remembered that in all our recommendations with

regard to that we said that there ought to be some subvention to meet the increased expenses. Then, we strongly urged that the pressure upon the poor town schools should be met in some way. It is extremely difficult in some towns to get local assistance. The 17s. 6d. limit hits them very cruelly if they do well, and yet these poor towns schools are of the greatest possible advantage. If we are to choose between giving up the voluntary schools in the country and the voluntary schools in the towns, I should say, looking at the matter from a broad social point of view, it is more important to have these centres of friendly communication between class and class in the towns than it is in the country. The Commission were unanimous in saying the poor towns schools require further aid. I have looked carefully through the whole Code and I can find nothing that will help the poor towns schools, but on the contrary, a good deal that, I am afraid, will tend to harm them. There is, no doubt, a good intention pervading the Code throughout. There is the good intention to help the schools by extra grants, but when you look into the question you will see that by raising the educational demands all round, those extra grants will not only be no gain to them, but they will be worse off under them than they were before. Then with regard to evening schools, I cannot express how deeply I regret that that great subject has not been taken up. The Commission, of all shades of opinion, urged "the complete reorganization" (that was the phrase) of the evening school system, which has been spoken of as the "Evening continuation school system." Why did they do that? If there was one point upon which they were unanimous, it was in expressing the opinion that children in all parts of the country forget all they learn after leaving school; so that really, after spending all these millions upon education, the country does not get a *quid pro quo* for its money. We urged, therefore, that there should be a bold and comprehensive treatment of the evening school system. I am quite sure that the advantages educationally, socially, and morally of the effective working of the evening continuation school system would be perfectly untold; and upon

that point I think the Commission were perfectly unanimous. I very much regret that that point has not been taken up. Now, with regard to day training colleges, I am one of those who are in favour of trying the experiment, but it must be remembered that all the conditions which the Commission recommended in the carrying out of the experiment are left out of the Code. This is, after all, an experiment, but it is of infinite importance that the teachers should not only be well trained intellectually but should be moral and well-conditioned people. With regard to the day training colleges, we said that if the experiment is made the serious attention of Parliament would have to be directed to these points—"To getting some security for the religious and moral instruction of the day scholars who were to be teachers." I see nothing of that. "That the constitution of a governing body like the managing committee of a training college should be responsible for the efficiency of education, and should also provide model schools for the teachers to teach in." I see no provision for that. "Some security that the students trained at the public cost should devote themselves to educational pursuits afterwards in elementary schools." That is a most important point, because otherwise, at the public cost, you will train a number of young people for ordinary commercial life. I see nothing about that in the Code. "Security that the supply of day training college teachers shall not exceed the demand"—in other words, that you do not artificially swell and swamp the teaching profession. I am afraid I cannot discover any security in the Code for that. Those are some of the important matters which do not find any place in the present Code. The answer may be that they will be embodied in a future Code. I say then you disturb again the Educational arrangements of the country. And remember that many of the fears and oppositions which are now raised regarding the present Code would not exist if the schools had got the advantages which are asked for in the Report of the Commissioners, particularly if the 17s. 6d. limit were removed, and if there were the exemption from rates, which is certainly very much called for. Those points require fresh legislation, but the

other points that I have referred to involve only the Amendment of the new Code. As far as I see at the present moment, I am afraid that the Code will not secure the willing assent of any one of the parties interested in Education. I have been watching the subject very carefully, and I only find great alarm amongst those who are connected with voluntary schools, Church schools, and other schools. I do not see any warm reception on the part of those who were represented by the minority on the Royal Commission. I have looked at their latest utterances, and they say that the Code now proposed will be held in no way to settle the Education Question. I see, therefore, nothing but unsettlement before me. I know the Code is produced with the best possible intentions, and I exceedingly regret, at any time, to be in opposition to my noble Friend, or to the Government; but I feel certain that if my noble Friend will only consent to follow the precedent of the noble Lord opposite and Mr. Mundella, and will meet the wishes of the great majority of the schools and let the Code be before the country for such a period that it may be thoroughly considered, that next year he will be able to take up the omitted recommendations of the Royal Commission; he will be able to get rid of the evils which I am afraid do attach to the proposed Code, and he will then, with the willing consent, with the hearty approbation of all who are concerned in education, be able to carry a Code effecting a great educational change which will do infinite credit to himself and the Government, and put the whole educational system upon a permanent, satisfactory, and enlightened position. I trust my noble Friend will forgive me for criticising the Code so freely, but we have the same great objects in view, and in what I have said I have been actuated by the desire that my noble Friend and the Government should have the credit of effecting an educational improvement of great national importance.

*EARL FORTESCUE: My Lords, I have no prejudice against Board Schools at all. I have only lamented that so many managers of schools, in London especially, thought it their duty to carry on a continual struggle to maintain voluntary schools under desperate

and hopeless circumstances, instead of acquiescing in what was found to be inevitable after a great expenditure of energy and money, and doing their best to turn the Board Schools to the best account. I will not continue the protest that has been so ably already made, against the hardship that would be inflicted upon the Managers of the voluntary schools, if the foundations upon which they were originally encouraged to build and to carry on those schools, were to be superseded by any ruinously onerous new conditions and requirements. It should be remembered that many of these Managers, at very heavy sacrifice and in the most generous manner, provided, to a great extent, for the education of the country before there was a question of Parliament enacting that education should be compulsory and universal, and made provision for the consequent expense, partly out of grants from the Treasury, and partly, where so found necessary, by imposing an entirely new rate upon the rate-payers of the country, that is, upon the owners and occupiers of real property only. I would only remind your Lordships that the hardships would be much the greater, because, as the right rev. Primate so truly said, the Department at one time besides insisting as it always has done, upon certain requirements as to accommodation and other points, actually refused grants, if it was proposed that schools should be built with (in their opinion), excessive accommodations or at an excessive expense. I remember well that to two schools that I was building I proposed to add a porch, quite as much for shelter as for ornament; but simply because the porches would have involved such additional expense as to forfeit the grant, they had to be abandoned. Whatever may be said of Board Schools, it is not denied either by their friends or opponents that they are carried on at a greater expense than voluntary schools, and these are not times when, whether in the shape of extra subscriptions or in the shape of extra rates, any sudden extra requirements can immediately be met without considerable hardship. It seems to me to be a reasonable case for something like a compromise—not on the one hand disregarding the conditions required by an improved standard of

education, nor on the other hand insisting almost suddenly on changes and improvements which may involve almost ruinous expense. With regard to new requirements suggested on sanitary grounds, my labours for more than 40 years, and I may add some suffering, on behalf of that good cause should prevent my being suspected of indifference to sanitary considerations. But I think common sense will tell us that requirements which may be not only reasonable but almost essential for schools situated with their playgrounds in the centre of dense populations, and which children arrive at and return from through crowded streets and narrow alleys. Many of them to single rooms lived in by day and slept in at night by the whole family, as is too often the case in our large towns are not equally essential in the case of schools situate in open villages and attended by children coming to or returning through country lanes or paths from cottages, all with one separate day-room at least in addition to generally two or three bedrooms. My Lords, I will say that I do not regret a word of what I addressed to your Lordships the other day in speaking of the very real and valuable improvements which are to be found in this Code. I mentioned one that struck me very particularly, and with regard to which the Department has shown a practical good sense, which it has not always shown. For years and years the successive Codes insisted that if a child failed in, say, arithmetic one year it was not to be presented in the standard which it had been unable to pass last year, but it was to catch up its arrears and be examined in as high a standard as those who with facility and success passed the former standard in the year before. One of the great improvements of the Code is that return to common sense which enacts that children are to be examined in the classes which the teachers select for them. Up to the present time there had been a want of recognition of child nature in the provisions of the Code, and I am bound to say that in that respect this Code has made valuable improvements. The hereditary principle applies to mental qualities as well as bodily qualities. A number of your Lordships, like myself, count among your ancestors distinguished lawyers

accustomed to abstract reasoning; as a rule, the higher and more cultivated classes, for generation after generation, have been accustomed to abstract reasoning and to the study of abstract principles. But it should be remembered that in the case of a very large proportion of the children who are now educated in our elementary schools, no one of their ancestors, perhaps for a thousand years, ever grappled with the difficulties of, say, grammar. Therefore, it is not surprising that we should find a good deal of over-pressure among children who have inherited from their parents a natural difficulty and disability in dealing with abstract principles and abstract reasoning. I observe, myself, a great improvement in the Code in several respects; but as the noble Lord has truly said, the changes made by it are indeed vast. It must be remembered that when a certain period has elapsed it obtains the force of Statute Law, and in the event of any change of President, still more of Government, it is still binding and imperative. Moreover, we have very good reason to deprecate frequent changes in the Code, so I do earnestly hope that the Government will consent to postpone the operation of the Code at a sacrifice, it may be, of the improvements in it for a while, and allow more time for its consideration and understanding by the country, and more time for the adoption of suggestions which I am quite sure the noble Lord President would not be at all above receiving from experts and friends of education throughout the country.

***LORD HERRIES:** My Lords, I do not propose to detain the House very long, but I wish to take this opportunity of saying that I have had the means of learning what are the opinions of the Roman Catholic Bishops of England on the subject of this Code, and I am able to say that they are unanimous in the wish that it should be withdrawn this year. A short time ago I attended a meeting of the poor schools Committee, which is a Committee representative of every Roman Catholic Diocese in England and Scotland, consisting of two lay to one clerical member. This Committee came to a resolution almost unanimously to the same effect, that in their opinion the best course would be for the Government to withdraw the Code. My Lords, I cannot help

saying that I am of opinion that these Codes coming so frequently and making such great alterations, and requiring often a great expenditure of money on the part of the managers, unsettle the conditions of our schools, and make the position of voluntary schools more difficult. I will quote to you an answer which was made by a great authority, the greatest authority perhaps in regard to this question. In Answer No. 608 made before the Royal Commission, with regard to the difference between the voluntary schools and the Board Schools, and the expenditure required upon them, Mr. Cumin said—

“Inasmuch as the rates are an inexhaustible resource to go upon as compared with voluntary contributions, there is no doubt that the requirements of voluntary schools might be much more severely felt than the same requirements by the Board Schools.”

After which he assented to the proposition that—

“A continuance of minutes of that character might entirely exhaust the help of the voluntary schools.”

The question is whether the result of Codes of this sort making greater demands upon the voluntary subscriptions of the people may not in the end make it impossible for the small voluntary schools to exist at all. That is a question which will come before us before very long. Now, in criticising the Code which has been brought before us to-night, I should like to say a few words in support of the criticism of the right reverend Prelate of Clause 72, which refers to the increase of staff. Additional certificated teachers are required in future for an average attendance of 60 instead of 70. That in some cases may necessitate a great expenditure—so great that it may be the means of shutting up some of the smaller schools altogether. Then there are other questions. There is the question of school accommodation which is a very serious matter. It affects not only the denominational schools but all the smaller schools throughout the country. The difference between 100 cubic feet of internal space to each unit of average attendance and 80 feet is very great. It is all very well in large towns, where you require the extra space, but in the rural districts where the air is good it is not necessary to have such a large

amount of internal space as in the overcrowded towns. But that is left entirely to the Inspectors, and throughout the Code a great deal too much seems to be left to the Inspectors. After all the Inspectors are human; they may be subject to bilious attacks, or fits of bad temper, and, going into the school, may be dissatisfied with everything, and may come away and make a Report to the Department, the result of which is that the grant is withdrawn altogether. Is it fair that the result of that few hours' inspection of the school should be the means of depriving the school of the grant? I hope that the noble Lord the President of the Council will really take these matters into consideration. I quite agree with what has fallen from the right reverend and noble Lords who have preceded me as to the great interest which the noble Lord President takes in voluntary education, and I hope he will give us a practical proof of it by, if possible, postponing this Code for another year.

*VISCOUNT CRANBROOK: My Lords, the outcry that has been made all over the country against the new Code which has been lying for some time on your Lordship's table, has, to a certain extent, taken me by surprise, because it is founded on the Report of the Royal Commission. The Royal Commission was issued because people were dissatisfied with the existing state of things, and thought that some alteration should be made. I venture to say that if I had met Parliament this year without having made alterations in the Code, the outcry would have been ten times as great as it has been upon the Code that is now before us. My Lords, I myself think that a great number of those who have taken up this question, have been rather influenced by what they have heard than by what they have examined; and that it will be found that this Code so far from being hostile to the voluntary schools is fair and just alike to the voluntary schools and to other schools; for I do not suppose there is any one of your Lordships, however much he may be interested in voluntary schools who would wish that because they are voluntary they should be treated with such laxity that their management would become careless; nor, on the other hand, that if they do their best they should want that support

which the Parliamentary grant would give them. Now with regard to some of the points on which the right reverend Prelate and my noble Friend behind me have touched. There are some of them, as they themselves are well aware, which refer only to questions that must be settled by legislation and not by the Code at all. I admit that the Royal Commission made recommendations with respect to that legislation, but all those recommendations were strongly contested by the minority; and when it is suggested that we might have brought forward legislative measures simultaneously with the Code, it must be remembered that the minority is very strongly represented in the other House of Parliament, not only by those who may be said to be in opposition to the Government, but by large numbers of persons in that House who are generally supporters of the Government, but who would not be upon a matter of this kind. I think it only right and fair to say that because my noble Friends have seemed to take it for granted that any one of those recommendations would be at once carried and that, however much I might be disposed to put them off I have no right to do so on the ground that they would be strongly opposed. Now, my Lords, with regard to some of those recommendations which I think might probably be carried easily, there is one which I think might fairly be dealt with. Though I am not in favour generally of exemption from rates, I think in the special case of voluntary schools which find it difficult to pay their way it is hardly fair to add the rates; and while the Board Schools pay rates out of rates it would be only just to give relief to those who, doing the same work, are so encumbered. But it was not possible to include that subject in the Code. I will, as far as possible, avoid taking up your Lordship's time by going into details, but I thank the right rev. Prelate the Lord Bishop of London for the words he has used finally, that if he had to choose between the withdrawal of this Code and its immediate enactment he would choose its immediate enactment; and I think I shall be able to show your Lordships that the passing of this Code must be a great advantage to schools throughout the country. First of all I will refer to the question of space. It is by many supposed and it

is industriously circulated throughout the country that the requirements as to space would destroy thousands of voluntary schools. Anything so monstrous and so absurd as that statement cannot possibly be conceived. At page 537 of the Report of the Committee of Council of last year particulars are given of the accommodation and the average attendance of all the schools that come for the Parliamentary grant—I mean voluntary schools—and anyone studying the figures and noting the enormous amount of room which there is available must come to the conclusion that this clause in the Code will hardly be operative in any single case. In the new Code 10 ft. of internal area and 100 cubic feet of space are made the general rule instead of 8 ft. and 80 ft. as before. When the right rev. Prelate asked some days ago whether this was intended to apply to existing schools, I said certainly not, and that it was not a hard and fast rule. And nothing would have been more unjust if it had been. The schools which existed were sanctioned by the Department on their present dimensions, and a certain number of children were allowed, and I say nothing would be more unjust than to press such schools now. The noble Lord who spoke just now (Lord Fortescue) seemed to be under the impression that a great deal of mischief might ensue if this law were to be put into operation upon all the schools which now exist. Now, even supposing that that were done upon a hard and fast scale, as he seems to think it will be, there has been an examination of 1,715 schools in the counties of Lincoln, Somerset, and the North Riding of Yorkshire, and it is found that, with the exception of 199, every school has the 100 ft. and the 10 ft., and that the others are such as will not be interfered with under the Code. The same is the case in a number of large towns. I know, however, that there is such a strong feeling on this subject that I think it will be advisable to put words in the Code to show what is meant. I would call your Lordships' attention to these words. The Rule is—

“The Department must be satisfied that the school premises are healthy, well-lighted, warmed, drained, and ventilated, properly furnished and supplied with suitable offices,

and contain sufficient accommodation for the scholars attending the school.”

That is large and liberal, and what is really required; and I am not sure that, after all, any extension of the terms, or any laying down of special rules is required, because very often there might be the full amount of space and yet from the mode in which the premises are constructed, they would not be suitable for the teaching of the average attendance of children. What has to be mainly looked to is the seat accommodation; and that which is most important for the children is that they have elbow room, and be enabled to go through their lessons without irksomeness or trouble of any kind. Therefore I have, in the note to the rule, inserted the word “henceforth,” and the note will run—

“The school premises should henceforth be constructed in general conformity with the rules for planning and fitting up public elementary schools issued by the Department.”

And—

“The existing schools sanctioned by the Department, while they have the seat accommodation for the average attendance of children so sanctioned, will not be interfered with.”

I am very much obliged to the right rev. Prelates and noble Lords who have expressed themselves so well satisfied as to my intentions; but it occurs to me that there may be respect for one's moral intentions, and at the same time a not very high estimation of one's intelligence; and it really seems to me that the supposition that I, an advocate of voluntary schools, should have set up a scheme the effect of which would be to destroy voluntary schools, does not reflect very much upon the intelligence which has been concerned in framing it. It is said that my successors may put an unfavourable interpretation upon the Code. My Lords, if my successor disagrees with the Code, he will alter, not strain it, and do openly what he thinks right, not by perverting the meaning put on the Code by the Department. Now, what did the Royal Commission want? The Royal Commission, as far as I can make out—taking the whole thing together—wanted to improve the efficiency of the schools, and they wanted also to bring about economy in the expendi-

ture. Now, that has been entirely left out of consideration by my noble Friend who has spoken, and by the right rev. Prelate. And when I am told that the recommendations of the Commission should be taken as a whole, let me make this observation. The majority of the Commission recommend that voluntary schools should be supported by the rates; but as soon as the sittings of the Commission were finished, and the Commissioners began to get into conflict with one another, they threw that over. [The Earl HARROWBY: No.] I do not say my noble Friend did, but these were, undoubtedly, the views expressed by various bodies of importance connected with denominational schools since the Report was issued; and a great number of persons, are persuaded that, if you once admit support by the rates, it would mean destruction to voluntary schools. Let me also say, with respect, to voluntary schools, what the Royal Commission did. The Royal Commission saw the importance of voluntary schools in enlisting enthusiasm, vigour, and religious feeling. That has been the force and meaning of the voluntary schools, and therefore they called upon their supporters to show by their subscriptions that they meant to support voluntary education. And, deeply concerned as we all are for the interests of voluntary schools, they cannot help the observation that they cannot expect that everything should be done for them and nothing by themselves. The Report says—

“It is just, that the supporters of voluntary schools should retain the management on the condition of bearing some substantial share of the cost in subscriptions.”

It was no doubt with a view to assist the voluntary schools that a fixed grant of 10s. was recommended. My right rev. Friend the Bishop of London made some very curious remarks about the way in which the Inspectors and the Department might play fast and loose with the monetary position of these schools. Yet it should be remembered that my right rev. Friend himself signed this Report, in which the 10s. grant was recommended. Just let me read what the recommendation was:—

“We cannot recommend so substantial an addition to the fixed grant without at the same time laying stress on the necessity of increased

facilities for the removal of incompetent teachers. Where such incompetence has been proved, and after due notice has been given, it should be in the power of the Department to declare the school in default, and thereupon,—”

not to do what my right rev. Friend says, diminish, but “to suspend the payment to it of any grant.” Great alarm is supposed to exist on the ground that if you allow these grants of 12s., 14s., and 15s. 6d. there is first of all great risk that the Department with a view to saving money, will practically cheat the best schools and give the smallest grants they can. Let us see what the Department is likely to do under the circumstances. They have provided by this Code that the Inspectors' Report shall be public. The Inspector himself will have to give the reasons for which he invites censure, or recommends a particular grant; and he will have to give full accounts of the schools he has examined. My noble Friend (Lord Harrowby) says he sees nothing about the moral training being reported on by the Inspector. There is, however, in the Code a general direction, under 9,100, which is much in conformity with the recommendation of the Royal Commission at p. 221, who desire that the Inspector should report on (1) Moral Training; (2) Cleanliness of school and scholars; (3) Quietness; (4) Attention; (5) Obedience; (6) Accuracy; (7) General intelligence; (8) Classification; (9) Instruction of Pupil Teachers. The general conditions of this kind under the new Code become real objects of inspection and reward. I have been asked as to day-training colleges. These day-training colleges will be on the same footing as the residential training colleges—that is to say, those who wish for them will have to go to the expense of getting them, and there will be just the same control over them by the Department, and there will be just the same examination by the Inspector as there is in the residential colleges. Therefore you have the same guarantees for morality and for proper teaching that you have in the residential colleges. I am rather surprised that so highly moral a country as Scotland, which has got day training colleges should be supposed to have institutions in which there is no guarantee for the moral training. At all events, I may say, with regard to these day training

colleges that we have adopted that which has the unanimous recommendation of the Royal Commission, and I do not think we have run a very great risk in doing so, inasmuch as it is only by voluntary efforts that these colleges can be brought into existence. School Boards are prohibited by Statute from founding them. My noble Friends are very much alarmed at the provisions as to staff which are contained in Article 72 of the Code. Now, how much staff have the different denominations in their voluntary schools? The Church of England has an excess of 45 per cent; the Roman Catholic, 45 per cent; the Wesleyans, 37 per cent; the British Schools, 44 per cent; and the Board Schools, 57 per cent. The Minority Report asks a larger addition than we have called for. The Majority for a "considerable" increase. Considerable is a dubious word, and for that reason was odious to the great Duke of Wellington. Now, how have we interpreted it in this new regulation which is to "ruin thousands of schools"? We add 12 per cent. My noble Friend (Lord Herries) called attention to the case of very small schools in rural districts, but there will be no sort of pressure on those schools. And no notice appears to be taken of the very excellent aid which those smaller schools will get under Clauses 101, 102, and 103 of the Code. They will all of them be able to earn at least the 17s. 6d. which they did not many of them attain before. Surely it cannot be said that we are neglecting the interests of the smaller schools when we make that provision. Then my noble Friend says, "Yes, but you take away something from the pupil teachers." It is quite true we do, partly with a view to economy, and partly because those particular grants of 40s. and £3 really never went into the pockets of the pupil teachers at all. Altogether there is about £37,760 given under that grant, but in the schools under an average attendance of 100 where the pressure really is, the whole deduction is only about £2,000, and therefore it will be seen that whereas in large schools this sum is of really no importance or advantage, we are enabled to give to the smaller schools considerable relief in order to better their condition, and if they want an increase of staff, they will be provided with the means of getting

it. I am astounded that anybody, whether with regard to the matter of space or to the increase of staff, should hold so lightly the power and strength of the voluntary schools as to suppose that they will go to pieces under these small, infinitesimal touches which we give them by the Code. The Royal Commission itself made the recommendations on those two subjects which we have followed. My Lords, I do not believe that anything in the Code will damage voluntary schools; on the contrary, taking the Code as a whole, it will be found that the voluntary schools will gain considerably, and the certainty is in itself a boon. I may just remark, with regard to the alteration we have made in the grant to rural schools, that the recommendation will be found in the Report of the Royal Commission at page 271. Now I will add one or two words upon the question of economy. What is it that the Royal Commission say on this subject? They say that the outlay which is already made is too great for the results—that "the results are not commensurate with the outlay"—and they say, as I understand it, that there should be, not an increase, but a redistribution. That I think justifies the course we have adopted in taking something from the pupil teachers which is not really of service to them, and giving it to the smaller schools in order that they may be in a better position. It has been supposed that the merit grants given in Mr. Mundella's Code were decided entirely by individual passes. That is not the case. They were decided also upon the condition of the schools, and you will find instances of schools which have got a great number of passes, but which did not receive the merit grants. We have acted upon the recommendation of the Royal Commission that the grant should depend on the good character of the school as a whole, and on the quality of the acquirements of the great majority of the scholars, rather than on the exact number of children who obtain the minimum standard required. I am afraid I am taking up too much of your Lordship's time, but I must of course endeavour to show that this action which we have taken both in regard to economy and in regard to efficiency is based upon the recommendations of the Royal Commission. Nothing has been

said by those who have spoken to-night of what the teachers think of this matter. I believe that so far as the teachers have indicated any opinion it has been one of approval of the Code. There was a meeting of teachers the other day, and the gentleman who presided, Mr. Wilde, went through a number of the points touched in the Code. I am afraid it will always be the case that everybody wants something more than he can get. And Mr. Wilde was not satisfied; but so far as the Code went, he thought it was a great advantage to the teachers. He approved as to space, staff, publication of accounts, variation of class subjects, English not being essential, non-endowment of certificates, examination for certificates, more money to small poor schools, and especially freedom of classification which is grateful to all the teaching body. All these the Code secures. With reference to the fear that has been expressed that schools may lose their grants on insufficient grounds, what will be the course of procedure? The final step of withdrawing the grant altogether would not be done merely on the Report of the first Inspector. The Department would, as is its wont in grave cases, send down one of its highest officers, one of the Chief Inspectors, to test the accuracy of the first Report; and I would venture to say that nobody would think of depriving a school which resisted, or appealed, or expressed any doubt about the propriety of what was done, unless there was some thoroughly fair and impartial examination into the circumstances of the case. Behind all is Parliament, which would secure justice being done. I may point out that the First Lord of the Treasury, having promised the other House an opportunity of discussing the Code, will not obtain validity until then, and it cannot come into operation before October. My noble Friend says "Do not let us have perpetual changes of the Educational Code." Suppose this Code were postponed for a year, and we have the criticisms of various people upon it up to next Session, are they to make no changes or am I to make no changes—and then would not people again say "This is a new Code, let us have a year to consider it." Reference has been made to the course pursued by Mr. Mundella with

regard to his Code. But what Mr. Mundella did was this; in August or the end of the Session, he put upon the table his proposals for the Code of the following year. What has been the case now? The Report of the Royal Commission was in your Lordships' hands last year, and what we have done is to embody in the Code those recommendations which the Commission were unanimous in making. If I thought that there was any reality in the grievances that have been suggested I would not be here to advocate the Code, because I should be perfectly willing to be influenced by those who have quite as much information as I have and a great many who have given their lives to education, and therefore are in a position to know what might be the effect of these changes. But they wanted a fixed grant; they get a fixed grant. They have got, beyond that, the means of earning grants on special subjects which will bring up the amount to that which Parliament has hitherto sanctioned. I should call your Lordships attention to this fact; that these are not questions which involve only tens or hundreds of pounds; they involve thousands and almost millions. If to-morrow you added 2s. 6d. to the 17s. 6d. grant that would represent £250,000. These things sound very small in shillings, but they become very serious amounts. There is a curious point to which my attention was called by the remarks of the noble Lord who spoke for the Roman Catholics (Lord Herries). The Roman Catholics, I know, have made most admirable efforts for education; have had great struggles and great difficulties to contend with; they have had a very poor population to deal with, and they have, at great self-sacrifice, acted as volunteers—and it is only as volunteers that they have a right to their voluntary schools—and as managers they have brought about great results. Now, how much of what they spend comes out of the public funds? They have 50·6 per cent of their expenditure out of the Parliamentary grant. The Wesleyans in their voluntary schools have 48 per cent; the Church of England have 46 per cent; the Board Schools have 34·5 per cent. When you consider these things and know the difficulties which you would have to

encounter in increasing grants of this description, I do not think I am wrong in calling attention to this point, so strongly put by the Commission itself. It is idle to suppose that any Department dare lay its hand on an efficient school. It would be impossible for any Minister to stand against the indignation of the country if he took any such step as that hinted at by the right rev. Prelate. Now, let me say one word with respect to the Department over which I have the honour to preside. There seems to be a suspicion that in the Education Department there is among permanent officials an intention to defeat the great measure which Mr. Forster carried, and to exalt the Board Schools at the expense of the voluntary schools. I have had experience of Civil Servants in many Departments and of their invaluable aid, and I know that such suspicions are unfounded. Is it a fact that the voluntary schools have been going down? On the contrary, they have been increasing, and in the course of a few years volunteers have spent £6,000,000 on additional schools, and yet the supporters of the system are so timid and apprehensive that they seem to think that if the space is enlarged or if the staff is increased by 12 per cent the voluntary schools of England will be destroyed. The Commissioners felt that there was a necessity behind the voluntary schools of the voluntary exercise of local effort. I cannot conceal from myself that there are cases in England which, if looked into, may do more harm than good to the system of voluntary schools. There are some voluntary schools with regard to which there are practically no voluntary subscriptions, and which are supported by the pence of the children, aided in some instances by small endowments. The voluntary efforts have gone down since the time when the 17s. 6d. was given. Therefore, if we lavish funds without, by means of hard and fast lines, or in some way or other securing efficiency, our money will go to the relief of the pockets of the contributors and not to the efficiency of the schools. With respect to the pupil teachers I do not see that there is any obstacle thrown in the way of central instruction to them, and I believe that that is cheaper than the instruction they would receive in separate schools.

Many suggestions have been made concerning evening or continuation schools, but they must be dealt with by legislation, and cannot be dealt with in all their bearings hand-over-hand by anybody in the position which I occupy at present. The great advantage of the voluntary school system to my mind, is that it enlists the religious enthusiasm of the community. It enlists the services of teachers who go to work with a hearty desire to bring about a religious and moral training to those who are subjected to it. I myself have the strongest feeling in favour of definite religious teaching, as against what I might call vague and undefined religion. Therefore as far as I am personally concerned, I have a great admiration for the efforts made up to 1870 by volunteers. By religious volunteers the system of education in England was founded, and that system has held its own, and more than its own since 1870. I would do nothing to interfere with its fair and just progress, but it should be borne in mind that I am an Administrator, that I act under Acts of Parliament, and that I have to do justice to the Board schools as well as to the voluntary schools. With a clear conscience I can say that in dealing with the Measure now before your Lordships, for their consideration, I have neither been influenced by personal feeling of liking on the one side, or dislike on the other, but that I have endeavoured to hold the balance even between the two great school systems which at present prevail in this country.

*EARL BEAUCHAMP: My Lords, the noble Viscount told us in part of his speech that this is not a question of hundreds or thousands, but of millions of pounds. My Lords, there is a great deal more than hundreds or thousands, or millions of pounds at stake—there is at stake the future education of this country, and all the religious and moral interests and considerations that are bound up with it. I decline to discuss the matter in that way, or to treat a question of high policy as a mere question of finance. I say you ought not to limit yourselves to considerations of hundreds or thousands of pounds when you are dealing with interests so important as those involved in the education of this country, though the State ought, of course, to take guarantees that every penny of the money shall be wisely

expended. I do not say that Her Majesty's Ministers ought to have embodied all the recommendations of the majority of the Commission in a Bill under existing Parliamentary difficulties, but I do say that if they desire to take to themselves credit for anything done by means of their Code, a Bill would have been some earnest of their desire to consider the moral difficulties of giving effect to it, and we might have treated their policy as a consistent whole. My Lords, the point to which I desire to call your Lordships' attention is a very simple one. The noble Lord, in reply to the appeal from my noble Friend who sits behind me, in reference to the recommendations of the majority of the Commission, that questions of moral training and discipline and matters of that sort ought to be attended to, thought he gave a satisfactory answer by reading out certain paragraphs which, as it happens, had appeared in the Code for a considerable number of years. My Lords, those words attracted my attention, and during the whole progress of the Commission. I asked almost every witness about them. The almost unanimous opinion of every one of them, whether schoolmasters or school-managers, or authorities of the Department, was that if those provisions were dropped out of the Code no difference would be felt, for those provisions were absolutely useless and not worth the paper they were written upon. If they are leaning on those provisions, I say they are trusting to a broken reed; therefore I decline to accept the position of the noble Viscount when he relies upon those words, which have been made ridiculous by their non-application. My Lords, the Inspectors not having been called upon to report upon these matters passed them over; they did not appear to know of the existence of those words, and no Inspector attached the slightest value to them whatever. For these reasons the Education Commission recommended that a formal Report should be made, and this at least is a matter of administration and not of legislation. Therefore I say it is idle to try to induce your Lordships to believe that the retention of those paragraphs in the Code which the noble Viscount referred to, is any adequate security or guarantee for the teaching of moral training and

religious discipline in the schools. My Lords, I think it is rather strange that the noble Viscount in expressing an optimistic view of the effect of this Code, has been unable to produce any educational authority whatever in defence of the Code. It is very easy to draw rosy pictures of the future, but all those who are practically conversant with the work of education, whether schoolmasters or voluntary school managers, look upon these proposals with dismay; even managers under School Boards look upon them with no approach to enthusiasm. My Lords, I do not know that anybody has found occasion to express satisfaction on behalf of those provisions in the Code. So far as I understand the noble Lord, it does nothing for the voluntary schools in the poor urban districts, which have been carried on under circumstances of very great difficulty and very great strain, and which deserve attention. When we know that the voluntary system has done so much within the last few years, your Lordships will not, I think, impose still further burdens upon the financial managers of those voluntary schools. The opinion of the majority of Her Majesty's Commissioners was in favour of the improvement of education, coupled with the adoption of adequate means to carry out that improvement of education. The Code imposes new burdens on education; it enforces requirements greater than are necessary for meeting the contingency, but it does not provide adequate resources to meet the further demands made on the managers of these schools. I do not want, my Lords, to make any comparison between voluntary schools and Board Schools, but I think that if no better argument can be adduced than the argument on behalf of the moral and religious training which is to be given under this system which I have shown to be wholly illusory and not of the slightest value, I, for one, must decline to believe in the predictions which have been made on such inadequate materials. A further examination of the provisions of this Code will show that it is fraught with the most serious consequences to this country. The noble Viscount, as far as I understand, notwithstanding his claim to have considered with the utmost care the interests of voluntary

schools in framing his Code, admits that his recommendations regarding space require alteration of a more or less material character. My Lords, I do not quite understand where we are at this moment or how the question stands now. Is the Code to be withdrawn and another embodying the alterations substituted? Does he intend to propose it with the words standing as part of the original Code, or is it to be amended upon the new documents which now lie upon your Lordship's Table? I really do not know how the question stands before us now. Are we to have further time for the consideration of a new document? If a new Code is introduced we shall have all the time allowed by Parliament. If a merely verbal change is to be made in the Code laid on the Table, the position is a different one, and we should have only a few days. My Lords, I earnestly hope that Her Majesty's Government will, notwithstanding the speech of the noble Lord, attend to the representations which have been made to him from all parts of the kingdom in behalf of delay. If this measure is a good one, he will have no difficulty; if on the other hand it is found to be necessary to modify it, I think your Lordships will consider that those who have studied the matter have a full right to insist upon the demands which have been made being listened to.

*EARL SPENCER: My Lords, I do not intend to enlarge upon this very important subject which has given rise to the debate to which we have listened; but I should like to allude to one matter to which the noble Lord who has just sat down has referred, and that is what the intention is with regard to this Code. I think it has been stated by the Lord President of the Council that it is not desirable to change the Code. I quite endorse the statement that it is necessary to be most careful that the Code should not be too often changed, but at the same time it is necessary, as the country is prepared for it and requires, that the standard of education should be raised. I think after the Report of the Royal Commission it is necessary that a standard of higher education should be adopted and introduced into the Code, and I therefore entirely approve of a change in the Code with that object. But

as that change can only be made after the very fullest consideration, it is necessary that discussion should take place on the subject. The discussion of this evening has been very useful, and the criticisms of the noble Lords who are authorities on this subject will be very valuable. I am glad, therefore, to hear that the noble Viscount intends to give more time for the consideration of the new Code. If I understand rightly the discussion which has taken place, the new Code will come into effect some time in the autumn. The subject requires every consideration, and I should welcome other changes in the Code besides that which has been foreshadowed, the changes intended to carry out some of the other important recommendations of the Royal Commissioners. My Lords, I should like to make a further reference to this subject. Allusion has been made to the method in which the Code which so appropriately is connected with the name of Mr. Mundella, who was Vice-President when I filled the post now held by the noble Viscount, was carried out. The noble Viscount correctly stated how the alterations then made were brought into operation. I do not desire him now to follow exactly that course, for that will put off too long improvements in education which I think this new Code will effect. But, My Lords, I should like to know whether it would not be possible for the new Code amended after discussion as it probably may be, and the old Code to run together for a time. If that were possible it would be a much better mode of dealing with the question. It would displace illusions, and it would be preferable to withdrawing the new Code altogether. I merely throw out that suggestion, and I hope the noble Viscount will consider what I press upon him, and that he will not postpone altogether for a year the consideration of a new Code embodying improvements founded in great part on the recommendations of the Royal Commission.

REMOVAL OF WRECKS ACT (1877)

AMENDMENT BILL. (No. 46.)

Read 3^a (according to order), and passed.

House adjourned at half past Seven o'clock, to Monday next, a quarter before Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Friday, 10th May, 1889.

QUESTIONS.

IRELAND—THE REV. D. STEPHENS.

MR. BLANE (Armagh, S.) asked the Solicitor General for Ireland if it was true that the Rev. Daniel Stephens, C.C., of Falcarragh, had a sentence of six months' imprisonment for conspiracy confirmed on appeal by Judge Webb at the last Quarter Sessions in Letterkenny; if the principle evidence against him was a private correspondence found by the constabulary in a search in a neighbouring parish; if evidence was also given of his having taken part in the Plan of Campaign since January, 1888; if, on the evidence given in April, 1888, the Rev. Daniel Stephens, C.C., was sentenced to three months' imprisonment; and if the Government will permit him to be punished a second time for the same conspiracy?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. MADDEN, University of Dublin): The facts are as stated in the former portion of the question. The evidence given at each of the prosecutions was not the same, nor were the prosecutions for the same offences.

THE GRAND JURY SYSTEM.

MR. MAC NEILL (Donegal, S.) asked the Solicitor General for Ireland whether a man named Beattie, an agent for the Kelp Company, was returned for trial by the Petty Sessions Bench at Falcarragh, to the Cork Summer Assizes, for the wilful murder of a man named Irwin, by shooting him with a revolver; whether Mr. Wybrant Olphert sat on the Bench, and decided to dismiss the charge, but was overruled by the other Magistrates; whether, at the Summer Assizes at Lifford, the grand jury, who were only 17 in number, threw out the bill against Beattie, the foreman stating there was not a sufficient number of grand jurors to find a bill; whether having regard to the fact that a bill to become an indictment must be found to be a true bill by 12 grand

jurors at least, will the Crown take any, and what, steps to insure a full attendance of the grand jury, which should consist of 23 members; was Mr. Wybrant Olphert a member of the grand jury by whom this bill was ignored; why was not a fresh bill sent up to the grand jury against the said Beattie at the Winter or Spring Assizes; and, do the Crown intend to take any further steps in investigating the circumstances of Irwin's death?

MR. MADDEN: The facts are substantially as stated in the first, second, third, and fifth paragraphs of the question, with this exception, that it is inaccurate to say that there was not a sufficient number of grand jurors to find the bill. In answer to the remainder of the question, I have to say that, after the bill was thrown out at the last Summer Assizes, the Attorney General called for a Special Report from the Crown Solicitor, and after going into the matter fully with him came to the conclusion that there was not sufficient evidence against Beattie to justify the Crown in taking any further proceedings.

VOLUNTEER ARTILLERY CORPS AT SINGAPORE.

GENERAL SIR WILLIAM CROSSMAN (Portsmouth): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether it is the case that, on the formation of a Volunteer European Artillery Corps at Singapore, certain conditions were virtually agreed to between the General Officer Commanding and the promoters of the Corps as regards the training of the men in working guns of the same nature as those mounted for the defence of the place; whether it was understood that every facility would be given to the Volunteers to enable them to drill at some place near the town and not at the outlying forts, to which they would have to proceed by boat; whether, up to the beginning of April 1889, a 7-inch gun at Fort Fullerton, a place most conveniently situated for the Volunteers, had been used for drill purposes, and that this gun was mounted on a carriage and platform of the latest type supplied to the Colony borrowed from Fort Blankan Mati, on condition that they were returned to that fort at 72 hours' notice; whether the War Department has now peremptorily or-

dered the immediate return of these gun mountings to Fort Blankan Mati, and have offered for the use of the Volunteers a gun at Fort Fullerton which has an obsolete mounting, or at all events one which requires an entirely different drill to that which is required for working the guns that are, or will be, mounted for the defence of the port; whether the difficulties of distance and time would prevent the Volunteers, nearly all of whom are men connected with business, from proceeding to the outer forts for drill so often or so regularly as would be desirable; and, whether, if the facts are as above stated, and considering the great exertions made, and the large sum of money spent by Singapore in providing for its own defence, the War Department will consider the advisability of giving immediate orders that a gun properly mounted at Fort Fullerton, as previously arranged, be placed at the disposal of the Volunteers for drill purposes?

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. E. STANHOPE, Lincolnshire, Horncastle): Without entering into the past arrangements in connection with the practice of the Artillery Volunteers at Singapore, I will take such steps as may be necessary to secure that the wishes of the Volunteers shall be complied with as far as may be possible.

THE 1ST WORCESTERSHIRE ARTILLERY VOLUNTEERS.

MR. RADCLIFFE COOKE (Newington, W.) asked the Secretary of State for War, whether in a letter dated the 15th of February last, the 1st Worcestershire Artillery Volunteers were informed by the War Office, in reply to an application in that behalf, that H.R.H. the Commander in Chief had been pleased to approve of the issue, on payment, of part-worn Artillery harness to them for the batteries of position; whether on receipt of such communication, a requisition was forthwith made in due form to the Senior Ordnance Store Officer, western district, to which no reply was given; whether subsequently, viz., on the 8th of April last, a letter of reminder was sent to the same official, to which a reply was received on the 1st of May instant in the following words, "None in store at present, will be supplied as soon as available:" Whether at the date of

the first mentioned, namely the 15th of February last, there was, as would appear to be the case, part-worn Artillery harness in store available on payment for issue to Artillery Volunteers; if so, what has become of such harness in the meanwhile? And what was the reason of the delay in replying to the requisition, whereby the said 1st Worcestershire Artillery Volunteers are now left in the position of having to train 62 horses and 36 men without proper harness between now and their annual camp training in July next?

*MR. E. STANHOPE: When the offer of part-worn harness was made to the Artillery Volunteers, it was on the understanding that part-worn harness should be available in sufficient quantity for the issue. At present this is not the case, as the store of such harness is purposely kept low; but new harness is in course of issue to the Second Army Corps, and as the harness which it replaces comes in it will be issued to the Volunteers. In the meantime the 1st Worcestershire Artillery Volunteers must act upon the original arrangement and hire farm or other harness for their training. The expense of thus hiring harness has been taken into account in fixing the annual grant of money for each battery. The delay in replying arose from the necessity of considering how the demands, which were in excess of the supply, could best be met.

MILITARY EXAMINATIONS.

MR. RADCLIFFE COOKE asked the Secretary of State for War, whether it is the case that, by Army Order 143 of 1889, the examinations in tactics, fortifications, military law, and topography, which Line Officers have to pass in order to qualify for promotion, have been thrown open to Militia Officers and Volunteers of equivalent rank; whether it is the case that the examination in tactics may be taken separately, but that the other three subjects must be taken up together, not separately; whether it is a fact that these examinations are considered of sufficient difficulty to warrant Line Officers being struck off all duty and sent to garrison courses of four months' duration to be coached up by garrison instructors before passing them; and, whether, having regard to the difficulty of these

examinations, he will direct that each subject may be taken up separately, so that, for example, an Officer may pass in tactics in May 1889, in law in December 1889, in fortification in May 1890, and in topography in December 1890.

*MR. E. STANHOPE: The answer to the first two questions is in the affirmative. Line officers are allowed if they wish it to have a two months' course of garrison instruction, as their promotion depends upon their passing. Line officers are not allowed to take up the subjects separately. The reason why an exception has been made in favour of Volunteer officers as regards tactics is because a special capitation allowance is granted for each officer of Volunteers who has passed his examination in tactics. It is not desirable that the examinations should be further subdivided.

EMIGRATION TO THE ARGENTINE REPUBLIC.

MR. BROADHURST (Nottingham) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether his attention has been called to circulars, issued by the authority of the Argentine Republic, inviting working people to emigrate to that country; and whether, seeing that the statements made in such circulars with regard to the rates of wages, the demand for labour, and the cost of living, are misleading, and that great misery has been caused to those who have thereby been induced to emigrate, the Government will issue a warning to intending emigrants on the subject.

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir JAMES FERGUSON, Manchester, N.E.): The Secretary of State has received from the Argentine Legation copies of the circulars referred to; but the reports of Her Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Buenos Ayres give a very fair prospect for suitable emigrants, and would not appear to justify the issue of such a notice as that indicated by the hon. Member. We are not aware of any misery resulting to emigrants, but only of a case of some temporary discomfort, caused by the simultaneous arrival of a great number of emigrants, who were soon after settled. Steps have been taken so that adequate notice is given to Her Majesty's Representatives of the arrival of emigrants from this country.

COCHIN CHINA—BRITISH COTTON CLOTHS.

MR. BRISTOWE (Lambeth, Norwood) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, whether it has been brought to his notice that British cotton cloths when imported into Cochin China, which for about two years have been subject to the Tariff General, and under it have been taxed at rates varying from 20 per cent to 40 per cent on their respective values, are now, under a resolution adopted recently by the Conseil d'Etat at Paris, to be charged an additional duty of 60 per cent; whether remonstrances have been made as to this impost, on the ground that it will be prohibitory as regards British cloths; and, whether, if enforced, such cloths now *en route* *via* Hong Kong and Singapore, or actually contracted for in Lancashire, will be subject to the said impost?

*SIR J. FERGUSON: The statement contained in the first paragraph of this question is substantially correct. As regards the second paragraph no remonstrance has been made because there is no treaty ground for remonstrance, and because this measure is in accordance with a settled policy, deliberately adopted. Whether goods now *en route* will be subjected to the increased duties must depend on the regulations under which these duties will be applied. On this point inquiry will be made at Paris, and I will inform my hon. Friend of the reply.

MR. MONTAGU WILLIAMS.

MR. MONTAGU (Tower Hamlets, Whitechapel) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether his attention has been drawn to Report in the *Daily News* of the 7th instant of a case tried before Mr. Montagu Williams, in which the following words appear:—

"The magistrate said that not half the evidence was before him, but he had no doubt that the child of Mrs. Cohen was lent for the purpose of this conspiracy, and that the prisoners, like their nation and religionists always did, lied as deep as they could lie to back up that conspiracy. Whether it would be proved was another matter."

And, if such expressions were really uttered, will any notice be taken of the use by a Magistrate on the Bench of words reflecting on all persons of a particular faith?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. MATTHEWS, Birmingham, E.): I am informed by the Magistrate that he did not use the exact words as reported. What he said was that—

“The prisoners had lied as deeply as they could, and that the perjury which was committed at his Court by many of their co-religionists was perfectly appalling.”

Although these words have a much narrower application than the expressions given in the Report, I cannot conceal my opinion that the practice of making general comments from the Bench in particular cases is open to considerable objection.

THE NEW CODE.

MR. FRANCIS STEVENSON (Suffolk, Eye) asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education whether persons at present recognized as provisionally certificated teachers, not having sat for the Queen's Scholarship Examination, will cease to be so recognized when the New Code comes into operation; whether, if they are still so recognized, it will be necessary for them to pass the Queen's Scholarship Examination before taking the certificate papers of the first year students; and whether provisionally certificated teachers, after being employed for one year in that capacity, may sit for first year papers?

THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL (Sir W. HART DYKE, Kent, Dartford): Nothing in the Code will affect the position of teachers now holding provisional certificates, nor will they have to pass the Queen's Scholarship Examination before taking the certificate papers of the first year; but they will not be allowed to take these papers after being employed only one year as provisionally certificated teachers.

IRELAND—THE OLPHERT EVICTIONS.

MR. MAC NEILL asked the Solicitor General for Ireland whether his attention had been called to the fact that a woman named Bessie Doolan, upwards of eighty years of age, one of the tenants on the Olphert estate, whose eviction was stayed about three weeks ago on account of her illness, was evicted from her holding within the last few days, and that she died on

Tuesday evening from the effects of privation and exposure; whether the Government intend to institute any inquiry into the circumstances of her death; whether any precautions will be taken for the preservation of the lives of destitute women and children on the Glasheroo portion of Mr. Olphert's estate, who are to be evicted on Monday next; and, whether the report is true that directions have been given to burn the houses, from which the people of Glasheroo are about to be evicted, with paraffin oil; and, if so, by whom will the cost of the paraffin oil be defrayed?

MR. MADDEN: I must ask the hon. Gentleman to postpone the question. A Report has been called for which has not yet been received.

MR. W. O'BRIEN AND MR. E. HARRINGTON.

MR. CAUSTON (Southwark, W.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether, during the detention in London of Mr. William O'Brien and Mr. Edward Harrington, they are under his care; and, if so, where are they lodged, and what is the nature of the prison treatment to which they are subjected?

MR. MATTHEWS: Mr. William O'Brien is lodged at Holloway and Mr. Harrington at Pentonville, in charge of Irish prison officers. The governors of these prisons have been instructed to allow their treatment to be regulated according to the information they receive from the Irish officers in charge, in order that they may be treated here as they are in the Irish prisons from which they come.

THE SUGAR BOUNTY CONVENTION.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT (Derby) asked the President of the Board of Trade whether, under the Sugar Bounty Convention, Great Britain could be called upon to exclude sugar being the produce of a Nation (not in any way a party to the Convention), on the ground of its giving a Bounty, although such Nation may be entitled by Treaty to the “most favoured Nation” treatment, as in the case of the Treaty of Commerce between Great Britain and the United States, in which it is stipulated as follows—

"Nor shall any prohibition be imposed by Great Britain upon the Exportation of any any article the growth, produce, or manufacture of the United States, to the territories of Her Britannic Majesty, which shall not equally extend to all other Nations;"

And, whether, in a case where such a Treaty exists, Her Majesty's Government claim the right, without the consent of the other contracting party, to exclude sugar, the produce of such country, whilst they admit the sugar of other nations?

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Sir M. HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): It rests rather with the Foreign Office than with the Board of Trade to give an authoritative interpretation of our treaty engagements, but as the right hon. Gentleman wishes to have my opinion I shall be happy to give it. This question, though apparently general, is really limited to the case of our treaty with the United States. I think all other nations that are at all likely to send us sugar or give bounties are either in some way parties to the Convention or do not possess the Clause which the right hon. Gentleman quotes in their treaties with us. In the case of the United States I would refer the right hon. Gentleman to the correspondence which took place in 1884 between Lord Granville and the United States Government. There he will find that Lord Granville then complained that by the treaties then made, or about to be made, by the United States with the Sandwich Islands and some of the South American States, the latter countries were placed in a more favourable position than our West Indian Colonies, and asked that this might be remedied by extending the most favoured nation clause in our treaties with the United States to our West Indian Colonies. The United States Government declined to do this, offering to consider a reciprocity treaty securing special favour for our West Indian Colonies, and saying—and this is the important point—that

"The most favoured nation clause in the Treaty of 1815 has not authorized, and could not authorize, Great Britain to ask for the products or ships of the United Kingdom (or our West Indian Colonies if extended to them) favours identical with, or equivalent to, those which Spanish American or West Indian Colonial products might receive in treaties with the United States by reason of special reciprocity treatment."

In my opinion the United States would

be absolutely barred by the interpretation they thus themselves placed on the most favoured nation clause, and by arrangements made with other countries in accordance with that interpretation, from pleading the most favoured nation clause in bar of the operation of the Sugar Bounties Convention as against themselves. I am rather surprised that the right hon. Gentleman should have been ignorant of the correspondence which I have quoted, and which took place when he was himself Home Secretary. Perhaps he has forgotten it, as he must have forgotten, when he made his speech the other day that the Government of which he was a Member attempted by negotiation to abolish those very Sugar Bounties which he now declares to be beneficial to this country.

SIR W. HARCOURT: I cannot now answer the rather irregular speech of the right hon. Gentleman upon the subject. I will take another opportunity of dealing with it. I am not aware that any Government ever proposed clauses of the character contained in the Sugar Bounties Convention. The late Government never proposed to limit themselves in that respect. I will not follow the right hon. Gentleman into that matter, but I will ask him this question, which is important as arising out of his answer, whether the Board of Trade have satisfied themselves that the Government of the United States acquiesce in the interpretation he has placed on the most favoured nation clause in respect of the Sugar Bounties Convention? I will further ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he has satisfied himself that the French Government, though not acting under treaty, but acting practically under the most favoured nation treatment, also acquiesce in the interpretation he has placed on the most favoured nation clause?

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: In answer to that question, I may say that the Representative of the United States, though not taking part in the Conference, was present at the deliberations, and the Government of the United States have in no way signified that they have changed the opinion which I have already read to the House. The Representatives of France took part in the proceedings of the Convention, and themselves proposed the clause barring the operation of the most favoured

nation clause with regard to the Sugar Bounties Convention.

SIR W. HARCOURT: Then I understand from the right hon. Gentleman that he states upon his authority that the Government of the United States and the Government of France hold the most favoured nation clause as having no operation whatever against the stipulations of the Sugar Bounties Convention.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: It is impossible for me to add to the answer I have already given.

WRONGFUL CONVICTION.

MR. CUNINGHAME GRAHAM (Lanarkshire, N.W.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether any compensation is to be given to the man Travis who was wrongly convicted of the murder of a woman.

MR. MATTHEWS: There is no intention to grant this man any compensation. He has not received a free pardon, and it must not be assumed that he was wrongfully convicted. It appeared, on a careful review of all the circumstances, that there was sufficient doubt in the case to make it expedient that his term of imprisonment should be abridged.

RAILWAY PASSENGER DUTY ACT.

MR. WALTER JAMES (Gateshead) asked the Solicitor General to be so good as to explain by what words the Railway Passenger Duty Act, 5 and 6 Vic. c. 73, confines the charge to receipts for passengers on a railway which is the property of some company or person, and does not cover the case of a tramway laid down on land which is the property not of some company or person but of the public, as stated by the Secretary to the Treasury.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL (Sir E. CLARKE, Plymouth): The Statutes under which the Railway Passenger Duty is levied, and particularly 5 and 6 Vict., c. 79, apply only to railways. No other explanation can be given. Tramways do not fall within the provisions of the Railways Act.

THE SWISS LABOUR CONFERENCE.

MR. CUNINGHAME GRAHAM asked the First Lord of the Treasury if

Her Majesty's Government has now finally determined to send representatives to the Swiss Labour Conference.

*THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH, Strand): Communications are still passing on this question, and no final decision has yet been arrived at.

IRELAND—CONDITION OF DONEGAL.

MR. JOHN KELLY, Camberwell, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether there has lately been any real crime in that part of the county of Donegal in which Mr. Olphert's estate is situate, except such as has been the result of the adoption of the Plan of Campaign on that gentleman's estate? And whether any complaints have reached him that disturbances have been created at Falcarragh by Members of the Royal Irish Constabulary Force and soldiers of the Rifle Brigade rolling and rioting through the streets there, or that the police there have been guilty of assaults upon women and children.

MR. MAC NEILL asked whether the first paragraph was in order considering that it related to a mere matter of opinion and not of fact.

*MR. SPEAKER: I do not observe that there is any irregularity in the question.

MR. MADDEN: So far as I am aware, there has been no real crime in the district of the county Donegal in which Mr. Olphert's estate is situate except such as has been the result of the adoption of the Plan of Campaign. No complaints have reached the authorities of disturbances having been created by the constabulary or by the military, or of the police having assaulted women or children there; and I do not believe that there is any ground for such a suggestion.

MR. MAC NEILL asked if it was not true that the riflemen had killed Sergeant Ducks.

MR. MADDEN: I have no specific information on the point.

ARMY (COURTS MARTIAL).

Return ordered,—

"For 1888 for each Regiment of Cavalry Battery of Artillery, Company of Engineers,

and Battalion of Infantry, respectively, of the number and proportion to average strength of, first, General; second, District or Garrison and Regimental Courts Martial, distinguishing those in which the Offences are only in relation to Enlistment; third Minor Punishments; fourth, Desertions; and fifth, Stations (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 337, of Session 1888).”—*Sir Frederick Fitz Wygram.*

CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ADMISSION TO HOSPITALS).

Address for,

“Return showing (1) the Ratio of Admissions into Hospital, and of Constantly Sick in Hospital, per 1,000 of strength of Troops serving in the United Kingdom during the year 1888; and showing (2) the Ratios of Admissions into Hospital for Primary Venereal sores and Gonorrhoea per 1,000 of strength of the Troops at certain large Stations in the United Kingdom (formerly under the provisions of the Contagious Diseases Acts) during the year 1888 (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 245, of Session 1888).”—(*Mr. Cavendish Bentinck.*)

MOTIONS.

PUBLIC EXECUTIONER BILL.

On Motion of Sir Edmund Lechmere, Bill to provide for the appointment of a Public Executioner, ordered to be brought in by Sir Edmund Lechmere, Mr. Lockwood, Mr. Hastings, Mr. Howard Vincent, and Mr. Paulton.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 216.]

PUBLIC LIBRARIES ACTS AMENDMENT

BILL.

On Motion of Sir John Lubbock, Bill to amend the Public Libraries Acts, ordered to be brought in by Sir John Lubbock, Mr. Baumann, Mr. Sydney Buxton, Sir William Houldsworth, and Mr. Justin M'Carthy.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 217.]

VOTERS' SUCCESSIVE OCCUPATION BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Causton, Bill to provide for the registration of Voters for successive occupation in London, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Causton, Mr. Mark Beaufoy, Mr. Sydney Buxton, Mr. Cremer, Mr. Howell, Mr. Lawson, Mr. Montagu, Mr. Octavius V. Morgan, Mr. Pickersgill, Mr. James Rowlands, and Mr. James Stuart.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 218.]

NATIONAL DEBT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Bill to amend the Law relating to the National Debt, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. William Henry Smith, and Mr. Jackson.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 219.]

ORDER OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY—CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES.

SUPPLY—considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

CLASS II.

(1.) £133,823, to complete the sum for the Local Government Board.

*SIR WALTER FOSTER (Derbyshire, Ilkeston): I wish to call the attention of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board to a question of considerable importance—namely, the frequent occurrence of blindness in this country among the children of the poor. At the time the last census was taken there were 22,833 blind persons in England and Wales, and I think something ought to be done to diminish, if possible, the misery which must result from this cause. It has been calculated by high authority that about 30 per cent of the cases of blindness occur from ophthalmia in newly born children, who are allowed to become blind through the negligence or ignorance of their parents. I think it is in the power of the Local Government Board to bring the gravity of what in the first instance may appear to be a comparatively slight ailment under the notice of parents. Some time since the President of the Local Government Board was approached by the late Sir Jacob Behrens, of Bradford, with a suggestion, that when the Registrar of a district gave to the parents of newly-born children the registration or vaccination notice, he should be allowed at the same time to distribute a card, such as was issued by the Eye Hospital at Bradford, calling the attention of the parents to the gravity of ophthalmia. It was believed, if this were done, that this ophthalmia would come in for timely treatment, and that the serious loss of sight of 7,000 persons would be prevented. It is a national loss because the persons so afflicted instead of being producers, become more or less burdens upon society. I want the President of the Local Government Board to undertake that the registrars shall be empowered to distribute at the same time as the notice of Registration or vaccination such a card as is issued with great benefit by the Bradford Eye Hospital. It contains the fol-

lowing very simple instructions in reference to newly-born infants. "If the eyes become red and begin to run with matter, take the child at once to a doctor. The disease is very dangerous indeed if not seen to at once. It destroys the sight of both eyes." This is very well known to people who are educated, but the masses of the poor do not possess the same knowledge, and the consequence is that a large number of children are allowed to grow up deprived of sight from negligence and inattention when they are infants. It has been contended on the part of the Registrar General and the Local Government Board that, inasmuch as the parents do not get the notices of registration or of vaccination until some weeks after the birth of the child, the damage would be done in the meantime. I quite admit the validity of that argument as regards a great many cases, but if only one per cent of the children afflicted were saved, we should be doing a great benefit to them and, indirectly, to the general community; while at the same time there would be brought to bear an educational process of a most valuable character. It would probably be enough to have printed at the head of the vaccination notice in red letters some simple instructions, and in many cases we should be able to prevent the needless sacrifice of one of the most precious of the senses. I do not suppose that we should save all those who are annually afflicted; if we succeeded in saving one-seventh we should have conferred an incalculable benefit upon the community.

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (MR. RITCHIE, Tower Hamlets, St. George's): I entirely appreciate the object the hon. Gentleman has in bringing this matter under the attention of the Local Government Board, and I also value the suggestion he has made. I need hardly say that if the Local Government Board could do anything that would have the effect of diminishing the spread of ophthalmia, and the consequent danger to sight, which the hon. Member has described, we should be very glad to do so. I understand the proposal is that when the parent registers the birth of the child, it is to be the duty of the Registrar to give a formal notification of the danger of ophthalmia

with the vaccination notice. When the question was brought before the Board previously by Sir Jacob Behrens, it was referred to the Registrar General, who is subject to the jurisdiction of the Local Government Board, and the objection which the Registrar General raised was that the duty suggested was something quite foreign to the duties the Registrars have undertaken to discharge. At that time it was proposed that a separate paper should be issued, but the suggestion now is that the intimation should be printed on the vaccination notices. As against that I would point out that the notification with respect to vaccination is a notification of an imperative duty, and it might, perhaps, lead to misunderstanding if along with and as part of the notice there appeared a recommendation which it was optional on the part of the parent to adopt. However, I admit that if we can do anything in the matter we ought to do it. I will, therefore, consider whether the objections which have been raised are really insurmountable, and I assure the hon. Member that I will further consider whether anything can be done in furtherance of of the object he has in view.

*SIR WALTER FOSTER: Will the right hon. Gentleman be willing to try the experiment in one town? I quite understand the objection he has raised in reference to the vaccination paper, but a notice printed in red ink would attract attention. When there exists such a serious amount of disease, and a disease attended by such grave consequences to the children who survive, if we can do anything to lessen the evil so far as future generations are concerned it is our bounden duty to do it. I will, therefore, ask the right hon. Gentleman to try the experiment in any one town he may select.

*MR. RITCHIE: I must ask the hon. Member to remain content with the assurance I have given, all the more as I have not by any means exhausted the objections. There are many other diseases to which proper attention is not paid by parents at the right time, and if special measures are taken in respect of this particular disease, there will be many other demands in a like direction.

*SIR WALTER FOSTER: I do not think the right hon. Gentleman need

have the least fear that there will be any considerable demand for other medical notices, and that I take it, is one of the objections of the Registrar General. Unfortunately this is a disease, the gravity of which the people do not understand, and it is one which is attended with the most serious consequences. The right hon. Gentleman has approached me with a certain amount of fair-mindedness, and I hope that next year something will be done to prevent what I cannot help regarding as a national calamity.

*MR. GRAY (Essex, Maldon), complained that in some of the workhouse infirmaries imbeciles, whose habits were repulsive or disgusting, were placed in the same wards with the ordinary patients.

*MR. CHANNING (Northamptonshire, E.): I wish on this vote to draw attention to the question of the vaccination of children in workhouses within two or three days after birth. I regret that the President of the Local Government Board should decline to interfere with the system which has been adopted very largely in the Metropolis. That the Local Government Board are responsible for the system and could put an end to it is shown by the circular they addressed to Boards of Guardians in 1881, advising this early vaccination. I have received a letter from a former Vaccination Officer of one of the largest towns outside London, who stated that formerly—

"The Public Vaccinator had the children brought to him from the workhouse from four to six years old. Afterwards a Resident Medical Officer was appointed who declined to vaccinate the workhouse children till three months old. I took the Registrar's returns for two periods—one month after vaccination—and found the deaths to be nearly 50 per cent in favour of the Resident Doctor's plan, clearly showing that many deaths must have occurred consequent upon too early vaccination."

The other day I called attention by means of a question to the case of a child described as extremely feeble, which was vaccinated three days after birth, and died a month afterwards. The doctor who carried out the operation stated on oath at the inquest that the mother of the child consented, but the mother distinctly stated on oath that her consent was not obtained. In regard to this particular case to which I drew the attention of the right hon. Gentle-

man the other day, the doctor of the St. Giles's Workhouse, in replying to a medical paper which somewhat sharply criticized his conduct, stated that—

"The immediate cause of death was convulsions, probably brought on by intestinal irritation."

But I would like to point out that Dr. Ballard, a very strong friend of vaccination, in an essay published in 1868, stated that a French authority, Bousquet, held—

"That the cutaneous excitation [from vaccination] was apt to show itself in the form of erysipelas and roscola, and in infants very young indeed, the intestines sympathized, and enteritis or diarrhoea might result."

The *Hospital Gazette*, commenting on this case, says:—

"Whatever one's opinion may be as to the merits of vaccination, no one can say that the risks of an outbreak of smallpox in St. Giles's Workhouse were so urgent as to justify the doctor in vaccinating the child before it was a week old, and that, too, without the mother's consent. Such indiscretions as this are calculated to bring vaccination into unmerited contempt."

Of course the justification of early vaccination is that possibly the smallpox may get into a workhouse, where there are always many young children, and may produce a very serious epidemic. But there are other dangers. Dr. Crichton, in his article on this subject, draws attention to the fact that—

"In Foundling Hospitals, notably at St. Petersburg, the erysipelas of vaccination has been the starting-point of disastrous epidemics affecting the inmates generally."

Erysipelas is far more likely to occur after vaccination than small-pox is likely to occur in a workhouse not specially liable to infection. We all know what great care is taken by our medical men in regard to the vaccination of our own children. They wait to see what the constitution of the child is, and not till they are sure the constitution is strong enough do they vaccinate. There is a very strong opinion among the highest medical authorities that a child is best fit for vaccination at a period of about half way between the birth and the time of dentition. Most of the children born in workhouses are not legitimate. A poor woman goes into one of these places and gives birth to a child, and she is, a few hours after, utterly incapable of forming an opinion as to the period when vaccination should

take place. The right hon. Gentleman, in reply to my hon. Friend the Member for the Ilkeston Division, has just been dwelling on the notices carefully served on parents to vaccinate. But in such cases as this there is no notice whatever. To say that her consent is obtained is a mere farce, and it seems to me that very great hardship is caused both to the parent and the child. It is obvious that in many cases some serious malady may be breeding in the body of the child, and it is difficult to say whether any doctor on earth can discover it when the child is only two or three days old. Undue risk is inflicted on the child by such early vaccination, which really sets aside the principle of the Vaccination Act, fixing three months as the period after which the penalty for non-vaccination shall be enforced. I must, therefore, condemn the practice, and unless the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board indicates an intention of issuing some order discouraging it, I shall be compelled to move the reduction of the Vote and take the sense of the Committee upon the question.

*MR. RITCHIE: I do not think the Local Government Board has any power to issue such an order as that. The matter is in the discretion of the Guardians, on whom lie the responsibility of carrying out the law, and the Local Government Board has no power of interference. The hon. Gentleman says it is owing somewhat to the advice of the Local Government Board that this practice has been adopted. Certainly the Local Government Board has never given any advice which would justify the Guardians in doing either of the things of which the hon. Gentleman complains. He says that young children are frequently vaccinated without the consent of the mother. That, I distinctly assert, ought not to be done, and certainly it is not done under the advice of the Local Government Board. In my opinion, no child ought to be vaccinated within the period of three months allowed by law without the consent of the parents. At the same time, I think it extremely desirable that the child should be vaccinated at such a period as will enable the sore caused by vaccination to be healed before the child leaves the workhouse. In a large number of cases

the children born in workhouses are illegitimate, and when the mother goes out it is extremely doubtful whether any trace can be found to enable the authorities to see that the law is complied with. We have frequently had investigations by Inspectors of the Local Government Board which show that the ill-health, and sometimes the death of the child is caused by the neglect on the part of the parents to see that the arm is properly looked after. A certain percentage of children do, no doubt, suffer from erysipelas after vaccination, but in nine cases out of ten that is owing to the child's being brought into an erysipelatic atmosphere. Vaccination ought not to be performed at such an early period without the consent of the parent, and in no case where there is danger to the child. The doctor ought to satisfy himself that the child is in a condition of bodily health which renders it perfectly safe to perform the operation. In the case referred to by the hon. Gentleman, the Board was informed that the consent of the mother had been obtained before the vaccination of the child, and the statement that there was any unfortunate result from the vaccination has not been substantiated. There is no power vested in the Local Government Board to issue instructions to the Guardians, though we have given advice that the children should be vaccinated before they leave the workhouse. With respect to the case referred to by my hon. Friend (Mr. C. Gray), I sent down an Inspector, who reported that there were five imbeciles in the infirmary, but that there was no pregnant woman with the imbeciles. I quite agree that the association of women in that condition with imbeciles is most undesirable, and I will take steps to put a stop to such a state of things if it be brought to my notice. The Inspector reported that the imbeciles were of an unobjectionable character, and the other inmates of the infirmary said they had no objection to make. It should not be forgotten that the Lunacy Commissioners have jurisdiction over such imbeciles as well as the Local Government Board, and it would be the duty of the Lunacy Commissioners, if they found any abuse of the kind existing, to at once order the removal of the patients from the workhouse infirmary. It would be the duty of the Local Government Board

Inspector to draw the attention of the Lunacy Commissioners to any such abuses as the hon. Member has referred to.

*MR. C. W. GRAY (Essex, Maldon): I have had a long-standing experience of the very ward to which the right hon. Gentleman refers, and I know that many of the imbeciles had the most objectionable habits. However, after what the right hon. Gentleman has said, I trust Guardians will be more careful in the future.

MR. PICTON (Leicester): The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board, whilst showing the most kindly feeling and the best intentions, has not, I think, sufficiently answered the case as presented by my hon. Friend the Member for Northampton. The right hon. Gentleman said the Local Government Board had no power. But, Sir, the Board exercises power continually, or exercises a description of pressure which amounts to very much the same thing. I hold in my hand a printed copy of a letter signed by the Secretary and dated from the Local Government Board, Whitehall, January 7th, 1881, and sent apparently to the clerks of all Guardians throughout the country. In this letter the greatest pressure appears to be brought to bear upon the Guardians to see that newly-born children are vaccinated before they leave the workhouse at the end of the fortnight. The letter states that some Boards of Guardians had passed a resolution requiring the Medical Officer, subject to the exercise of his judgment, and making exceptions in particular cases, to secure the vaccination of all children born in the workhouse, as soon as practicable after birth, and further that it had been found practicable as a rule to vaccinate the children when six days old. I hold, therefore, that the Local Government Board is responsible for the initiation and continuation of this practice. Oftentimes, as we all know, the most unexpected changes take place in the health of young children, and some who are apparently strong to begin with are taken with some serious illness. Nothing is more uncertain than the health of a young baby, especially when born in the circumstances which have been referred to.

Mr. Ritchie

In more than one case in my own experience, the vaccination has been put off for a year or more after birth. Our own children are dealt with in a very different way from those of poor parents, and I maintain that a very great hardship is inflicted on the poor parents. The right hon. Gentleman says that in all cases the consent of the mother must be obtained. But in this instance evidence was given at the Coroner's inquest, by the mother herself, that she did not know her child was to be vaccinated. It is, of course, open to the Medical Officer to interpret the silence of the mother in such circumstances as giving consent, but it seems to me to be a very illegitimate mode of interpreting such silence. It has often been said that the proper way of enforcing vaccination is to take the child out of the recalcitrant mother's arms and put it into the arms of the doctor. The reply made is, that public opinion in this country will not stand that—that public opinion will stand the infliction of fines again and again, but will not stand recourse to such violent measures as that. I maintain, however, that incidents like that which has been referred to are simply the thin end of the wedge. You begin with violently taking away the child from the mother in the workhouse, and if that is not protested against perhaps some plan will be proposed of taking away the children of other mothers in the same way. I therefore think it is only the right thing to protest earnestly against what took place in this case, and as I do not think the right hon. Gentleman has sufficiently indicated appreciation of the gravity of the position, I am rather disappointed that my hon. Friend has not moved the reduction of the Vote. I desire to protest against what I call the cruel and unconstitutional arbitrariness of taking away a delicate child from the mother in order that it may undergo an operation of this kind which has the effect of causing its death.

*MR. RITCHIE: I wish to protest against the statement of the hon. Member for Leicester (Mr. Picton), that the death of the child referred to was due to vaccination; because that is not the fact.

*MR. CHANNING: At any rate it was an improper thing to vaccinate a

child in the state of health in which it then was.

*MR. S. SMITH (Flintshire): I desire for a few moments to call attention to the question of the emigration of pauper children, and I have to complain that the intentions of Parliament and the Local Government Board in regard to the emigration of pauper children are continually being frustrated. For years past there has been a general opinion in this country that there is no better way of dealing with that portion of the population than by emigration, and yet year after year next to nothing is being done in that direction. I am informed that last year out of a total of 60,000 pauper children only 600 were emigrated, or at the rate of 1 per cent. I am quite aware that the right hon. Gentleman opposite sympathises with my view that the best way of dealing with those pauper children who are left as orphans is to send them out to places where they may find comfortable homes, and I wish to ask why it is that the intentions of Parliament and the Local Government Board in this matter are so constantly frustrated? Compare the children who are sent out with those who are kept at home. Pauper children are kept in this country at an average cost to the ratepayers of £20 a year, whereas they might be sent out to the Colonies and placed with farmers to their own very great advantage and also to the benefit of the community at an average cost of from £10 to £15 per head all told. Why should the ratepayers be put to the additional expense involved in keeping the children in this country? Our Colonies are calling out for this class of emigrants. A society with which I am connected sends out poor children to Canada, where they are placed under all kinds of guarantees for their proper care and future welfare, and the system works most satisfactorily. But in this country we have still those 60,000 children brought up in pauper schools, whence they are sent out into our large cities, where they are exposed to great temptation and where their future chances of earning an honest livelihood are not to be compared with the prospects they would have in the Colonies. I therefore hope that the President of the Local Government Board will bring more pressure to bear upon Boards of Guardians in order to induce them to use

that safety-valve of emigration which they now so much neglect.

MR. LONG (Devizes): There has been a steady increase in the number of pauper children sent out to the Colonies, and I can assure the hon. Member for Flintshire that the Local Government Board not only throws no obstacle in the way of such emigration, but encourages it by Poor Law Guardians as far as they can, subject to the regulations. I can endorse every word that has fallen from the hon. Member as to the advantages which awaits the children when they get out to Canada. A vast number of residents in the Dominion of Canada are only too glad to receive children who are reasonably prepared to work in either in-door or out-door occupations. It would be unfair to compare the methods of private associations in promoting such emigration with those of the Central Board in London, which could not adopt similar methods. But the Department offers every facility in its power for the emigration of those children in such a way as will secure their being properly placed when they arrive on the other side of the water. The Local Government Board are as anxious as the hon. Member himself to promote that object; but when the hon. Member asks us to go still further and put pressure on Boards of Guardians for that purpose, he asks us to do that which it is impossible for us to accomplish.

MR. MUNDELLA (Brightside, Sheffield): It is only on such occasions as the present that we have the opportunity of calling the attention of hon. Members and of the President of the Local Government Board to cases such as that to which I referred a week ago in regard to the condition of the blind in this country. I allude to the prevalence of a disease known as granular ophthalmia, as to which there is an abundance of evidence showing that that disease is largely existent in our work-house schools. A few days ago I brought before my right hon. Friend opposite a case which it could hardly have been supposed would have occurred in this country, so bad is it in point of neglect and so scandalous to the Local Authorities concerned. What are the circumstances of that case? It is one which is under the immediate control of the Guardians of the richest union of the richest city in the world—the City

of London. The school is situated at Hanwell, and there are 1,100 children there at St. Saviour's School. In that school ophthalmia has been chronic for over 20 years; and in the course of the ten years, from 1875 to 1886, no fewer than 2,420 children have suffered from ophthalmic disease. There is another school at Anerley where there was a similar outbreak three years ago. They called in an eminent oculist, and he advised them as to the course they ought to take to stamp out the disease, and I am told that in that school there has only been one case of ophthalmia. In the Hanwell school at the present time there are quite as many children suffering from ophthalmia as there were ten years ago. They called in the same eminent man, who gave them the same advice, supported by the Inspector of the Local Government Board, but in spite of this pressure the Guardians, by a small majority, refused to make the necessary outlay to stamp out the disease. I do not complain of the action of the Local Government Board, but I hope the time has come when some additional pressure may be exerted, having regard to the fact that this disease is one of the most fruitful sources of blindness, and of misery and pauperism in later life.

*MR. RITCHIE: I am not at all sorry that the right hon. Gentleman has mentioned this matter, and I hope that what he has said will have an effect upon the managers of the schools in inducing them to carry out the works which are in the opinion of the Local Government Board absolutely necessary for stamping out the disease. It is only fair to say, however, that the managers of the schools have taken some steps, with the result that, while there still exists a regrettable number of cases of ophthalmia, the prevalence of the disease is enormously lessened, and the cases are not so severe. But the managers are incurring a grave responsibility in not carrying out still further the suggestions of the Local Government Board. A new infant school is absolutely necessary. The Local Government Board have strenuously advocated this course, but its powers are limited to remonstrance and the exertion of pressure. I cannot, however, believe that the managers will continue to resist the pressure which has been, and which will continue to be,

put upon them, and the effect of which will be considerably enhanced by the expression of opinion which has fallen from the right hon. Gentleman the member for Sheffield.

MR. RATHBONE (Arfon, Carnarvonshire): May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether it is not possible that in cases where the Guardians do not do their duty, the Local Government Board should supersede the Guardians, as has been done in Ireland? At any rate, could not the Local Government Board give the names of the people who so discredited themselves?

*MR. RITCHIE: Whatever the powers of the Local Government Board may be, the circumstances would have to be extremely grave to justify them in taking such serious action as that suggested by the hon. Gentleman. I cannot contemplate that, after what has been said in the House, and done by the Local Government Board, the managers will fail to do what is necessary.

*SIR TINDAL ROBERTSON (Brighton): I desire to endorse the remarks of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Sheffield. If two things are clearly demonstrated by the inquiries of the Royal Commission on the Blind, they are that ophthalmia is one of the most contagious diseases, and that, if properly treated, it can be stamped out. Under these circumstances it is most criminal on the part of Guardians not to take steps immediately. I believe that the forthcoming Report of the Commission, on which I have lately served, will strongly recommend that the President of the Local Government Board should have further powers. If these powers are not enough, I hope that the pressure of public opinion will be brought to bear on the managers, and that there will be no longer a possibility of a large number of poor children being afflicted with such a terrible disease.

MR. J. NOLAN (Louth, North): I may be allowed to say that I have had opportunities of watching the inception and growth of this disease, and I am sure that there is scarcely a reformatory, industrial, or workhouse school in the country where it is not known in some degree. With regard to the emigration of pauper children, I think that the Government ought to act with very great caution. I have had reports from Canada

with reference to these children which cause me to doubt whether they do benefit in all cases by exportation, and I will ask the Government, before consenting to bring pressure upon Poor Law Guardians to send children out to Canada in large numbers, to take time for reflection and allow the scheme, which has been at work for some time under the auspices of the hon. Member for Flintshire to show its fruits in an unmistakable way, so that there shall be no doubt as to the real tendencies of the plan. For my own part I hold that the rescue of children from lives of shame, and suffering, and sorrow is well worth the ambition of any man, whomsoever he may be, but from what I have seen and heard I know that it is possible for people with the best intentions in the world to make very grave mistakes indeed in dealing with this delicate subject.

MR. W. H. LONG (Wilts, Devizes): I only want to say in reference to what has fallen from the hon. Member who last spoke, that the Government recognize the importance of very carefully safeguarding the interests of the children when they are sent out, but I can assure the hon. Member that we receive reports which are the results, not of flying visits, but of annual inspections made by competent and painstaking officers of the Government of the Dominion of Canada on the subject. We find from these reports that the children like their places, and would, on no account, return home. The experience gathered from these reports coincides with the experience on the subject which I gained when I interviewed some of the inspectors, and also witnessed the arrival of a number of these poor children and their conveyance to their respective homes.

MR. J. NOLAN: I have seen some of the children, who, under great disadvantage and after great trouble, have made their way back to this country.

MR. LONG: Yes, Sir. Of course there are a few cases where the good intentions of the promoters fail, but surely the whole system of emigration is not consequently to be condemned. It is manifest, looking at the material with which we have to deal, there will be some cases of failure, but nobody who has seen the homes provided for the children, and who knows the excellent future which is before the majority of them, can deny that it is completely to

their advantage that they should be emigrated, provided that the Local Government Board exercises proper control as to the destination to which they are sent. It is impossible to expect that there will be success in every case, but in the vast majority of cases, complete success has so far attended the emigration.

*MR. SAMUEL SMITH: I merely want, in reply to the hon. Member, to explain that our scheme of emigration has now been carried on for nearly twenty years, and that after the most thorough and searching examinations of the results we have found that 95 per cent of the children we have sent out have gone on happily and well, and will grow up, or have grown up, good, prosperous citizens of Canada. I must say that the result is one which no system of workhouse management could possibly produce. I do not blame the managers of workhouses for that at all; but when you get hundreds, or even thousands, of children herded together in pauper schools, you find from experience that the result in after life is very disappointing. In these workhouse schools it is hardly possible to touch the hearts of these children; and, after all, it is through the heart that you can best train a child. Now, with regard to the precautions which are taken to secure that the children in Canada are well treated, I may say that if any child makes a complaint we immediately send an Inspector to inquire, and should there prove to be a good foundation for the complaint, the child is removed. My hon. Friend has suggested that we are sending these children into the backwoods of Canada. Sir, that is not so. We send them to the settled parts of Canada, where the land is in a fair state of cultivation and covered with homesteads, and the children are planted out in the most comfortable farms. I hope, therefore, the hon. Member will see that what we do is for the real good of the children. It is a purely benevolent enterprise to save the children from the misery of the streets of Liverpool, and I hope he will admit that our work has not altogether failed.

MR. J. NOLAN: I only wish to add, in reply to the hon. Member for Flintshire, that I never thought for one moment to doubt his intentions. I have been for a long time familiar with the

character of the hon. Gentleman, who has devoted a considerable portion of his time and means to helping on the most unfortunate of his fellow creatures, both grown up and children. What I wished to do was to draw the attention of the Committee to the fact that human nature is the same pretty well all the world over; and if we in England cannot find homes here for our poor children, it is hard to expect that Canada shall be willing to find satisfactory homes for them.

*MR. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.): I have risen only for the sake of making one remark in confirmation of what has just been said by the Secretary to the Local Government Board and the hon. Member for Flintshire. There is in New York a society for exactly the same purpose as that which they have been referring to. It is called the Children's Aid Society, and has been in existence for thirty-five years. This society gets hold of the poor children from reformatories and sends them out West, finding homes for them amongst farmers, and I believe the same testimony which the Secretary to the Local Government Board and the hon. Member for Flintshire have given with regard to Canada might with equal truth be given as to the result of the operations of this society. Since 1853 it has sent out 80,000 persons, nearly all children, and in 1885 it sent out about 2,600 children. I believe an equal percentage of the children turn out well—it is stated at over 93 per cent for children under 14 years of age. I have gone into the question in America, and I found but one testimony, to the effect that this society has produced the greatest possible benefit, and that nothing can be imagined which is more likely to relieve the pressure of the population of large cities, and to meet the great difficulty which such cities experience in dealing with juvenile vagrancy and crime, than this plan of getting children of this class and sending them out to new homes. The decrease of crime, and especially of juvenile crime, in proportion to the population which has lately been observed in New York is attributed largely to its efforts.

*SIR WALTER FOSTER: I desire to raise the question of compulsory contributions to the maintenance of pauper relatives. I have in my hand a letter

just received which gives an instance illustrative of what occurs in some of these cases. A Staffordshire man has been earning when in full work 2s. 4d. a day. His father was injured some years ago in a colliery, and his earning power was lessened, and the parish has forced the son to pay one shilling a week as a contribution towards his father's outdoor relief. That one shilling a week was paid by this man for some time, but lately he has fallen ill and been confined to his bed and attended by a medical man. While ill in bed he failed to appear on a summons, and when he did appear he was condemned to one month's imprisonment for not contributing a shilling a week to his father's maintenance. The actual rate of wages he received for April came to nine shillings and a halfpenny per week, and yet he was absolutely condemned at the instigation of the Board of Guardians to go to prison for one month for not supporting his father. I think the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board might well exercise a certain amount of pressure upon Boards of Guardians in different parts of the country, so that these cases of cruelty and hardship may not be so frequent. There is in all the Poor Law districts a large amount of work done by Poor Law Guardians with humanity and kindness, but there are, on the other hand, from time to time, instances of hardship and almost cruelty itself, and if the right hon. Gentleman can, during his tenure of office, introduce more of that tenderness and kindliness to poor people which should prevail, in the treatment of the poor, he will have done great service. There are, I know, gross abuses, in which people able to contribute to their poor relations are unwilling to do so.

*MR. RITCHIE: Hear, hear.

*SIR WALTER FOSTER: I do not plead for any mitigation of the punishment in such cases, but where a man has to support his wife on 9s. 0½d. a week it is a disgrace to our humanity that he should be sent to prison for a month for failing to contribute one shilling out of the nine towards the support of a man nearly as well able to earn his living as he is himself.

*MR. A. B. WINTERBOTHAM (Gloucester, Cirencester): Probably the reply of the President of the Local Govern-

ment Board will be that there is an appeal to Petty Sessions against orders to contribute made by Guardians. But there are many poor people who do not know of this, and who, if they do, do not care to go before a Bench of Magistrates, prefer to go on paying. It may be in the recollection of hon. Members that some two years ago I brought forward a case which the Secretary for War at first hardly believed, but which on inquiry he found to be as I had described. It was the case of a poor man earning only 12s. a week, who for years had been called upon to contribute 1s. 6d. a week to the support of his son, who was in the Guards, and was wounded at Aldershot during some manœuvres. As a result of the inquiries then made, the Government granted an allowance for two years, but the grant has ceased, and his father has again been ordered by the magistrates out of his scanty earnings to pay this 1s. 6d. a week. The reply will probably be that the magistrates can exercise their discretion, but as a fact I know that some Benches do make these orders on working men who earn only 12s. a week, and who have a wife and a family to maintain. I would suggest that a Circular should be drawn up by the Local Government Board to the Boards of Guardians, so that there may be some uniformity with regard to the exaction of contributions for pauper relatives, and that poor people, with a wife and family and scanty earnings, shall not be called upon to make payments which are very heavy for them.

*MR. RITCHIE: I do not at all complain of the manner in which hon. Members have brought this matter forward. I think we are all agreed on the general principle that persons able to pay should contribute to the support of relatives who are under the Poor Law. Any other principle I think would lead to great abuses. The case cited by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Ilkerton appears on the face of it to be one of hardship. If the Local Government Board had any power, by remonstrance or otherwise, to induce those who are responsible to deal with cases of this kind in a more kindly and humane spirit, we should not hesitate to do so, and I hope and trust that those who have to administer the law will, while seeing that the law is observed, be extremely careful that is not unduly

strained. It would be most inexpedient, however, to lay down any hard and fast line, which would only lead probably to more difficulties than would be got rid of.

MR. A. O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.): I desire before the Vote is passed to draw attention to its exceedingly inflated character. We have been assured that during last year there has been the most stringent investigation of every detail of the estimates by the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, and I assume that the President of the Local Government Board has himself overhauled his own estimate with a view to seeing if some economy might not be affected. Now, Sir, this Vote affords an illustration of the character of the detailed investigation which has been carried out. There is, for example, a Chief Inspector and Assistant-Secretary with a salary rising from £900 to £1,000, by a triennial increment of £50. The Chief Inspector has a maximum salary of £1,000, but no less than £1,100 is put down for this single officer. Anyone might suppose that that is a clerical error, but I have taken the trouble to cast up the figures and I find the total is correct. Now, Sir, with regard to the general character of the Vote. It seems to me that it is clearly inflated. I do not see why services rendered to this country should be more highly paid for in England than in any other part of the United Kingdom. I do not refer to Ireland, because we have long ago given up the attempt to get justice for her in that respect. I will compare it with Scotland, and I will ask why Scotch officials should have 30 per cent less than English officers, although they perform similar functions? The Local Government Board appears to cost £450,000, or at the rate of £17,300 per million, or about 4½d. per head. The Board of Supervision in Scotland, on the other hand, is allowed £29,000, or £7,330 per million, or 1½d. per head. Again, in the vote for salaries and wages of Local Government Officials England receives £72,843, and Scotland £7,300, or less than one-tenth. Now, I pass to the Engineering Department of the Board of Trade. It costs £8,000 of which £6,300 is for salaries. Why does Scotland get the generous sum of £280? And so it is throughout the whole public service; the Scotch are

underpaid and the English exceedingly overpaid. While in England you have four Inspectors with a salary of £1,000, 13 others with salaries ranging from £600 to £900, and four Assistants at £500 a year, you have only, in Scotland, two with a maximum salary of £500, beginning with a minimum of £300. And in the case of the clerical staff, you find precisely the same thing. In England there are 12 first class clerks receiving from £400 to £600 a year each, and 32 second class clerks receiving from £200 to £350 a year each. In Scotland there are three first class clerks who receive from £250 to £400 a year each. The same thing occurs in the case of the *employés* of the lower grades. The English messengers get salaries ranging from £70 to £100 a year, while the Scotch messenger has to be satisfied with something between £50 and £60, and we find that the English charwoman receives £36 a year, while the Scotch charwoman is only paid £16. For the Medical Department in England £15,000 is asked in these Estimates. What does Scotland get? One-thirtieth part, or £500. The salaries in this Department range from £500 to £1,200 in England, the total salaries paid amounting to £9,080. Scotland, however, only gets £300 in salaries. Again, under the Alkaline Acts £4,600 is spent in salaries in England; but Scotland does not get a penny. Who is to blame for the inflated state of the English Estimates as compared with the starved condition of the Scotch Estimates? I cannot find it in my heart or conscience to blame the Government. They are providing for their own people. But I do think that the blame rests upon the Scotch Members who, year after year, have had all these figures before them. In duty to their constituents they ought to have investigated these things. It seems rather an odd thing that it should be left to Irish Members to point out to Scotchmen the way in which Scotland is treated. Having said this, I feel that perhaps I had better leave it to some Scotch Member to move whatever reduction is necessary. I have only risen for the purpose of illustrating what inequalities are found in the Estimates by anyone who takes the trouble to examine the figures.

*MR. RITCHIE: I think it may appear strange to the Committee that

when the hon. Gentleman desires to institute a comparison of the expenditure of certain public offices he should not have done so as between England and Ireland. The hon. Gentleman exercised a wise discretion in comparing England and Scotland; had he taken the course which might seem a natural one for him, and drawn a comparison between England and Ireland, the deduction to be derived might not have been quite in the direction he desired it. Now it is perfectly impossible for the Committee to arrive at any correct conclusion on the matter without knowing the whole of the duties devolving upon one Board and another. The hon. Member has not given any such information, and therefore he omitted to furnish the necessary guidance. The hon. Gentleman started by saying that one Chief Inspector and Assistant Secretary receives a salary of £4,100 a year. Anybody who looks at page 138 will see that that is the amount for three Assistant Secretaries and one Chief General Inspector.

MR. A. O'CONNOR: Yes; I am wrong. I give in.

*MR. RITCHIE: I am not at all sorry the hon. Gentleman has drawn the attention of the Committee to this Vote, because he has afforded me an opportunity of saying—and I must know more about the work of the particular gentlemen referred to than any Member of the Committee can possibly know—that not only do these gentlemen do most valuable and efficient work, but that there are no public servants who work longer hours or more continuously. There is hardly a day on which the Secretary of the Local Government Board and his assistants do not work for 10 and sometimes 11 hours and more. The pressure brought to bear on the Local Government Board in consequence of the alterations connected with the Local Government Act have been of a very great and onerous character, and the country owes these gentlemen a debt of gratitude for the most valuable and efficient services which they have rendered in the matter. I am glad the hon. Member has given me an opportunity of saying how much I am personally sensible of the value of the services rendered to the country, the Department, and myself by the gentlemen to whom the hon. Member has

referred. Now it is impossible for me to enter into a comparison of English and Scottish expenditure. But if the expenditure of the Local Government Board now is to be compared with the expenditure of previous years, it will be found in the highest degree satisfactory and economical. Year by year additional responsibilities are constantly being placed on the Local Government Board. Nevertheless, the expenditure upon salaries has certainly not increased in proportion. Indeed, it has positively decreased as compared with many previous years. In 1879-80, putting aside grants in aid, the expenditure was £127,904; in 1884-85 it was £126,196; and in the present year it is £126,317. I am sure the Committee, looking to the immense increase of work thrown on the Local Government Board, will regard that as extremely satisfactory.

DR. CAMERON (Glasgow College Division): I should not have intervened in this discussion but for the observations of my hon. Friend the Member for East Donegal (Mr. A. O'Connor). The hon. Gentleman thought it very wonderful that he had discovered a mare's nest that no Scotch Member had been able to find. He discovered one mare's nest which has been pointed out by the President of the Local Government Board, and I think he discovered another mare's nest when he instituted a comparison between the expenditure of the Local Government Board in England and the Board of Supervision in Scotland. We have repeatedly called attention to some of the inequalities, but those inequalities were in the form of grants in aid. There is no use in talking of them now, because national grants in aid are to be given to the different countries and are to be distributed by them. We have had the worst of it in many cases. In respect to vaccination the English got excessive grants in aid. This was also so in the case of grants in aid of the sick poor, but in the matter of grants in aid in respect to lunatics Scotland had the best of it. So far as the Board of Supervision is concerned we do not want to increase the emoluments, but want to sweep it off the face of the earth. The Local Government Board has in it the germs of the most important Ministry that can possibly be represented on those Benches—the Ministry of Health. The Board of Supervision is

a non-representative body, altogether out of accord with the spirit of the age. It is composed of a paid secretary, sundry Sheriffs, and a couple of Law Provosts who have no official acquaintance with Poor Law administration. We think that the duties of the Board might be better performed by an Inspector elected to the Scotch office. I know there are some who think that the Local Government Board itself might be dispensed with. Sir Charles Dilke thought so. But I am of opinion that the Ministry of Health is as important as a Ministry of Agriculture, and I should be very sorry to cripple it in any way. Of course I do not mean to say that the Department is administered with a single eye to economy, but I am not aware that there is any gross or extraordinary extravagance in its administration as compared with that of other Departments. I am inclined to think there is less, and what inequality we have had to complain of in the treatment of Scotland, as compared with England, has been in respect of grants in aid. Those inequalities will by the new arrangements be entirely redressed.

*SIR H. ROSCOE (Manchester, S.): I wish to call attention to a matter of some consequence as affecting the health of the people, viz., the working of the Alkali Acts, which however in my opinion ought to be called the Noxious Vapours Acts. We all know how important is the question of air pollution, and these Acts have in this respect been of the greatest value in the manufacturing districts both to the manufacturer and to the public. Whilst, however, I say this, and will bear testimony to the knowledge and ability of the Inspectors who carry out the Acts, I think that much still remains to be done. The subject is a somewhat complex one, but I may explain that the Acts apply to certain manufactures in which noxious gases are evolved, but they apply to manufactories alone and not to any other place in which such noxious gases are evolved by the use of the products made in those manufactories. I desire, therefore, to suggest that the President of the Local Government Board should consider whether the provisions of the Acts may not be extended so as to include places where chemical substances are employed which, during that employment, give off

noxious vapours. For example, many refineries of gold and silver, where nitric acid is used, do not come under the supervision of the Inspectors. This, as I have said, is a matter of the greatest consequence to the health of the people. It is impossible to get rid of the fogs of London under any Act of Parliament, but a great deal may be done to purify the atmosphere, especially of our manufacturing towns, much has been done under the Acts by the application of the best practicable means clause, but much still remains to be done, and I therefore desired to draw the right hon. Gentleman's attention to the suggestion I have made.

*MR. RITCHIE: I will confer with the hon. Gentleman on the subject.

*DR. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire): This Vote may be inflated, but if there is any increase it is certainly not due to any excessive emoluments paid to the Medical Department of the Local Government Board. The Chief of the Department only receives £1,100 a year, and the juniors £800 and £900. I should be glad to know whether steps cannot be taken for the circulation among medical officers of health of the admirable report of Dr. Barry on the Sheffield smallpox epidemic. I understand that the price of the volume has been reduced from 24s. to 10s. or 12s. But I do not see why a cheap edition should not be published and sent out to the Inspectors of the different districts. May I suggest that Members of the House who are supplied with copies should, if they do not want them, give them to their local Officers of Health.

*MR. RITCHIE: The price of the volume has been reduced from 24s. to 10s., and that I hope will cause the Report, of which I cannot speak too highly, to get into the hands of many people who would not otherwise see it. We are now in communication with the Treasury concerning the supply of a certain number of copies for distribution amongst medical officers.

MR. PICTON: I have been informed by friends who endeavoured to buy the Report, that it has been withdrawn from circulation, for the purpose of being corrected. I should like to know what truth there is in my information. There is another matter I wish to raise. The terms of reference to the Royal Commission on the opera-

tion of the Vaccination Act leave it a little uncertain whether the question which I raised on Tuesday will come before the Commission. In 1887 a disease broke out amongst a certain herd of cows in Wiltshire. There were various speculations as to the nature of the disease, but Professor Crookshank, who is a very eminent authority upon such questions, having closely examined the cows and compared the disease with what he had seen elsewhere—on the Continent and in this country—came most decidedly to the conclusion that it was a clear case of cowpox. He read a paper on the subject before the Pathological Society in December, 1887. A report of the meeting was published in *The Medical Journal*, and in the course of the discussion, it was stated that the medical officer of the Local Government Board expressed his satisfaction that the outbreak of cowpox in Wiltshire would afford an opportunity of testing the effect of vaccine from that source on human beings as had long been desired. The right hon. Gentleman stated on Tuesday that the report was incorrect, perhaps he would now say in what particulars it was wrong.

*MR. RITCHIE: What I meant to imply on Tuesday, was that the report was substantially incorrect; that Dr. Buchanan had not expressed the views attributed to him. But I am not at all sure that the language in *The Medical Journal* was wrong. I think it was capable of another interpretation. That is how it was put to me. The question the hon. Gentleman asked as to the Sheffield Report surprises me. I have never heard of the withdrawal of the Report, neither have I heard any suggestion that it required correction.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): Economies have been effected in this Vote notwithstanding Ministerial assurances of their impossibility. That only shows how necessary it is to scrutinize these Votes most carefully. A certain number of the Inspectors travel, and in addition to the large salaries paid to them it seems to me excessive to give them a guinea per night for expenses. In the case of four of the Inspectors of Workhouse Schools the travelling expenses appear to have been commuted for a sum of £250 a year, which is, I think, an exceedingly good commutation for them. At a guinea per

night I think the amount would be much less. The same system runs through the whole of the Vote, and brings the total up to a very large sum per annum.

*MR. RITCHIE: So far as the ordinary expenses are concerned, the hon. Gentleman should remember that most of these gentlemen have large districts to superintend, and they must of necessity, in order to discharge their duty, be a great many nights away from home, and be compelled to obtain accommodation at hotels. The Inspectors do not receive more than a guinea a night for personal expenses when they are on duty away from home — an allowance only equal, I understand, to that paid to commercial travellers; and considering their position, and the work they do, I do not think that amount is excessive. For years past the Inspectors have been required to reside in their districts, so that travelling expenses may not be incurred unnecessarily. I do not think that we can do more in the matter. These accounts are gone through with the utmost care by the Department.

MR. J. NOLAN: I do not intend to criticize the Vote, but I wish to say that in my opinion the Canal Boats Act has conferred an immense benefit on the canal boat population, both physically and morally. I believe that the population living in these canal boats have been much benefitted by the system of inspection, but I should like to draw the attention of the right hon. Gentleman to the fact that there are other wanderers in the country besides those who live in canal boats.

THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order! The canal boat inspection comes under item B., and that has already been passed.

Vote agreed to.

2. £13,215 to complete the sum for the Lunacy Commission, England.

*DR. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W.): I had hoped that the Lunacy Act Amendment Bill would have been introduced this Session, and if that had been the case I should not trouble the Committee with any remarks on the present occasion; but as our hopes in that respect have been so often before disappointed, I will offer a few observations on the general system of

inspection. I wish to obtain a little information from the representatives of the Home Office. I am not one of those who look upon our lunacy inspection generally as being well carried out. I consider that the number of Inspectors is too few to render the inspection of that thorough-going character which we all desire. Three medical men and three lawyers, who go about together, have to inspect 100 asylums containing 82,600 lunatics. One question I want to ask is, why lawyers should be employed for that duty at all? I presume that the object of the inspection is to find out whether persons are mad or improperly shut up, and that the asylums are maintained in a proper condition. A man who has not been properly trained to the technical and difficult study of insanity cannot give a competent opinion as to whether persons who are shut up in these asylums are mad or not; and if they have only to see that the asylums are properly furnished and the like, the salary, which is £1,500 per year, is too high for the performance of such a duty. I want to know what is the actual function which the lawyers discharge in these cases. In Scotland, where the lunacy arrangements are nearly perfect, this system of inspection by lawyers and doctors does not exist; the doctor goes round by himself, and the system of inspection there carried out is one of a more searching and complete character than that adopted in England. If any legal question arises, of course a lawyer is called in. In Scotland the inspection is done from patriotic motives; the gentlemen by whom it is done get no salary, whereas in England they receive the large salary of £1,500 a year. If inspection is necessary it ought to be thorough, and the doctor ought to see the patients at least once a year. In Scotland we have an excellent arrangement of lunacy districts. A doctor is appointed to each district, and by going round regularly he gets to know the patients. There is nothing of that kind here. The remedy which I propose is to abolish the legal Commissioners, and to appoint in their place three more doctors, thus insuring an inspection which would give confidence to the public. I should like to know what the functions of the legal Commissioners are, and how they have ever been of

practical use in detecting persons improperly confined in asylums.

*MR. H. H. FOWLER: My hon. Friend behind me has assumed that the Government have no real intention of proceeding with the Lunacy Amendment Act this session. If I thought so, I should regret that decision very greatly. The Bill has been introduced by successive Governments year after year, and I understand that having been passed through the House of Lords, it is now awaiting a Second Reading in this House. I would appeal to the First Lord of the Treasury to say whether arrangements can not be made for reading the Bill a second time in the House of Commons and sending it up to the Grand Committee on Law, which has at present nothing before it. The country is anxious for legislation, and the Bill will arouse no Party feeling whatever. So far as I am concerned, I am ready to give it all the support in my power.

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I think I had better reply at once to the remarks of the right hon. Gentleman. The Government have every hope of being able to pass the Bill in the course of the present Session. With such a Bill, touching a great many interests and prejudices, it is desirable before reading it that communications should pass between those who have fair reason to object to any of the provisions in order to smooth down any opposition. Those communications are passing; and I trust that the Second Reading will not occasion any debate in the House, because the Bill is very generally approved and it is most desirable that it should be carefully considered in Committee upstairs, and after issuing from the Committee, by the House, I can assure the hon. Gentleman that the Government will pass the Bill unless they meet with uncompromising opposition.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland): I am sure that the Committee have heard the statement of the right hon. Gentleman with great satisfaction and relief. I do not see how he can expect anything like factious opposition to the Bill which he proposes to bring in. I presume that all the details will be settled by the Committee upstairs. I wish now to join the hon. Gentleman who initiated the debate in urging the Home Secretary to substitute medical for legal Lunacy Commissioners,

as lunacy is pre-eminently a subject for doctors. The legal man knows nothing of lunacy, which is a physical and not a legal question, and consequently under the present arrangements two men are employed to do the work of one. There are few subjects on which the public mind has been so disturbed, and several recent cases have served to increase the anxiety. The other day the relatives of a man who had been missing for years applied for permission to administer his estate, when the man was suddenly discovered in a lunatic asylum. There must be something wrong in a system which could permit this. I think there are many persons within the walls of a lunatic asylum who ought not to be there at all, and on the other hand there a good many outside who might be confined with great advantage to the wives and children who have to live with them. I believe that in some cases both lawyers and doctors have mistaken eccentricity for lunacy. In former days it was much too easy to have a man shut up in a lunatic asylum, and now we are confronted with the other evil, that it is too hard.

MR. BIGGAR (Cavan, W.): The right hon. Gentleman who spoke from the front bench, and my hon. Friend the Member for Liverpool (Mr. T. P. O'Connor), have assumed that this Bill will be a great improvement of the existing law. Now, I have heard on competent authority that the proposed Bill, if carried, will make the law worse than it is at present. My belief is that at the present moment there is not a proper amount of supervision. I think that the present system of putting people into asylums on the certificate of two doctors is a most objectionable one. There ought to be no private asylums, but the Executive Government should be responsible to the public for all institutions for the confinement of the insane.

*THE UNDER SECRETARY FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (MR. STUART WORTLEY, Sheffield, Hallam): I do not know whether the hon. Member for Aberdeen (Dr. Farquharson) is aware that the arrangement by which the Commission is composed of members partly legal and partly medical is one that cannot be altered without legislation, so that if the hon. Member will

render what assistance is in his power for bringing on the Lunacy Bill which has come down to us from the other House, he will be bringing nearer his opportunity for bringing about an alteration in the law in the direction he desires. On the merits of the present system there are some impartial judges who have arrived at an adverse conclusion to that of the hon. Member. The Medical Members of the Commission are in favour of the present arrangement, and they find advantage in the presence of their legal brethren on the Commission. It was the opinion of the late Lord Shaftesbury, who was Chairman of the Commission, that it was an advantageous arrangement, and an examination of the duties of the Commissioners shows why that should be so. Those duties are by no means exclusively of a medical character; they include investigations into matters of fact and other matters of an administrative nature upon which legal qualifications are required. The Commissioners have to inquire into not only the physical and moral treatment of the insane, they have to consider the disposition and arrangements for property; to conduct prosecutions for neglect or ill treatment; they have to enter on the plans for the structure and accommodation in asylums; and deal with contracts relating to administration and general rules. They have also to deal with the licensing of Metropolitan Asylums and to examine the forms of orders, certificates, and all similar documents under the Lunacy Acts. These duties cannot be described as entirely medical, and there is no doubt it was with a view to these matters that Parliament decided there should be a strong legal element on the Board. The hon. Member for the Scotland Division (Mr. T. O'Connor) says that under the present law lunatics may possibly be improperly confined, and the hon. Member for Cavan (Mr. Biggar) complains that the Bill we have laid on the Table would probably make matters worse, but without infringing on the rules of the House that forbid me to discuss the merits of the Bill not now before us, I may point out that the Bill alluded to makes only two proposals, curtailing the extension of private asylums and ensuring that judicial intervention in reference to orders for detention which

the hon. Member thinks would check the evils of which he complained.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: I think the hon. Gentleman has made out a case for having a certain number of lawyers upon the Commission, but that was not exactly the point of my hon. Friend, and that to which I also alluded. It is not that lawyers are not useful for the legal work to which the hon. Gentleman referred, the work of looking after the property of lunatics and that sort of thing. Our point is that lawyers go with doctors for examination into the state of the mind of the lunatic, and that, we say, is exclusively medical work, with which lawyers should have nothing to do. We say that medical men should do this medical work.

*DR. FARQUHARSON: The legal Members of the Commission might sit to adjudicate on points of law, but I object to the dual examinations of asylums by the two sets of men, lawyers and doctors. It is a plan which limits the number of medical inspectors, and unduly contracts their influence and operations. If we could get the £1,500 which the lawyers have, for the doctors, we should have a more effective supervision. There should be in England an arrangement such as we have in Scotland, a legal Board to which reference might be made by the doctors in case of doubt or difficulty.

*MR. STUART WORTLEY: The visits of the Legal Commissioners are incumbent on them by Acts of Parliament that require that there shall be two visitors—one legal, one medical. They have to investigate charges of ill-treatment and therefore to deal with disputes as to questions of fact—duties, I think, that are better discharged by persons accustomed to legal investigation.

*DR. FARQUHARSON: I will not put the Committee to the trouble of dividing.

Vote agreed to.

3. £49,421, to complete the sum for the expenses of the Mint, including coinage.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): There is only one point I wish to raise in reference to this Vote, and that is the great scarcity of sixpences among the currency and the enormous quantity of florins. I cannot understand why this should be, and I very much doubt whether the public care very much for

florins. At any rate, I can see no reason why they should be coined in quantities out of all proportion to sixpences. I hope we may have some explanation from the Secretary to the Treasury, or whoever is responsible for the Department, as to the system pursued in regard to the small coinage, and the proportion of one to the other—how many florins, shillings, and sixpences.

*MR. H. H. FOWLER: My hon. Friend has anticipated a point I was going to raise. There is much inconvenience caused by a scarcity of small silver coins. There is an ample supply of florins and half-crowns, but speaking for my own locality, and I think I can speak generally, there is a want of shillings and sixpences. I hope we may have this remedied.

MR. JACKSON: I shall be very glad to convey this complaint to the Mint Authorities, but I am in a position to say that steps have been taken to increase the coinage of silver considerably, including these smaller pieces.

Vote agreed to.

4. £10,708 to complete the sum for the National Debt Office.

Vote agreed to.

5. £48,496 to complete the sum for the Patent Office.

MR. LABOUCHERE: I believe it is the fact that arrangements have been made for the exchange of the publications of the Patent Office in England for those of the United States office, and of other countries, but there are great complaints that these exchanges are conducted unfairly towards us. We do not get the same number of copies we give to America, and other countries. It is important in our great centres of industry that there should be means of access to these publications, especially those from the United States, and the public libraries in Leeds and elsewhere should have copies for reference. There are complaints that libraries have not copies of these publications, nor indeed the publications issued by our own Patent Office. At any rate, I think these last should be procurable for the actual cost of paper and ink. In all the issues of publications from Government Departments there is an attempt on the part of the office to recoup itself not only for the cost of the parti-

cular copy, but for the cost also of setting up and the original expenses. It is the idea of large profits and small sales, instead of small profits and large sales. I do not think it really ought to be a question of profit at all, and surely some arrangement might be made to facilitate the distribution of both our own and foreign Patent publications. In America, as we know, there are far more patents taken out than there are here, and we know that labour-saving appliances are continually being produced, knowledge of which would be of great advantage in our manufacturing towns. I have had a correspondence on this subject with a gentleman who strongly urged me to mention this matter, and it appears to me a very reasonable suggestion.

MR. JACKSON: I was not aware that there were any complaints in reference to the exchange of Patent Office publications between this and other countries. I know it has been the practice to make such exchanges of publications of designs and specifications, and I will call the attention of the Patent Office to the statement of the hon. Member. As to the publications of the Patent Office, there were some complaints, but quite recently the whole subject was examined by a Departmental Committee, presided over by my hon. Friend the Member for Wigton (Sir Herbert Maxwell), and it was decided that in future a journal should be issued consolidating into one the three publications that have hitherto been issued, and at a price that will bring it within the range of those who desire to refer to it. Illustrations also will add to the usefulness of the publication, and the arrangements made promise to work very satisfactorily.

MR. COSSHAM (Bristol, E.): No patent is ever taken out in the United States without a guarantee of its distinguishing merit, but there are patents taken out in England without any merit at all. I think it would be a wise change if our Patent Office were made responsible for the thing patented having some real benefit about it.

Vote agreed to.

6. £20,190 to complete the sum for the Paymaster General's Office.

MR. LABOUCHERE: I should like to know precisely what are the functions of the Paymaster General and his assis-

tants. Here we have a Paymaster General who gets nothing, and an assistant with a salary of £1,000. What is the use of keeping up this office of Paymaster General? It was acknowledged to be a sinecure office, and the salary was abolished, I believe in the time of Lord Wolverton, who, I believe, as he did not earn the salary, declined to take it. Why keep up the fiction when the office is superfluous, and does not require a salary?

MR. JACKSON: If the hon. Member will refer to the Estimates he will find that there is no amount placed against the entry of "Assistant"; he has been abolished. I may say in relation to this subject that I hope shortly to introduce a Bill dealing with this office, which was the subject of consideration by a Committee some years ago. It is believed that by the re-arrangement proposed considerable economy will be affected. The Bill will, I hope, shortly be ready for submission to the House.

MR. HANBURY (Preston): Has the official in question been transferred or pensioned, or how has he been treated?

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: We shall be anxious for the production of this Bill, for it seems that we have a Department that is almost unnecessary, maintained at considerable cost.

*MR. BRADLAUGH: Is it possible for the hon. Gentleman to help the Committee a little further by shadowing forth the arrangement proposed, because it may or may not be satisfactory? I hope it may be, but it is clear that as the head of the Department is gone, and the assistant head is gone, we should feel more happy with the knowledge that the body is to go too, and no particular harm would result to the country. It would give satisfaction outside the House and in if the hon. Gentleman would increase our information a little.

MR. CAUSTON (Southwark, W.): And may I ask what are the duties of the Department?

MR. JACKSON: I think it would be rather irregular, and I think the Committee will hardly wish me, to anticipate the statement that necessarily must be made when the Bill is introduced. I gave the information I did that the Committee might know that we contemplate dealing with the office generally, but the Government must not be sup-

posed to convey the impression that the office has been extravagantly conducted. I did not mean to cast the least reflection on the officers of the Department. As to the re-arrangement, we propose—I may say as much as this—that it is in the direction of making payments through bankers rather than through the Office. The Committee will excuse me if I do not enter further into a Bill not yet introduced.

*MR. BRADLAUGH: Only one thing I will ask, will the Bill certainly be introduced with the intention of carrying it through this Session?

MR. JACKSON: Certainly, that is the intention.

MR. LABOUCHERE: I cannot make out whether there is any head to the Office. I suppose there is some head?

MR. JACKSON: The Chief Clerk is the head of the Office.

MR. LABOUCHERE: The Chief Clerk gets £1,100 a-year, but then we have a Treasury Remembrancer and Deputy Paymaster for Ireland who gets £1,200. What duties is he called upon to discharge?

MR. JACKSON: Anyone who knows the Treasury Remembrancer for Ireland knows that he has most important duties to discharge. He is the representative of the Treasury, the officer to whom, if the Treasury has occasion to make any communication, reference is made. He is a most efficient and capable officer, and I can assure the Committee has a great deal of official work.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: I do not know who the gentleman is, and am not disposed to dispute the assertion that he is a very capable officer, but it strikes me as strange that the head of the office in England should be satisfied with £800 but the official in Ireland should require £1,200. We know, as a matter of fact, living in Ireland is very considerably cheaper than living in England, so that the difference in salary should be the other way, and £800 in Dublin would be about equivalent to £1,200 in London. But I am afraid my hon. Friend has hit upon one of the many examples that run through all the Estimates that extravagant salaries in Ireland are more extravagant even than extravagant salaries in England. I would be diverging into questions I am anxious

to avoid if I were to suggest a reason for this disproportion.

MR. HANBURY: I must press my hon. Friend for an answer as to the terms upon which the Assistant Paymaster has been removed from office.

MR. JACKSON: I am afraid I cannot say, for I do not remember, but I will get the information, and give it to my hon. Friend on Report.

*MR. H. H. FOWLER: May I ask whether the same rule is applied to Civil Service Officials in Ireland as is wisely applied in England, and is it adhered to, that they shall abstain from all party political manifestations and controversies?

*MR. JACKSON: Oh yes. There is not the least objection to stating the name of the present holder of the office of Treasury Remembrancer; it is Mr. R. W. Holmes; and having given his name I feel bound to follow it up by saying that from observation of his work in connection with the Department in London, and from personal knowledge acquired in several visits to Ireland in connection with the Department I can testify to the very efficient manner in which he discharges his duties.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: I have not the least knowledge of Mr. Holmes, and am quite content to take it for granted that he deserves the eulogium passed upon him by the hon. Gentleman; but I would like to ask, does Mr. Holmes take part in political demonstrations, is he compelled to exclude himself from party politics as similar officials are in England?

MR. JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.): Is not the very fact that the hon. Member does not know Mr. Holmes in itself sufficient evidence that that gentleman does not take part in political matters?

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: With all due respect to the hon. Member I cannot allow him to answer a question addressed to the Treasury Bench, which he does not yet adorn, though he may do so some time in another House and in another country. Until then I must address my question to the Secretary to the Treasury, and he can probably answer from personal knowledge whether or not Mr. Holmes abstains from taking part in Party politics in Ireland in the same manner as officials are compelled in England?

Mr. T. P. O'Connor

*MR. W. H. SMITH: The same rules apply to Members of the Civil Service in Ireland as those which operate in England, as the hon. Gentleman knows perfectly well, and thorough impartiality is exercised so far as the Treasury is concerned. I hope this will be satisfactory. I have no personal knowledge of Mr. Holmes, but believe he is an efficient officer.

MR. COSSHAM: Is Mr. Holmes a son of Mr. Justice Holmes?

Vote agreed to.

7. £8,205 to complete the sum for Public Works Loan Commission.

Vote agreed to.

8. £17,506 to complete the sum for the Record Office.

MR. MUNRO FERGUSON (Leith, &c.): I drew attention to this Vote not long since, but on that occasion I had no answer. I should like to refer to the subject again, not with a view of criticizing the work done at the Record Office which I believe is extremely good, but because the public records are very insufficiently housed, and the public have not sufficient opportunity of viewing them. I believe that many of the records have been ruined and are still being destroyed by the dampness of some of the rooms. Then there are large numbers of our most valued possessions in the nature of relics stored in the Record Office, but they cannot be exhibited to the public. There is no space to allow of them being shown. I think it will be found that the Rolls Chapel is hardly ever used, and might be turned into something in the nature of a museum, where the "Domesday Book," the "Roll of Agincourt," and other interesting historical national possessions might be shown to the public. The collection of national records of this country is perhaps the finest in the world, and, independent of those in the British Museum, those at the Record Office are such that there is no collection to compare with them. But in Paris the collection is infinitely better housed in the Palais d'Archives, and presents a most interesting feature for the visitor. I hope something may be done by which the collection may be properly housed and seen.

*MR. JACKSON: I know the hon. Member takes great interest in this question, and I do not say but I sympathize with his views to some extent. I am not sure that his suggestion is practical. I dare say he knows that the original plan contemplated the pulling down of Rolls Chapel and adjoining buildings, and some day this scheme will have to be carried out. I should not like to say more, but I will report the hon. Member's views to my colleagues, and I hope he will be content with this general answer. No doubt, when the further extension of the building (which I admit must be made, because a great many papers are stored in a building quite unfit for them) is under consideration, and when additional accommodation is provided, then the question will be considered how they may be most conveniently disposed for public inspection.

MR. LYELL (Orkney and Shetland): Can the hon. Member give the Committee any information as to the progress being made with the Orkney or Icelandic Sagas, about which I asked for information last year?

*MR. JACKSON: I am glad to be able to say something more definite on this subject than I was in a position to on the last occasion. I am bound to say I think the hon. Gentleman is entitled to make some complaint as to the delay that has taken place. Many circumstances have contributed to it, but I am now in a position to say that one volume is in print, and that another volume is in MS. ready to be sent to the printers, some progress having been made with the proofs. The volume in print lacks one sheet. That is to be sent to the printer, and the MS. of the second volume will be sent within a month. Every effort is being made to complete the work during the present Session, and I hope that before the discussion on the Estimates comes round again, it will be completed.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): I do not see any return as to the amount which has been received from the sale of these publications, nor of the number of copies published and sold. It is desirable that we should have this information, as it will show us what, as a set-off, we get back for these publications. We want the information before we discuss whether the price is too high, or too low.

MR. JACKSON: I will make inquiries into the matter, and endeavour to obtain for the hon. Member the information he desires.

Vote agreed to.

9. £39,952 to complete the sum for the Registrar General's Office, England.

*MR. CHILDERS (Edinburgh, South): On this Vote there arises the question of the preparation the Government have made with regard to the census. Some time ago, a very important deputation waited on the responsible Department of the Government, and several suggestions were made for rendering the next census more efficient, and giving a larger amount of information than has been given on previous occasions. There is no doubt that our census is inferior to the census of the greater number of civilized Governments, and especially to those of Australia and America, and it seems to me very desirable that we should not defer too long the preparations which should be made for carrying out desirable improvements. The Government should take the matter in hand at once. I think something was said by the deputation about the appointment of a Royal Commission or a Committee to collect the opinions of those who feel a large interest in the subject. I would therefore ask the Secretary to the Treasury when the first steps will be taken, and whether facilities will be given to those who have matured opinions on the question to bring them before Her Majesty's Government.

MR. A. ACLAND (York, W. R., Rotherham): Before the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government replies, I may be allowed to endeavour to elicit from him what I know he is willing to give, namely, a friendly consideration of this question in a little more detail than has been indicated by the right hon. Gentleman who has just spoken. A most important deputation went before the President of the Local Government Board and the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and suggested further classification, to a very moderate extent, with reference especially to the industrial workers in the country. The deputation was introduced by you, Sir, and there were present not theoretical, but practical

men, Mr. Charles Booth, whose book on the East of London, has attracted so much attention, being the chief speaker. Mr. Booth is a gentleman who has already done much valuable work in collecting statistics with regard to the industrial and commercial character of the East of London. He is a gentleman who has spent a considerable sum of money out of his own pocket in providing the public with a better knowledge of the industrial and social condition of the people, and he is of opinion that the census of 1891 might give information of a valuable kind which the enumerators could without much difficulty provide. He does not ask for a large number of classes which those who have the duty of filling up the census tables might find it difficult to deal with, but he thinks we ought to draw a distinction between employers and employed, between skilled and unskilled—that is to say, between the artizan and the ordinary labourer. I would ask the Local Government Board to pay attention to what practical men like Mr. Booth have to say, before giving the reply tendered by those who have prepared previous censuses—the very natural reply—a sort of *non possumus*—that what was done in 1881 is good, and ought to be repeated. I know that that will in all likelihood be the answer, but I trust the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board will go into the matter fully before he says that nothing can be done. It is often said it is better to have few statistics and good than many and bad, but I say that practical men—men like Mr. Booth—would not be asking for these statistics if they did not believe that they could be provided. I would add that every year education is increasing in the country, and we may rely upon it that the bulk of the working people will be better able to fill up the census papers in 1891 than they were in 1881. I go further and say that if they can be made to understand—as no doubt they can in many cases—that the census is being made in their interest in order that we may know the industrial position of the country, they may take more pains. Trade unions, friendly societies, and others ought to appeal to them on the subject, for if they are not induced to believe that the census is going to be utilized on their behalf by

persons who take an interest in their position they are not likely to take the trouble to fill up the papers accurately. I feel sure it is not the Treasury that is going to stand in the way of the improvement of the census, for the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer gave us a friendly and cordial answer. I do not think we need have any fears as to the supply of the money, provided we can induce the Registrar General's Department to give a favourable consideration to the proposal, and persuade them not to be too much afraid of the ignorance of those who fill up the papers. The question is one which will have to be settled now in a very few months, and this is probably the last opportunity we shall have of raising it. I hope that before the matter is finally settled the Treasury and the President of the Local Government Board will see some of the practical men I have referred to, and hear what they have to say on the subject.

*MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton): I desire to draw attention to the fact that the evidence reported upon last year by the Committee on Emigration—I am afraid I should not be in order in referring to the evidence taken this year—clashes with the Returns prepared by the enumerators and I think there ought to be more care exercised by the enumerators, especially as regards the number of foreigners in particular cities and districts employed in particular trades. We have had one very curious piece of evidence as to the Italian population and the number of their fellow countrymen relieved by the Italian Authorities in England. The number so relieved shows an excess in one occupation over the whole number of Italians without occupation stated by the census to be in the country. Allowing for some disposition on the part of the Charitable Authorities to magnify their operations, one cannot help thinking that there must be something seriously wrong in the Returns that the enumerators have accepted as correct, or in the facts as given in evidence. I desire to support what has been urged by the hon. Gentleman the Member for the Rotherham Division, that the census as affecting industrial questions can only be useful when both employers and employed are taught to rely upon it. The more accuracy we

get in these matters the more disposed the workers will be to place reliance on the census. There is now a very grave matter to which I wish to call attention. The very specific instructions issued by the Registrar General to the Registrars of births and deaths have been disregarded in a matter which very much affects infantile mortality. Where a child is insured the Superintendent Registrar is not to issue certificates under which a sum can be obtained in excess of that provided by the Act. If it comes to his knowledge that certificates have been issued, or that insurance has been effected, or that money has been paid beyond the amount for which the certificate is given, he should report to the Chief Registrar for prosecution, or he is at liberty himself, as a person aggrieved under a Section of the Act. Now, I am sure that the Registrar in the case of the Borough of Oldham, has continually neglected that duty. I should think, on an average, in eight or nine cases every year for the past five or six years, children's lives have been insured for amounts in excess of the sums for which they ought to have been insured. According to his own statement, in three or four cases where illegal payments have been made, he has never reported to the Registrar General, nor has he himself initiated any prosecution. It is useless to have provisions on the Statute Book prohibiting the improper insurance of very young children if they are not to be carried out. The complaint I am now making is in the same line as that I made in connection with the Department of the Registrar of Friendly Societies last night. The House passes Statutes which, if they were carried out, would be productive of enormous good, but which are utterly disregarded. In the case of Oldham there is no doubt about the law having been disregarded. A gentleman wrote me a letter a year and a half ago calling my attention to the facts I have stated, and this gentleman has since repeated his allegations on oath. I do not blame the Chief Registrar for not initiating prosecutions, as he had no knowledge of these events, no report having been made to him; but the subordinate Registrar was clearly bound to report or prosecute. Unless the Government will promise to inquire into the matter and cause some

representation to be made to the Chief Registrar, and through him to the Registrars throughout the country, I shall move the reduction of the Vote. I do not wish to do that, as I look upon such a Motion as one which should only be resorted to in the last extremity.

MR. AMBROSE (Middlesex, Harrow): I desire to call attention to the tables prepared by the Registrar General in regard to deaths. I drew the attention of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board last Session to the increase in the number of cases of cancer which is taking place in England, and suggested that information specially bearing upon this disease should be supplied in the Registrars' Returns, but the right hon. Gentleman, whilst admitting the importance of the question, declared that the staff of the Local Government Board was not such as to enable them to undertake any further duty. On looking into the matter, I must say it hardly seems to me that it would cause any additional labour to the Local Government Board, as the work would be done by the officials under the Registrar General. The death tables, valuable as they now are, should be extended so as to afford information on the subject to which I have referred. Sir Spencer Wells has lately called attention to the great increase of cancer in the United Kingdom, and has suggested that under the head of "Cause of death," further particulars, especially in respect of the organs effected, should be given. He says that the disease has doubled itself within a comparatively short space of time, and he and other members of the medical profession are anxious that there should be some means of ascertaining the cause of the increase, as it may enable them to supply a remedy. Additional information as to age, occupation, and geographical distribution might be afforded. The Irish tables are much fuller than those of this country, and if the English standard were raised to the Irish the medical profession would be satisfied. I do not think it can be said that there is not sufficient authority under the Act of Parliament to require this information to be given, as the powers under the Act are very general.

*MR. RITCHIE: I gather that the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Childers) is anxious to ascertain what

the Government are doing or contemplate doing in connection with the census. It is true we received a deputation on this particular subject a short time ago. The recommendations of the deputation I may divide under two heads. In the first they urged that the census should be quinquennial instead of decennial, and, secondly, that the information should be much more ample than that now afforded, especially with regard to the skilled and unskilled workmen, and to employers and employed. Of course, it will be the duty of the Government to consider the recommendations of the deputation. I have been in communication with the Registrar General, and have found that there would be great difficulty in obtaining the additional information. It is only a week ago that I had my last interview with the Registrar General. He went fully into this question and stated that it is not easy to obtain accurate statements of what is now required, and he feared that if we were to endeavour to obtain information as to employers and employed, and skilled and unskilled labour, we should not only get incorrect information on those subjects, but damage the information obtained under the existing system. He urged on me that there was a reluctance on the part of those who are asked for this information to give information as to whether they are employers or employed, or skilled or unskilled. There is frequently a tendency on the part of unskilled workmen to take advantage of some incident of their employment to make out that they are skilled, and in the same way a tendency on the part of the employed to make out that they are employers. Indeed, the line of demarcation can scarcely be drawn between classes of labour, for workmen are themselves sometimes employers also, and come under both categories. With regard to the question of a quinquennial census, the Registrar General states that even if we were to get an intermediate census, confined mainly to the enumeration of ages, sexes, inhabited houses, and the like, the cost and labour would be almost as great as that of the present census. But it has been suggested that, looking at the fact that the great cost was the cost of enumeration,

the reduction of expense in taking such a census would not be so great as was at one time supposed. I do not, however, intend to rest satisfied, and I have informed the Registrar General that I will put definitely in writing certain propositions to which I have requested his most careful consideration. I have also thrown out the suggestion that there may be some of the information which they now obtain that is not of such great value as that which it is desired to have, and whether some of the information that is now obtained might not be omitted, and other information obtained that would be more useful. All these matters the Registrar General has promised shall be carefully considered. An hon. Member opposite has alluded to Mr. Booth, a gentleman who has devoted much time and labour to the subject in a manner highly praiseworthy. It does not follow, however, because that gentleman has been able to gain more information than the tables of the Registrar General give, that the matter is an easy one. But I am fully aware of the great value of having some conference with Mr. Booth and the hon. Gentleman at the Local Government Board, and I am in hopes that some of the difficulties raised in connection with the subject might perhaps be disposed of if we had a personal conference. I understand that arrangements are being made for such a conference. I am most anxious to obtain all the information that is desired by those who take an interest in this subject. But I wish the Committee to realize the very great difficulties that stand in the way. Unless we have some guarantee that the information they desire is fairly accurate, it will not be worth collecting. I have been asked by the right hon. Gentleman what work has been done in preparing for the next census. Sir, a great deal of work has been done for a considerable time past; a great deal is now going on through the Registrar General on the question of the areas. There had been a great change in the areas in connection with divided parishes, and also through the Local Government Act of last Session; and attention is being given to all these matters, with the view of forwarding the work of the census when it is undertaken. I have especially put it to the

Registrar General whether it would assist him if the Bill, instead of being passed next year, as would be the natural course of things, were passed this year; and his reply was nothing would be forwarded by the passage of the Bill this year. The Registrar General has convinced me that there is no stoppage in the work at present, and that the work is now going on.

*MR. CHILDERS: Would it not help the Government and the Registrar General if a small Commission were appointed to make preliminary inquiries before the Bill is introduced?

*MR. RITCHIE: That point has not escaped my attention, and when I have pursued my investigation a little further I shall be glad to let the right hon. Gentleman know the conclusion which has been arrived at. With regard to the matter referred to by the junior Member for Northampton, I will make personal inquiries into it, with a view to see whether or not the law has been obeyed. I am sorry to hear that such a state of things as he suggests exists in Oldham.

*MR. BRADLAUGH: I may remind the right hon. Gentleman that I suggested the Government should inquire into the allegation that the Oldham Registrar has neglected to report breaches in connection with the insurance of children under five years of age, thereby allowing illegal societies to carry on operations while registered societies have been paying more than they ought to.

*MR. RITCHIE: I will make personal inquiry into this matter, and avail myself of any information the hon. Member can give me with a view to seeing that the law is not evaded. With reference to the question raised by the hon. Member for Harrow as to the increase of cancer and the insufficiency of the tables, I will undertake also to make inquiry into this subject and communicate with him. If anything can be done to give fuller information upon matters of such vital importance I shall be happy to do it.

MR. W. JOHNSTON: I wish to urge upon the President of the Local Government Board that a new item might be introduced into the census. It would be of great interest to the country, for it deals with a matter vitally affecting the statistics. Temperance has made great progress during the

last 10 years, and I think in the census papers there might be a column showing the number of total abstainers.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL: I have been much impressed by the suggestion that instead of having a census once every 10 years we should have something in the nature of a continuous Statistic Department and a continuous census. Under the present arrangement you have for every census to form a special establishment to work it, and the task is not completed for several years after the census is actually taken, so that when you get the statistics some of them are almost out of date. You do not in fact get the full benefit of the enormous expense which you incur. If you had a continuous establishment you could keep your machinery up to date, and the work would be got out much more rapidly, while you could get additional information. I hope that this question will be carefully and adequately considered by the right hon. Gentleman.

DR. CAMERON (Glasgow, College): I would ask the right hon. Gentleman to reconsider his answer to me a short time ago as to the facts supplied by the Registrar General in regard to the causes of death, and the detection of causes of death by violence or crime. As a matter of fact this country is behind every other country in Europe in that respect. In 17,000 cases of death people were buried in England without any steps whatever being taken to ascertain the cause of death. In Scotland matters are ten times worse, and in Ireland matters are even worse than that. I hope the right hon. Gentleman will allow me to talk to him privately, for I may be able to induce him to reconsider his decision.

*MR. RITCHIE: Certainly.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: I desire to say a few words on the important question raised by my hon. Friend the Member for Rotherham. I think it is unfortunate that this discussion did not come on earlier so that the debate might have been more exhaustive. I sympathize very much with what was said by the hon. Member for the Harrow Division. I think the tables are singularly deficient in regard to some statistics of mortality. I look upon the Census as the Intelligence Department of the country, by which it is able to survey its population, health, and circulation; and

with regard to the question whether this subject should be in the hands of a spasmodic and temporary or a permanent body, I think there cannot be two opinions. So important a matter deserves a well-equipped and permanent department; and if the right hon. Gentleman only takes the steps necessary to establish it permanently, I do not think he is likely to meet with any opposition, even from the most rigid economist. Now, I fully sympathize with the objects aimed at by the hon. Member for Rotherham; but let me point out that, in regard to census statistics, there is a very strong disinclination on the part of the people of this country to anything like an inquisitorial inquiry, and I am afraid that if some of the questions suggested by the hon. Member were put, the replies would in sundry cases be more forcible than polite. With regard to what has been said by the hon. Member for Belfast, of course it would be desirable to be able to have statistics showing the effects upon men of temperance as opposed to a moderate indulgence in stimulants. I heard a large shipping agent once say that he never employed a captain who was a total abstainer because he felt assured he would prove to be a badly-reformed drunkard who would break out into intemperance again when he got an opportunity. I fear that a large number of hopeless sots would take the advantage of a census paper to give themselves a good character by describing themselves as abstainers. While sympathizing with the suggestion of the hon. Member, I must say I do not think it is a practical one.

Vote agreed to.

Resolutions to be reported upon Monday next; Committee to sit again this day.

WAYS AND MEANS.

ESTATE DUTY—MIXED ESTATE UNDER WILL OR INTESACY.

Resolution reported (9th May) [see page 1574].

SIR G. CAMPBELL: I do not intend to obstruct the passing of this Resolution, because as I understand it we shall be distinctly entitled to move Amendments in Committees when the Bill is before the House. I do hope that before that

stage is reached, the right hon. Gentleman will reconsider the anomalies which have been brought to light, and will do away with the distinction between real and personal property. The right hon. Gentleman has determined that toll shall be levied on property which so to speak passed the Styx on each occasion of death, and he has also determined on the general principle of having no distinction between real and personal property. Why, then, does he not get rid of all the anomalies by saying that there shall be no distinction at all, whether the property be settled, or whether it be willed absolutely?

Resolution agreed to.

Ordered, that it be an Instruction to the Committee on the Customs and Inland Revenue Bill, that they have power to make provision therein pursuant to the said Resolution.

WEIGHTS AND MEASURES [COSTS].

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Resolved, that it is expedient to authorize the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of the costs incurred, and of the remuneration of the officer employed, in any local inquiry which may be held under the provisions of any Act of the present Session for amending the Law relating to Weights and Measures.

Resolution to be reported upon Monday next.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY.

Resolutions [9th May] reported.

(See Pages 1580-1635.)

Resolutions agreed to.

Order for Committee, read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

THE REPRESENTATION OF UNIVERSITIES.

MR. E. ROBERTSON (Dundee): In rising to move the Resolution which stands in my name, I desire to say at the outset that I do so in no spirit of hostility or disrespect to the Universities. It would ill become me at any time or in any place to speak of these illustrious foundations otherwise than in terms of the warmest affection, and with the most

profound gratitude and esteem. And least of all could I speak in terms of depreciation of the Universities in an assembly which has hitherto consisted, and now largely consists, of men who have sought and found in the Universities the best possible preparation for their duties in the House of Commons. I hold that the proudest boast of the British Universities—that which distinguishes them from similar bodies in other parts of the world—is that they have never failed to furnish to the service of this House and the country an abundant supply of able, accomplished, and honourable public men. Nor, Sir, do I intend by the Motion to cast the slightest reflection upon the fitness for their position of the group of Members who have the high honour of representing the Universities in this House, and if I name one of them more particularly it is not by way of invidious distinction, but because he is the don of the order and I am one of his constituents. I refer to the right hon. Baronet the senior Member for the University of Oxford, and I hope that he will allow me to assure him that I set a high value on his public services in this House, and as one of his constituents I have no fault to find with him, except for the colour of his political opinions. My motion does not deal with any of the academical functions of the Universities; and I wish the House simply to regard them as Parliamentary constituencies. As such, I invite the House to pass sentence of death upon them, because University representation is a unique anomaly, entirely opposed to the plain spirit of the existing Parliamentary system, and productive of no such good results as would, in the mind of any reasonable man, justify such an anomaly. Before I proceed to the practical points which I shall urge in support of the proposition, I hope I may be pardoned if for a moment I venture to glance at the history of the question. The House, no doubt, is aware that the origin of this anomalous system is to be traced back to Letters Patent issued by James I. in the first two days of his reign to the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, and some time afterwards to the University of Dublin. This anomalous system has not had a legitimate Parliamentary origin. The validity of the Letters Patent was

doubted, I believe, for some considerable time, and steps were taken in this House and in the Courts of Law to test their legal validity. These proceedings, however, came to nothing, and undoubtedly the system has been ratified by long and uninterrupted acquiescence. But it is undeniable that this spurious, illegitimate system has never yet been sanctioned by Parliament—it has never yet deliberately and on principle been ratified by Parliamentary Law. I will just allude to the occasions on which it has come before the House. In 1887 three new University seats were created by the Redistribution Bill of that period—the two Scotch Universities and the University of London. But these seats were created, not because the House approved of the principle of University Parliamentary representation, but rather as a compromise and a kind of set-off to the three older Universities, which had so long been represented in this House. And in support of my theory that in creating these seats the House did not approve of the principle of University representation, I wish to quote an authority for which I may claim the respectful attention of hon. Members opposite. One of the great men in this House, whose loss we have all had occasion to deplore—Mr. John Bright—used the words which I am about to read. Let me say that the Conservative Party has recently exhibited a great deal of significant, and at all events, severe remorse, for the treatment which, in his early days, they meted out to Mr. Bright. This is what he said:

“I am not in favour of the representation of Universities. The representation of the ancient Universities of Oxford and Cambridge was created in times about the worst in our history, and the Members they have sent to this House, learned as some of them have been and amiable as many of them have been, have not been representatives such as it would be wise for the House of Commons to follow. I therefore say I am not in favour of the representation of the Universities and if I had had the making of the Reform Bill for introduction to this House, I should have done violence to my views in regard to the subject if I had proposed to give a representative to the University of London.”

I may remind the House of the well-known saying attributed to Lord Beaconsfield in regard to the University of London, that the reason he gave for the creation of that constituency was to accommodate Mr. Robert Lowe with

a seat in this House. On one other occasion this question was brought before the House—namely, at the time of the Redistribution Bill of 1884. The motion to abolish University Parliamentary representation was made by the Member for Aberdeen, and was not resisted on any ground of principle at all by the then Government, but I believe that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian, then the head of the Government, refrained from expressing any opinion upon the subject, because it was inconsistent with the terms of the compromise into which they had entered, and was outside the scope of the Bill. Therefore I am justified in saying that this system has never really been sanctioned by Parliament. It has never been sanctioned by the House of Commons as at present constituted, fully representing, as it does, the whole of the people of these kingdoms. Now, Sir, I shall state as shortly as I can the reasons which seem to me to justify the Resolution I am proposing. First of all, I invite the attention of the House to the fact that nine seats are involved in this Vote. There are too many Members in this House. Much of the paralysis of business is due to this; and if the number could be reduced, even by nine, that would in itself be a gain. I believe the excessive number of the Members of this House is the source of nearly all its maladies. My next point is that University constituencies are abnormally small and that they are highly over-represented. Whereas the average number of electors in an ordinary constituency is 9,000, Oxford, which returns two Members, has only 5,799 electors; Cambridge, with its two Members, 6,500; London, 2,838 to its one Member; and Dublin is the worst of all, for it returned two Members with only 4,000 electors. The Scotch Universities do not present such flagrant cases; in fact from this point of view they are by far the most respectable. Edinburgh has 7,389 electors, and Glasgow and Aberdeen 7,454, each of these constituencies returning but one Member. Now let me take exceptions in the other direction. Ayrshire has one Member to 14,750 electors, and West Nottingham one Member to 15,252 electors, and these two constituencies, taken together, have as many electors to

their two Members as the Universities have to their nine Members. My next point is the character of these University constituencies. The character of a University constituency is wholly different to that which was originally intended when the Letters Patent were first issued by James I. And what is now the real character is entirely different to its apparent character. The University is not represented at all. The University, with those who are engaged in the work of education and charged with the administration of great endowments, and who fulfil such noble functions in directing the higher intellectual culture of this country, is not really represented, nor mainly even its present members. It is not the University graduates who are represented in this House, it is the past members, the clergymen, the lawyers, the doctors, and schoolmasters scattered throughout the country, and who have nothing to do with the University, who are represented. Nor is it the past members generally who are represented, but only a limited fraction. Oxford has 5,799 electors at the present moment. It has on its books 3,100 undergraduates, which means that the annual output of graduates, so to speak, is a thousand annually, and it is, therefore, absurd to suppose that the 5,799 electors fairly represent the University. What, then, is the explanation? It is that there are two degrees. The degree of B.A., which implies something in the way of learning, gives no vote. To be placed on the electoral register it is necessary to take the formal degree of M.A., which, in regard to learning, implies nothing more than B.A., and which anyone, having taken his Bachelor's Degree, can obtain by merely paying the extra fees. It is purely an ornamental degree. The fees amount to £20, I think, and many men who do not think it worth while to spend the money, consequently remain Bachelors of Arts. Why any do become Masters of Arts is a problem. I will give the House a little piece of personal experience. In my time at Oxford there was an obscure, mysterious title, designated by the mysterious letters S.C.L.—Student of the Civil Law. It was noticed that those who obtained this *status*, a large proportion of whom were clerical gentlemen, seldom proceeded to take their degree in Civil

Law, but rested content with these mystic letters. What was the explanation? It was that it gave them the right to wear the most gorgeous and beautiful of University garments. Very much the same thing may be stated with regard to the degree of M.A., which is purely ornamental. Taking St. John's College, Oxford, which is a fair average college, I have examined its position in regard to this point, and I find that of 252 Masters of Arts on its books, according to the last calendar, 178, or more than two-thirds, are clergymen of the Church of England. Now, Sir, it possibly may not do to condemn the University constituencies as a whole, but, while hon. Members do not represent the University graduates, they do not represent the most select of them. In fact, I do not know in the whole of our political system anything that might be more justly described as the natural selection of the unfittest than is to be found in this system of University representation. My next point is that certain only of the Universities are represented. The University of Durham has no representation here, and, after reading the debate which took place in the House of Commons 20 years ago on that subject, I am convinced that, if we are to have University representation at all, the House did a great injustice to that body in refusing to associate it with the other Universities. Nor is there any representation of Victoria University in this House, or of the Royal University of Ireland, which I understand has absorbed the Queen's University. But the Universities are not the only academic bodies in the country. There are many other learned bodies, and I am glad to say their number is increasing every year. There are at least 12 University Colleges in Great Britain—one of them situated in the town I have the honour to represent—which are discharging University functions in the great centres of population in this country. If there is any sense in University representation at all—and I maintain there is not—these great bodies are just as entitled to be represented in this House as those which already have special representatives. There are besides many other learned bodies which are discharging academic functions—functions relating to the education, either professional or scientific, of large and important bodies

of the community. These have no special representation here. There is no special representation of the College of Physicians, of the Inns of Court, of the Royal Society, or of the Royal Academy. I might give a long list of similar bodies which have no representation in this House, but which, as far as the Government and the country are concerned, stand on precisely the same footing as those Universities which happen to be favoured by the existing system. But my main objection to the present system is that the representation of the Universities in this House is entirely inconsistent with the existing system of Parliamentary representation. That system is based on a well understood and widely accepted theory. We are here as representatives of citizens *qua* citizens, divided as nearly as possible into equal shares. No doubt there are inequalities which it will be our duty some day to amend. But although there are these inequalities, the constitution of the House, speaking generally, is such as I have described. Now, against this fundamental principle of Parliamentary representation, the group of nine University Members is a standing protest. They are an alien body in this House. They sit by an obsolete tenure—as obsolete as Old Sarum or Midhurst, which sent two Members to this House when it had not a single soul living within its boundaries. It is the one section of this House in which privilege continues to raise its brazen front. Historically it is a mere survival, and politically a mere excrescence on the Constitution. University representation is a distinct denial of the “one man one vote” principle, for practically all the electors of the University constituencies have votes in other divisions of the country. I do not suppose there is any constituency—not even the constituency of the City of London—where the electors have so universally a double representation as the members of the Universities. Well, Sir, is there any practical defence, is there any practical good gained by this ridiculous and unpopular system to justify the anomaly? I submit to the House that nothing of the kind is to be found. There are no constituencies in the whole country where elections are fought on more strictly Party lines. I am not saying that I blame the electors. As a

constituent of three out of the nine University Members, I do not hesitate to say that I have never thought for a single moment of voting in a University contest otherwise than for the best Radical candidate put forward. I cannot blame the University electors for doing what I invariably do myself. But what is the result? It is that they are not specially concerned in or competent to inform the House about University subjects. They are very much the same as the rest of us. There is nothing in their character or qualifications to justify us in maintaining a system which sends them here in defiance of the fundamental principles of this House. I think it is better that the University electors should vote for Members of this House as British citizens and not as members of Universities, and I think also it is better that all Members of this House should vote with reference to ordinary Party instincts. It would be intolerable to have in this House of Commons nine scientific wobblers, however distinguished they might be, whose votes could not be counted on with certainty by any Party, and who would be unable to make up their scientific minds on any subject whatever. So far I prefer the present system. But the fact that the University members act on ordinary Party lines, while wholesome in itself, destroys the only possible defence which has been set up for this anomalous system. I think that the defence is a bad one. I do not think that the interests of learning require any special or artificial protection in this House. I appeal to Members on both sides to say whether it is not true that at this moment the interests of learning and education command the interest and sympathy of this House to a degree unparalleled in all former times. Even the special interests of the Universities do not require such representation. A very large proportion of the Members of this House have been prepared for their duties in Parliament by a course of study at the British Universities, and these Members are not less distinguished in scientific attainments than the average University representative. I think the nine muses themselves, if they will allow me so to call them, will admit that I could produce from the rest of the House a batch of nine Members who would equal them in every academic respect, and I could

add another similar batch of nine, and then I could go on for a considerable time naming their equals and parallels in this House. The Members for the Universities are not only Party men, but it happens at the present moment that they are all members of the same Party—the great Unionist Party—which is in a majority in this House. Even the new University constituencies, London and the Scotch Universities, have gone over to the Unionist majority. I am bound to say I think the Liberal Party, in deserting Liberal principles by consenting to the creation of the new University constituencies of London and Scotland, have met with the fate which I trust will always attend them when they desert Liberal principles. The action of the University Liberal Members reminds me of the action of the Peers created by the Liberal Party, and we know what that is. When the Liberal Party so far forgets itself as to send one of its adherents to the other House, we know what is going to follow. After a decent interval, in which to make a show of political gratitude and fidelity, the noble Liberal seizes the first opportunity of turning tail and running into the camp of the enemy. If he does not do so, it is perfectly certain that his immediate successor will take that course. It seems to me that the fate of the new Universities has been in all respects parallel to that of the Liberal Peers. The new University seats were created as a set-off to the old Conservative seats in Oxford, Cambridge, and Dublin, and they have rewarded their creators by joining the great Conservative majority in this House. Although that fact may be highly complimentary to the hold upon the intelligence of the country of Gentlemen representing the Party opposite, yet from our point of view it is equally gratifying. For what does it mean? It means that we need have no scruple or compunction about sentencing them to death. I should deeply regret if the University constituencies were nearly equally divided between the two Parties in this House. We shall know the exigencies of the political situation, and we know that no Government would feel itself impelled to remedy an abuse of this sort, infinitesimal as it may be in some respects, when the first effect of so doing would

be to sacrifice four of its own seats. That, I take it, will be accepted as justified by the ordinary character of human nature on both sides of this House. But as it is our hands are full. We can lose no political advantage by giving effect to the demands of political justice, and I sincerely hope and trust that in the Parliament which is to follow the present the political colour of the University representation will remain exactly what it is now. If that is so, I do not hesitate to prophesy that, whatever may be the fate of this Motion tonight, whatever the amount of support I shall receive from the Liberal Party in this House, in the first Parliament in which the Liberal Party has a majority the principle which my Motion commends to the House will be adopted. Let me, in a single sentence, sum up my objections to the present system. I say it is in its origin surreptitious and of doubtful legitimacy; it has never been deliberately ratified by Parliament, and never ratified at all by Parliament as at present constituted; that it adds superfluous members to an already overcrowded House; that the Universities are hugely and absurdly over represented, and are not legitimate constituencies; that the University Members do not represent the Universities at all, and do not even represent the graduates, who alone have the right of voting; that an invidious distinction is drawn between the Universities and other learned bodies; that the system violates the accepted and fundamental principle on which the rights of representation in this House rest; and finally, I say that the Universities fail to provide for the Members whom they send to this House any special representation of the interests of learning, science, or education. For these reasons I beg to move the Motion which stands in my name.

Amendment proposed,

"To leave out from the word 'That' to the end of the Question, in order to add the words, 'in the opinion of this House, the privilege possessed by certain of the Universities of returning Members to Parliament ought to be discontinued.'"—(Mr. Edmund Robertson.)—
—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

*DR. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W.): I well remember the im-

portant debate we had on this question in 1884. Well, we are now in the cold shades of Opposition. The House is now much more representative of the Motion, and a much more democratic House than it was in 1884. [*Ironical Ministerial cheers.*] I mean on our own side. I am sure Members on this side will welcome this opportunity of expressing their opinion on a condition of things which seems to be a survival and remnant of the bad old times of the past, which is opposed to many of the most cherished convictions of the Liberal and Radical Party, and which is no better than the old fancy franchises. One of the reasons given for the special representation of Universities is that in past days the franchise was more restricted than it is now, and that the present system gives a vote to many who would not otherwise have one. That reason has now entirely disappeared because in these days every capable citizen has the franchise. We are also told that these University seats provide an entrance to this House for certain personages who might not otherwise easily get seats. We know perfectly well that in these days no person of distinction who goes the right way to work can fail to obtain admission to this House. There is also the sentimental defence to deal with. The sentimental ideal has such an arcadian charm of simplicity about it that if the ideal were carried into practice, men would not be readily found to disturb such an arrangement. The ideal is that the ordinary, rough mass of the fighting politicians should be leavened with something of the sweetness and light that comes from the higher culture, and that a certain number of Gentlemen in this House should be kept apart from the rough work of ordinary politics, but should come down occasionally from their Olympian heights of calm contemplation to instruct us on special questions, and that they should be a sort of assessors in matters of Art, Literature, and Science. That is a very charming ideal, but it is just a little bit too fragile and delicate for use in this rough and practical world of ours. I think the day has rather gone past for what we may call lofty and independent political isolation. Constituencies in these days prefer to be represented by strong party men, and distrust indepen-

dent politicians. It often seems to me that the University members must be placed on the horns of a dilemma if they try to carry out the ideal scheme by indulging in the erratic pedestrian exercise of going first into one Lobby and then into the other. They are apt to get into trouble with their constituents if they refrain from voting on important occasions, and still more so if they do not vote on Party lines. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Leeds (Sir Lyon Playfair) was the type and ideal of a University representative. He did not take much part, when a University member in ordinary political discussions, but contented himself with treating questions of science and education, on which he was an acknowledged expert. Well, towards the end of the Parliament of 1884 he got a very plain intimation from his constituents—in fact a warning that he had better clear out and make room for a gentleman who would, physically at all events, fill the seat more effectually. The hon. Member for the University of London (Sir J. Lubbock) is also a good type of University representative. I read in the papers that a large and representative body of his constituents came to him here the other day and remonstrated with him upon his procedure respecting the Irish Question in this House. We have here also another very distinguished man, whom I am proud to see here to-night and whom we are, I think, all proud to sit in the House with—the hon. Member for the University of Cambridge (Professor Stokes), a gentleman of high scientific distinction and who is no doubt in many respects a highly qualified and almost an ideal University member. On turning to *Dod*, I find that he is a Conservative, but represents the University rather than any Party. At the same time, I learn that he is opposed to Home Rule and the Disestablishment of the Church and that he expresses opinions on several other important Party questions. If the hon. Gentleman thinks he can take an independent part in politics, I would ask him to come over to this side of the House and give an independent vote just for once. I would recommend him to utilize the Sugar Bounties Question for the purpose. Now I would mention two other representatives. There is the hon. Member for Shoreditch (Mr. J. Stuart); he is a

man eminent in his University, but he, with all his scientific acquirements, was beaten by a man who is no doubt an admirable politician, but who ought not to have beaten our Professor in competition for University representation. Still worse was the case of Professor Munro, a distinguished educational authority, but he was beaten by an excellent politician, but a purely Party man, having no claim to any distinction of any kind. Indeed, as my hon. Friend has told us, these University seats are fought on purely Party grounds and held by purely Party men, and so it has come to this that they are nothing more or less than pocket boroughs belonging to the Tory Party. I do not want to say anything offensive, but they have become what I may call refugees for the destitute in this way: that when a Party politician of distinction—they are all men of distinction—holds an office under Government, it is very important that he should have a seat in the House, and when the prospect of this is very bare the Government find an open door to the House through a University and pop him securely into the seat. Another pernicious custom has grown up. In two of these seats—Dublin, and Edinburgh and S. Andrews—a very objectionable principle of hereditary succession has been established, succession, I mean, not of individuals, but of officials. For what happens? When a law officer of the Crown in Ireland is unable to find a seat elsewhere he finds a door opened for him in the Dublin University. And so, also, I am sitting opposite a very valued friend of mine, whom I am glad to see in the House, but I am bound to say that if a University door had not been flung open to him he would have lost the opportunity of sitting among us to-night. I say, therefore, these are pocket boroughs for the Tory Party, and in these two cases have become hereditary seats for certain classes of Government officials. In trenching a little upon personal considerations, I speak with some hesitation; but, looking at the question in a practical manner, these University representatives are supposed to sit in the House for the purpose of guiding and instructing us in matters of education, science, and other questions of that kind, a little outside or separate from ordinary Party

and political questions. Now, we have had debates lately on educational subjects and one on vaccination, but I did not get from University Representatives on those occasions that "light and leading" we might have expected from those Gentlemen. To whom do we go when we want information on such matters? Not to University Members, but to the hon. Member for Manchester (Sir H. Roscoe) and the right hon. Member for Leeds (Sir Lyon Playfair), and others on this side, who, when occasion offers, come forward and give us the information we are sorely in need of. My hon. Friend has anticipated me on one point I intended to bring forward, and he has done it much better than I could. Why single out the Universities for this particular form of political representation? If Universities, why not the great public schools of Eton, Harrow, and Rugby? The Royal Academy has been mentioned, and I am sure we should be all the better for listening to the polished eloquence of Sir Frederick Leighton; and the College of Physicians, and I am sure Sir Andrew Clark would be a great addition to our debates. I cannot understand why the Universities were picked out for this special form of representation when other public bodies have no such recognition. My hon. Friend has referred to another anomaly. Of course, the Universities of Oxford, Cambridge, and Dublin are great and important institutions, but there is not much work done by either of these towards popular education. My own University of Edinburgh does a great deal more of the ordinary educational work among the people—the masses, not the classes—but Edinburgh gets half a seat, while Oxford, Cambridge, and Dublin have two seats each. Another point is that which I recollect the hon. Member for Stockton put in the former debate, and he did it very effectively. I wish I could recollect his words. He said it was impossible for anyone who represented these old Universities as Members to represent the living University—that is to say, the actual working body, the very small, very consolidated University life—for that has no power in the election. It is overborne by the great mass of outsiders, the clergy and others, who vote, not knowing the wants and wishes of the University—gentlemen whose original

connection with the University was very slight, and who are now out of touch with their *Alma Mater*, having little knowledge or interest in the matter. There is no healthy political life in these elections; they are simply worked by wirepullers, and the caucus who issues instructions how to vote on sheer Party lines. A few instances were given by the hon. Member for Stockton, and Professor Stuart is a practical instance of selected candidate of the living body of the University, the actual teaching and organizing workers, but whose candidature was simply overborne by the inert votes of outsiders, sent up with very little knowledge of, or interest in, what was going on. My hon. Friend has spoken so clearly and so ably on this question that I do not propose to weary the House with more remarks. To sum up and recapitulate my objections to this old form of fancy franchise in our present system, it is a mischievous anachronism, and any reason that formerly existed for the retention of these seats has passed with the lapse of time; these seats do not carry out even the most sentimental or any of the reasons upon which they were originally founded, for the right class of men are not sent to the House, they are simply worked on Party lines, and the necessity for these seats has disappeared; and finally the gentlemen elected cannot be said in any way to represent the real living and working University. On these grounds I have much pleasure in seconding the Motion, and I hope that, at all events from this side, we shall have a large and solid vote in favour of the abolition of an antiquated and worn out system.

*THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR SCOTLAND (Mr. M. T. STORMONTH DARLIN, Edinburgh and Aberdeen Universities): I hope it will not be thought presumptuous if I, the latest recruit to the ranks of University Members, desire to say a few words before the hon. and learned Gentleman succeeds in persuading the House to pronounce upon us a sentence of death. No man can be more aware than I am that my right hon. and honourable colleagues in the representation of Universities possess personal qualifications for defending our position to which I can lay no claim. Some have high academic distinction, others have

a great Parliamentary position; all have rendered signal service to the cause of education. I can lay claim to none of these qualifications; and I do lay claim to nothing but this, which I hold in common with all Members of this House, the desire to render faithful service to the constituency which has done me the honour to send me here. There is something perhaps peculiarly embarrassing in my own personal position, because this Motion to-night has been proposed by one of my constituents and seconded by another; and my only consolation is that of these hon. Gentlemen are of opinion that I ought not to represent the Universities of Edinburgh and Aberdeen, they are equally strongly of opinion that nobody else should. I must return thanks to the hon. and learned men of Dundee because he has gone so far as to express a hope that I may continue to represent him in the next Parliament. My hon. Friend the Member for West Aberdeen has played the part of the candid friend by saying that if I had not obtained my present seat, I would not have obtained any other. Well, I will not argue with him on that point. All I will say is that I owe my seat to the kindness and forbearance of 5,000 members of his own profession. But all these personal questions are really of comparatively small moment, because I take it that this is a question which ought to be decided on principle, and not upon the personal merits or demerits of those who happen for the time being to be representatives of the Universities. Now, I think I am entitled to say that this is not a practical proposal. It is an abstract Resolution, and it is an abstract Resolution not intended to be immediately followed by legislation, and for which there is no popular demand. I venture to think that the two hon. Gentlemen on the other side have not taken to heart the doctrine frequently propounded by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian, reiterated not long ago in this House, that abstract Resolutions are things to be deprecated, and that you ought not to invite the people to live on your promises rather than on your performances. I venture to think that not only is it a Resolution open to this objection, but it is one for which there is no hint or sign of popular demand.

Mr. Stormonth Darling

I observe it has not as yet attained the dignity of being comprised in the list of questions set out in the handbook of political subjects by the hon. Member for Poplar (Mr. Sydney Buxton), although that most useful treatise runs down the whole gamut of political science—from Home Rule to cremation. I should even doubt if the constituents of the hon. Member for Dundee have any very strong opinion on the question; for the City of Dundee, I am glad to think, will in all probability very shortly become intimately associated with the most ancient University of Scotland, and I should think the people of Dundee would not regard this as a very opportune time for making an attack upon the position and influence of Universities. There is this further objection to the Resolution, that there are not at the present time any constituencies knocking at the door of Parliament and clamouring for these nine seats which the hon. Member is asking the House to take away. Indeed, the hon. Member is sensible of this, and does not propose to allocate these nine seats at all. The hon. Member apparently hopes to make a great revolution in the condition of Parliament and to advance its business by reducing the number of its Members by nine, but I rather fancy that if all he is going to do is to strike out the nine Members for the Universities, he will not do much in that direction, for I rather think that whatever may be our other shortcomings, we are not particularly talkative, and in this Session at all events have not done much to obstruct that business which the hon. Member and his friends are so anxious to forward. But I have no wish to shelter myself under the plea that the time for making this proposal is inopportune. The case of the representation of Universities from a Parliamentary point of view seems to me to be absolutely unique in its strength. Not merely has it the sanction of great antiquity; it has also the sanction of recent and deliberate enactment. The hon. Member gave the House the outlines of its history, and gave them, I think, correctly. But after all, what does it come to? The representation of the English Universities is about 300 years old; that of Dublin about the same. In 1832 a Liberal Government confirmed the

principle of University representation by restoring one of the Members to Dublin University. Then in 1868 a Conservative Government, with the approbation of the Liberal Party, conferred representation upon the Universities of Scotland and of London, and in 1885 both political parties deliberately united in preserving that state of matters. Now, can anything be stronger than that? Is it not idle for the hon. Member to talk of some original flaw by which this representation was set up? Can you go back upon an original flaw to which no objection has been made during a period of 300 years? If lapse of time will not satisfy hon. Gentlemen, surely they will bow to the decrees of Parliament, and confess that a representation that survived the reforms of 1832, of 1868, and again of 1885, has as strong a Parliamentary position as any question can have? But I am quite ready to accept the ground the hon. Gentleman has taken up and to oppose the argument he has presented on its merits. I do not propose to defend the representation of Universities merely on the ground that it benefits the Universities themselves. I think there can be no doubt it does benefit the Universities; but I think I may also say without contradiction that if it has been of benefit to them, they have used their advantage with signal moderation, for University Representatives have never claimed more than their fair share of the time and attention of Parliament, and, what is still more important, they have never attempted to dip deep into the National purse. There is no country in the world where Universities receive less support from the State than here. The great Universities of England do not ask any State support at all; and the Universities of Scotland, which unfortunately have very scanty endowments of their own, are subsidized to an extent that such countries as Germany and Holland would consider altogether insignificant. Therefore, I say that if the Universities have derived benefit from Parliamentary representation, they have used their advantage with moderation and fairness. But I desire to base the cause I am upholding on the advantage not to the Universities, but to the Nation at large, and I say it is for the good of the Nation at large that there should be some variety in the representation of the

people. I say, moreover, that this principle of variety has always been found in the Constitution, and is a necessary principle, if Parliament is to be the mirror of the Nation, if it is truly to represent all the great interests of which the Nation is composed. This great principle was formerly attained by a difference in the size of the constituencies, and now it is secured by a difference in their composition. The hon. and learned Gentleman shakes his head, but I say to him surely the effect of your single Member districts, which were established with the assent of both parties, is to produce that variety which is essential to the working of our political system. In one district there is a preponderating representation of manufacturing industry, in another of agriculture, in another of commerce, and nobody has any objection to make to that. I suppose no man is bold enough to challenge the great advantage which is derived by the State from the representation of the City of London? Yet the City of London is, as everybody knows, mainly composed of the great merchants of this country. When you have great classes or interests aggregated in particular localities, it is easy to apply the principle which the hon. and learned Gentleman says is the ruling principle of the Constitution as it now stands. But it is impossible to apply that principle of locality to the great professional classes. They are scattered all over the country; they are always and everywhere in the minority, and if you want to arrive at their mind on a particular question, it is impossible to group them as you group the merchants of the City of London, or the artisans of the East-end, or the agriculturalists of Wiltshire; and therefore the only way to get at their real mind on public questions is by some such expedient as University representation. Well, then, the answer is made that you do not require special representation, because you have the professional classes, the interests of education, of literature, of science, sufficiently represented by other Members of this House who do not directly represent these interests but who are eminent in various walks of intellectual effort. I admit that to the full; I admit it with pride and pleasure, and I should be exceedingly sorry as a University representative if we had not the benefit, as I believe we have, of the

filial devotion of University men like the hon. Member for South Manchester, and the distinguished scientist who preceded me in the representation of the Universities of Edinburgh and St. Andrew's, the right hon. Member for South Leeds. I believe that all these Gentlemen, although they do not happen to represent a University, do regard their University with as much devotion, with as great and as warm an interest, as if they did. But then that is not the point, because it is surely an advantage that you should have a certain number of Members in the House who are specially charged with the duty of looking after the interests of education, of science, of literature, and of the professional classes, and whenever you want to ascertain what is the real mind of these classes on the great questions of the day you look not to the chance representatives of science and literature who may happen to sit in Parliament, but you look, as you are entitled to look, to the chosen representatives of these interests in the House. My hon. Friend who seconded the Resolution seemed to complain that Universities did not select their representatives on purely academic grounds. In this particular he was rather in conflict with the mover of the Resolution, but whatever might be the case in peaceful times, I think it is vain to expect in a time like the present, when the country is absorbed in one particular question, that these constituencies should renounce their duty as citizens, and not do as others do and record their vote on the leading question of the day. It is idle to complain of them on that account, and, therefore, we return to this, that if it is desirable to ascertain the mind of these classes at all, you can only do it by some such means as University representation. Now I am tempted to ask what have Universities done to deserve this condemnation? It is quite clear that the Scottish Universities at all events are exempt from many of the charges brought by the hon. and learned Gentleman. The constituencies of the Scottish Universities are large; they consist of all graduates, who are admitted to the constituency without payment of any kind—except a small charge which really has nothing to do with registration—and they at all events are not open to the charge of being in any way exclusive or aristo-

cratic. No man who knows the Scottish Universities as the hon. and learned Gentleman who moved this Motion does can fail to know that it is very often from the cottage on the hillside, from the back shop in the village street, that the students come, and he and I know with what pluck and perseverance and under what tremendous difficulties they push forward through their academic career, and at last are able to rise to positions of honour and distinction. These men form that very middle class which the Liberal Party used never to be tired of holding up to admiration. Is it altogether wise of the Radical Party to direct public attention to the fact that the middle class has turned against them? The Universities have, I admit, committed the unpardonable sin in the eyes of the hon. and learned Member of disagreeing with him and agreeing with the majority of the householders of this country, and it is for that reason, and that reason alone that the House is gravely asked to pronounce upon them a sentence of condemnation. I venture to ask the hon. and learned Gentleman, and those who think with him, another question. I suppose they agree that these are times when education is not only much more widely diffused and more highly thought of than it used to be, but that it is also a time when education is becoming of vital importance to the future of this country, and I ask is it wise at such a time to do anything to discourage or depreciate education in the eyes of the country? I say it is impossible, if the House passes a Resolution of this kind, to avoid flouting and contemning the cause of education, because the moment you strike a blow at the strength and prosperity of the Universities you strike a blow at that which Universities embody and represent. Sir, I venture to base my defence of University representation not merely upon the ancient usage of the realm, but on the broad ground of public policy. I say that this proposal is retrograde and Philistine, and I ask the House to reject it.

*MR. HALDANE (Haddington): It was not my intention to take any part in this discussion until I listened to the speech of the hon. and learned Gentleman who has just sat down. There were certain statements in that speech which, I think deserve a word of notice from a Scottish Member, who like myself

is connected with the Scottish Universities. The hon Gentleman has just told us that opposition to University representation is an opposition which must call in question the influence of that middle class which he accuses us of not sufficiently regarding. He says that the middle class from which the University constituencies are recruited, is a class which has turned against the Liberal Party, and he warns us to take note of the attitude of this class towards us. Well, I think we on this side of the House can take care of ourselves in this regard. But if it were necessary to comment on the argument of the hon. and learned Gentleman that comment is to be discovered in his own statement made in the earlier portion of his speech, that he owes his own election not to the middle class in Scotland, not to the sons of shepherds and other people who have been able to give their children a University education, but to 5,000 members of the medical profession, the bulk of whom reside on this side of the Tweed. That was the argument by which the hon. and learned Gentleman meets the case of my hon. Friend the Member for Aberdeenshire (Dr. Farquharson). Now what is this University representation—what is this education, and this science, and literature and art of which we have heard so much to-night? Of this flower of the House collected on the benches before us four sit as Members of the Government. These representatives of education and literature and science and art, whom we have not only the advantage of listening to, but of constantly seeing before us, are the Postmaster General, my hon. and learned Friend the Solicitor General for Scotland—for whose powers I have the greatest admiration, but whose ability to secure a constituency north of the border other than a University constituency, I very much doubt—and who, so far as I am aware, is not especially connected with academic interests either on this or the other side of the border—the right hon. Gentleman whose brilliant oratory it delights us all to listen to on those rare occasions when he favours the House with a speech, the senior Member for the University of Dublin—a gentleman of great eloquence, but not in the cause of science, and great culture, but not specially representative of literature,

and connected with that minority in Ireland which can only find a refuge in the University—and the Solicitor General for Ireland, whom we are glad to see here and to listen to when he favours us with his legal lore, but whose speeches I am bound to say I have listened to in vain to discover in them those references to science, art, and literature which we are told the right hon. Gentleman represents. Suppose we go a little further. There are nine Members who represent Universities. Two of these, and two only, can be said to represent University subjects. There is the hon. Gentleman who represents London University (Sir J. Lubbock), and who at the same time so brilliantly represents science; and there is the hon. Gentleman who sits opposite (Professor Stokes), one of the most distinguished mathematicians whom this country has ever produced. But even two swallows do not make a summer, and the characteristic of University education in these days is to present to Parliament less and less of that element we should desire to see if there are to be University representatives. It would be idle for me standing as I do on this side of the House to say that I do not approach this question with a considerable amount of Party bias. It is a fact, and a painful fact, that the representation of the Universities has been a representation, which in late years has been more and more adverse to the interests of the Radical Party. There was, I think, up to 1885 one University Member who sat and steadily voted with us—I mean the hon. Baronet the Member for the University of London, but he afterwards left us for reasons I am not here to discuss. What is a University? A University consists of the teachers, lecturers, heads of colleges, and—but not for voting purposes—of the undergraduates. If they were to be enfranchised it is impossible to say what change would take place. But the House has declared against it, and the result is that the representation of the Universities is in the hands of the graduates of a certain class. We have, for instance, five or six thousand non-resident clergymen who have nothing to do with the Universities except that they are entitled to send in their votes from time to time to return representatives to this House. These gentlemen possessed an exceptional privilege in the mode in

which they vote through the post, and the result of the system on which University Members are returned—a system which would not be tolerated anywhere else—has been that the University representatives play, not to the University, but to the gallery of their constituents. They play to the Tory Party and the Carlton Club, whose nominees they are in large measure. I do not complain of that, but let them not come and tell the House of Commons that the Members of Parliament so sent represent science and literature and art, or fulfil any thing that may be legitimately described as an academic function. One has only to look at the history of this matter to see how completely it has failed in its purpose. Whatever may have been the case in times past, we have learned that the only basis upon which representation in this country can be justified is the basis of democracy, and that fact must be faced in its full consequences. The principle of University representation stands condemned on two grounds. In the first place, it is contrary to the principle which the House of Commons has recognized and has acted upon. The Solicitor General for Scotland told the House a few moments ago that the principle of University representation was sanctioned as recently as 1885. I had not the honour of a seat in this House at that time, but I have a vivid recollection of the discussion that took place. I remember the speech of Sir Charles Dilke; and what did he say? He said he was heart and soul with the spirit of the Motion, and he condemned the principle of University representation as indefensible. Then there was the famous speech of the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian, who did not defend the principle of University representation or say that it was to be preserved because it carried with it the representation of a special interest which deserved special consideration. On the contrary he pointed out that to amend the Bill as suggested would be to do something not within the scope of the Redistribution Bill of 1885, and to violate the agreement come to with the opposition and the House of Lords—which was as good as saying that if the Bill was to pass it should pass on the basis of the representation being retained, which was the lesser of these two great evils. But it is not alone on

principle that this proposition stands. It stands also on practice, because we have seen over and over again that the University representation has become not the representation of science, literature and art, but of the Tory party in its most ordinary fashion and form. These University seats have become in England places for finding seats for Cabinet Ministers who are unable to find them elsewhere, and have become in Ireland and Scotland refuges for the destitute. Therefore there is nothing left for us on this side of the House but to vote in favour of this Motion as one embracing principles to which the Liberal Party is bound to give its warm support.

*MR. MOWBRAY (Lancashire, Prestwich): Though this discussion may be somewhat of an academic character it appears to me that, after all, there are other Members who have a right to speak upon it besides University Members themselves. I venture to think that the Motion affects not only the representatives of the Universities, but the constituents who send them to this House. I therefore, as a constituent of the University of Oxford, feel bound to protest against the Motion. The hon. Member who has just sat down complains of there being four University Members on the Treasury Bench. I should have thought it was an argument in favour of University representation that we are able to find four University Members sitting on the Front Bench of the House of Commons, on either side. At present I am glad to say they are on this (the Ministerial) side of the House. If this Motion is to be carried it ought to be shown that this representation is injurious, either to the constituencies themselves, to the House, or to the country; but that has not been done. As to the constituencies we have heard to-night a good deal about the difference between the resident bodies of the Universities and those who send Members to represent them. But is the hon. Member who introduced the Motion able to produce from the resident Members of any of the Universities a petition in its favour? And if there is no petition on the other side the reason is because the resident bodies apprehend no danger whatever from this attack. They are not prepared to raise their hands in self-defence until they see that they are actually exposed to some danger. We

heard from the right hon. Gentleman who moved the Motion a good deal as to the anomaly of this representation and the size of these constituencies. The hon. Member was perfectly right in saying that these constituencies are small. But it appears from a Return which I have here, and which has been presented to Parliament, that in two English and one Welsh county, in 32 English and five Welsh boroughs, the number of the constituents is smaller than in the two older English Universities. In Scotland the case is still stronger, because the Scotch Universities embrace a larger proportion of the population, and 14 counties and 12 boroughs in Scotland have a smaller number of constituents than the Scotch Universities. In Ireland one county and four boroughs have a smaller number of constituents than the Dublin University. I think that disposes of the argument as to the size of the constituencies. If we were discussing the question upon the basis of anomalies there are other anomalies which could be shown to exist. When the Redistribution Bill of 1885 was going through, Sir C. Dilke admitted that Ireland had more Members in proportion to her population than England, and that Wales had more Members than Ireland. If we are to deal with anomalies we must deal with the question all round. We have been very much pressed with the argument of one man, one vote. But it should be remembered that that principle has not been adopted in the House or in the country, and if it were it does not follow that persons who have a University Vote would not desire to retain it, and to vote in their present constituencies in preference to any other. As to the effect of University representation upon the House, I will only say this. If the House were to vote by ballot to the nine Members whom in its own interest it would wish to see excluded, the nine University Members would not, I think, be the first to be excluded. No doubt all University Members cannot be presidents of the Royal Society, or address the jubilee meeting of the British Association, but it is something that two out of the nine have reached such distinction. But, after all, the principle upon which this question was to be decided is not the interests of the Universities, or the interests of the House, but the interests of the country.

I entirely agree with the remark of the Solicitor General for Scotland as to the importance of the element of variety in the constituencies. We have attempted to get that variety by the system of single-membered constituencies, but in carrying that principle out we are running into another great danger. I am glad to see the hon. Member for Aberdeen in the House, because I am going to refer to a book of the hon. Gentleman's which is a storehouse of facts and a treasure house of experience. In his Book on the American Commonwealth, the hon. Member refers to the deterioration of representation in America, owing to the pressure of local considerations. Happily we have not suffered from that in this country up to the present, but everyone knows that local considerations in the choice of Members are becoming greater and greater every day. One of the great values of University constituencies is that they form an element in this House not necessarily confined to local connections. That, Sir, is to my mind an additional argument, derived from our experience of foreign countries, why we should maintain the existing system under which the Universities are represented in this House. But though we have heard to-night a good many plausible arguments against this system, I think the hon. Member who opened the debate and the hon. Gentleman who last addressed the House have "let the cat out of the bag." They have shown that they approached this question in a spirit of political bias, because they have told us that the Universities return a solid body of Unionist representatives. No doubt it is very annoying to hon. Gentlemen opposite that this should be so, and probably it is all the more so because for the last twenty years or so they have been doing everything they could to throw the doors of the Universities open wider and wider by abolishing tests and encouraging the middle classes to seek the benefits of a University education. and now, notwithstanding all that has been done during the whole of that period, I venture to say there never was a time when a candidate supporting the views of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. Gladstone) would have had so poor a chance as at the present moment of being returned for either e Universities.

This is doubtless very annoying to the hon. Member opposite and his friends, and I cannot but think that in this respect, as in many others, the hon. Gentleman has forfeited or changed his old Liberal principles and doctrines. If the hon. Gentleman had been true to his old Liberal traditions he would have proposed to win the University seats by argument and not to destroy them by what used to be considered the old Tory weapon of force. But it is because the hon. Member and those who sit by him know that the spirit of educated intelligence in the country is in favour of the Unionist cause that the hon. Member is so very anxious, if he cannot win nine seats by argument, at all events to cut off by one stroke nine Members who sit on the other side of the House.

*SIR J. LUBBOCK (London University): I shall not stand between the right hon. Gentleman (Sir G. Trevelyan) and the House, but I hope that under the circumstances the House will allow me to say a few words in reply to the Resolution, for although the University Members are naturally interested in this matter, I think they may at the same time be allowed to bring forward such arguments upon it as they think may have weight with the House. The hon. Gentleman who brought forward this Resolution referred to the origin of University representation as surreptitious. Whatever may have been the case with regard to the old Universities, although I do not wish to be supposed to admit the allegation, this certainly does not apply to the University of London and the Scotch Universities, which owe their seats to the deliberate decision of the House. The hon. Gentleman went on to refer to the size of the University constituencies and although upon that point it is hardly necessary for me to say anything, as that argument has been destroyed by the hon. Member who has just sat down (Mr. Mowbray). If not among the largest, the University constituencies are certainly far from being the smallest, and if the lesser constituencies are to be disfranchised, the Universities have very little to fear from the result, as it would certainly be some time before we came to them. But my hon. Friend has asked, if the Universities are represented why should not other academical bodies be represented also—why should not the colleges be represented. But the hon.

Gentleman seems to forget that the colleges are represented through the Universities. For instance, University College and a great many other colleges are represented through the University of London, while the whole of the Scotch and Irish Colleges are represented in a similar way. Who are the voters at the Universities? They are the graduates. But this is complained of by my hon. Friend, who made it a grand accusation that those who vote in respect of the Universities are the graduates of the Universities. The colleges prepare the graduates for the Universities, and those who study with success and distinction at the colleges, go on and take their degrees at the Universities, for which they then become electors. It is the same with regard to the College of Physicians and the other great colleges; a large proportion of their members obtain representation through the Universities. Then the hon. Gentleman complained that the University Members had gone over to the Unionist Party. [Mr. ROBERTSON: No.] The hon. Gentleman says he did not complain of that, but, at any rate, it was one of the reasons he gave in support of his Motion.

MR. ROBERTSON: I mentioned it as a regrettable fact. I am quite sure the hon. Baronet does not desire to misrepresent me.

*SIR J. LUBBOCK: Whether the hon. Gentleman used it as an argument or merely stated it as a fact I deny it. I say that we have not gone over to the Unionist Party, because we have always belonged to that Party, and belong to it still. It is not we who have gone away and deserted our party, it is our friends who have gone away and deserted us. Then, Sir, my hon. Friend said the University Members had no special connection with the Universities they represent. That certainly does not hold good as a general statement. I may be allowed to say that I have been on the Senate of the University of London for nearly a quarter of a century, and that I was for several years its Vice-Chancellor. The hon. Member for the University of Cambridge again is intimately connected with that University. It is, moreover, a mistake to say that the Universities are all Tory. Certainly not a quarter of my constituents are Tories, though an overwhelming

Mr. Mowbray

majority are Unionists. Then, Sir, the hon. Gentleman spoke with some contempt of the University constituencies as being composed of lawyers, doctors, schoolmasters and clergymen. I have yet to learn that a constituency is any the worse for being so composed. Surely it is not undesirable to have in this House a few Members whose special function it is to keep in touch with those professions in order to represent their wants and opinions. We have Members of this House who represent constituencies that are mainly composed of miners, and others whose constituents are mainly agricultural or commercial; and in fact it may be said that most of the occupations in which the people are engaged have their representatives in this House. So that when the hon. Member says that the University constituencies are mainly composed of lawyers, clergymen, doctors, and schoolmasters, I cannot regard that as a valid argument against University representation. Another argument brought forward was that it sometimes happens that the Government find a difficulty for the moment in finding a seat for a distinguished man whom they wish to put into the Ministry, and that they employ the Universities for this purpose. I do not remember many instances of the kind, but even if there be such cases I cannot help thinking that that is an argument for retaining seats which can occasionally be put to such a useful purpose. The hon. Member for Haddington has lastly, objected to University seats as contrary to the spirit of democracy; but it is not contrary to democracy in the true sense, but to that narrow, unfortunate, and mistaken ideal which in the history of the world has so often brought democracy to discredit and to failure.

*SIR G. TREVELYAN (Bridgeton, Glasgow), who rose together with Mr. W. Redmond, who, however, gave way: I am sorry to stand between an Irish Member and the House [*Ministerial cheers*—well, I suppose those are University manners. I am sorry to stand between an Irish Member and the House, because on this question the majority of the people of Ireland suffer specially. The hon. Member for London University told us we are mistaken in thinking that men belonging to certain colleges are not represented, because they are represented by the Universities to which the colleges are affiliated. That

is very true of this country, where a large number of isolated colleges are represented through the London University; but it is not true of Ireland. One of the great grievances of Ireland is that the University which is the special University of the religion to which the enormous majority of the people belong has no Parliamentary representation whatever. The Solicitor General for Scotland, in what I believe to be his first speech on a general political question, has shown us that in his case we have a very real addition to the debating power of the House. He has put forward all the arguments in favour of University representation. He has put their case forward fairly and ably; he has made the best of it: and a poor case it is. But, first, he objected that this is an abstract Resolution, forgetting that abstract Resolutions have preceded legislation on many subjects, including electoral reform, the ballot, the lodger franchise, and the redistribution of seats. It need not be feared but that in this case, too, the passing of an abstract Resolution will be followed by legislation. At any rate, the Opposition desire to take the sense of the House, because for special reasons the Division of 1885 did not represent the collective sense of the House. It was one of the objects of an abstract Resolution to put arguments before the country and to create a popular demand; and that demand already existed so far as evidence was furnished by the meetings that Members of the Opposition were in the habit of addressing. Of course I do not affirm that that is the experience of hon. Members on the Ministerial Benches. This I maintain to be the clearest use of privilege which exists; it is plural voting in an obtrusive and unadulterated form. In other cases plural voters are scattered about the constituencies; but here you have nine constituencies consisting of plural voters. Every one of these electors has a vote for the constituency in which he lives, but in addition to that he has a second vote for his University, and sometimes for a University in which he has not resided. In one of the Scotch Universities there are a thousand voters who have not been educated there, but who, simply by paying fees, have obtained a fagot vote. This is privilege. A plural vote at the University is worth a great deal more than a plural vote else-

where. The plural vote is chiefly exercised in the counties, where there are on the average about 9,500 voters to every Member, whereas in the Universities there are 34,000 electors and nine seats—that is to say, one member for 3,800 electors. But the Scotch Universities have between them 15,000 electors with only two seats, so that in the English and Irish Universities there are seven seats to 19,000 electors—that is to say, one Member to 2,700 voters. The plural vote in one of the Universities is equal in value to three or four times the plural vote anywhere else. Then plural voters in other constituencies—with the exception of Hornsey, I believe, where voters who have property in the City can vote at the Guildhall—have to take the trouble to go and give their votes; but the University voter, if only he can get within reach of a British Justice of the Peace, may sign his voting paper and vote quite comfortably. Plural voting is a great abuse, and the mode of voting for Universities, which I have described, is a great injustice to other classes of voters. Members for the Universities are sent to Parliament to discuss Bills which refer to the Universities. Has it been of advantage in the past to have University members to discuss Bills relating to the Universities? The most important Bill affecting the Universities is that which threw them open to all the citizens of the country, whatever faith they professed; and against that Bill all the University Members voted. That was the result of having privilege. Then University Members opposed the abolition of slavery, the reform of Parliaments, Catholic emancipation, and other great measures which were approved by both sides of the House, and which the whole country agree to have been measures but for the passing of which the country would have been in a much worse position. Now, Sir, the abuse of having these University seats has been very much aggravated of late years. There really was a great deal to be said for them at the beginning of this century, when a great number of Members were returned to Parliament by very small constituencies of 15 or 20 electors, who were absolutely in the pocket of one man. There may have been 170 Members returned by such constituencies in those days, and it was therefore a good thing

to have constituencies which, like the Universities, had a public opinion of their own. I do not hesitate to say that, if Scotland were in the same condition as she was before the passing of the Reform Act, if there were only 1,500 voters in the Scotch counties and only 1,200 in the Scotch boroughs, I should be very glad to have Members allotted to the Universities of Glasgow and Edinburgh. But now the whole country is cut up into districts each of which has a public opinion of its own, and the reason for maintaining the University constituencies has vanished. Again, constituencies in olden days were very impure; an enormous amount of expenditure was required to get into Parliament—of even what was called legitimate expenditure, while there was still more illegitimate expenditure. In those days, then, it was something to have a constituency which was not susceptible to bribery—at any rate in the coarser form. In those days there may have been some inducement for the Members of a University to vote for a Minister for the sake of what he could get, but the constituents at any rate were pure. And though perhaps every constituency in the country now is not thoroughly pure, yet, thanks to the right hon. Gentleman who sits on my left (Sir Henry James), much improvement has been effected in that direction, and I shall always feel the deepest gratitude towards him for his labours in the cause of electoral purity, labours given with an amount of energy and minute industry and enthusiasm such as is generally only given to one's personal affairs. There is now, then, no necessity to keep up the University constituencies on the grounds that they are exceptionally pure. Again, in olden days the University constituency was in many respects superior; it was a self-contained community in which the men who voted lived together, exchanged their views, had common objects and had individual opinions about their Members. Those were the days in which men were elected for other reasons than that they belonged to a given party. In the course of this debate allusion has been made to St. John's College. I think with respect to that famous College, it cannot be called an average College—I mean St. John's, Cambridge.

MR. E. ROBERTSON: My reference was to St. John's, Oxford.

*SIR GEORGE TREVELYAN: Well, I remember that when Lord Palmerston was a young man, although he did not take honours degree at Cambridge—he could not, being a nobleman—yet two years running he came out at the head of St. John's in the annual examination. When he stood for Parliament he was elected for three reasons. In the first place he got the votes of the Whigs. In the next he was a man of fashion, and he therefore induced other young men, who were masters of art in London, to come down and vote for him; and in the third place he was a Johnian. He was therefore said to be returned by the Dandies, Johnians, and Whigs. St. John's was a strong Tory College, but the Johnians had in those days a patriotic feeling for their College which was stronger than even their feeling for their Party. But in these days, if a young man distinguishes himself in his college, if he prove the most able and most eloquent of men, he would not have the slightest chance of being returned to Parliament unless he belonged to one particular Party in the State. The Solicitor General for Scotland, ignoring this fact, has suggested that what we want in this House is variety, and to have that he says we must keep up the Universities, while, as my hon. Friend behind me has pointed out, these seats are looked upon as useful on each side of the House as affording constituencies for Members of the Government who have been unable to get elected elsewhere. Now I consider that these defences of University seats are opposed to each other. Why should the Government, on one side of the House, always be able to seat a Minister or Law Officer, while we on this side of the House are forbidden to do that, because you will not grant Parliamentary representation to the three Methodist training Colleges? The defence which has been running all through this debate breaks down. It is not the case that University members are different from other Members in this House. People talk as if University Members were a class apart; as if they were something to wise and good for human nation's daily food. Why after all they are men of the world in the right sense of the word. And they make most excellent candidates for any constituency. Just look opposite, for instance, at the right hon. Gentlemen the junior Member for Cam-

bridge and the senior Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Plunkett), whom any constituency of their political views would be proud to elect. Nor can it be said that it is the University Members who pre-eminently devoted themselves in this House to the question of education, or are specially consulted on these matters. I wonder whom the noble Lord the Member for Rossendale consulted when he was specially interested in the subject of technical education. Do you want special constituencies to return men who have the cause of education at heart when you have such men as the hon. Member for Rotherham, for Aberdeen, and for South Manchester, or on the other side of the House the hon. Members for North Wiltshire and for Blackpool. Other constituencies besides the Universities are glad to get men of high education if they can to represent their opinions. Look, for instance, at the representation of Leeds. The commercial centre of Leeds is represented by five Members, sitting on both sides of this House, who are admirable specimens of practical ability and culture. Read the list and see how this great place of commerce returns a veritable galaxy of cultivated and able men. I do not think it is necessary to keep up these privileged constituencies. I do not think that Universities profit by their representation. I support the motion on the ground of electoral justice as against privilege, and because the representation of the Universities is unfair to the country at large. Nor can I forget how educational reforms have been retarded, and educational abuses kept up by the Universities in which men do not stand up as they ought, side by side, for educational interests, but are divided as much as elsewhere by political differences. Equality is the only principle which should be applied in electoral matters, and I hope that all Members who are pledged to that principle will vote for the Resolution, and show that the University seats are moribund and condemned.

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. H. C. RAIKES, Cambridge University): I think, perhaps, that this debate has hardly realized the expectations which were formed, for the speeches which have been delivered, although interesting, have not added very much

to the information previously possessed by Members. But my right hon. Friend who last spoke never speaks without adding to our information; he always contributes something which, if it does not bear scrutiny, at any rate amuses the House. I am sure that the House is grateful to my right hon. Friend for having inspired some life into the debate. I cannot, however, but feel a little grudge against my right hon. Friend in respect of his reference to Lord Palmerston, because he clearly indicated a possible candidate for Cambridge at the next election. When my right hon. Friend said that Lord Palmerston was supported by the Whigs, dandies, and Johnians, I feared that he was stirring some little ambition in the breast of the Chairman of Committees. I, therefore, personally enter a caveat against that embarrassing suggestion. I make no objection to the speech of the hon. Member who moved the Amendment. I had expected some fresher contribution to our knowledge of the subject. The hon. Member pointed out that the representation was created in the reign of James I., and cited the charter as requiring that the Members elected should be men skilled in the Imperial laws. That certainly was a new point in this discussion, and I think the charter showed a disposition on the part of the King and Government when it was granted to give to the University representation a wider and more general character than had commonly been attributed to it. Then in 1867 three new University seats were created, because the Liberal Party deemed them a set off to the dominance of the other Party in University representation. The hon. Member quoted Mr. John Bright as being unfavourable to these additional seats. I think it very probable that this was so, because Mr. Bright opposed giving a seat to the University of Durham, and the hon. Member admitted that it was an illiberal proceeding on the part of the Liberal Party to oppose the granting of a seat to Durham. Now I come to the four grounds on which the hon. Member for Dundee supported his Resolution. He first said that it would be a good thing to reduce the number of Members by nine. That might be so, but it does not follow that the reduction should be at the expense of the Universities. The hon. Member has been good enough to say in regard

to the Irish question, that the necessity of a reduction in our numbers is apparent. Probably it occurred to many Members at the time that if a reduction is to be made, it would be to Ireland that it ought to be applied. Then the hon. Member said that the representation of the Universities had never received the sanction of Parliament. I should have thought that the prescription of nearly three centuries was sufficient sanction. We have, during the last quarter of a century, had the express recognition given by Parliament to University representation. I refer to the Reform Settlement of 1867. We have heard something about the number of University constituencies, and attention has been called to other constituencies less numerous. But, Sir, although the actual number may be as low as that given, yet the graduates represent a larger body of persons who, had they chosen to taken the trouble, might have been added to the constituencies of the respective Universities. It is not too much to say that the 6,000 electors of Oxford or Cambridge represent not less than 30,000 persons who might have taken their degree and become electors had they chosen. Then we have had the objection to the character of the University constituencies, and have been told that the residents are not represented. I will give you no mean authority on such a matter. Oscar Browning told me that there were only 13 Home Rulers among the residents in my University. At any rate there were not more than 33, and when you remember that there are 400 or 500 residents, I think we may claim that the residents are represented by an enormous majority. It is not because the Universities have turned their backs on the Liberal Party, but because the Liberal Party has turned its back on the Universities, that the latter have abandoned them. A few years ago the Liberal Party was in a majority in both of the Universities so far as the residents were concerned. Then we had the reference to the clergy. If we have the clergy scattered over the country their influence on public affairs would be nil; at least all the influence they would have would be derived from their character and calling. One of the strongest arguments that can be put forward in favour of the maintenance of University representation, is that it gives to clergymen of the Church

of England a voice in this House that they are unable in their own persons to exercise. But I do not think the hon. Gentleman's figures with regard to the Universities at large are correct. I do not think that at the present time anything like two-thirds of the University electorate consists of clergymen. I very much doubt if half of it consists of clergymen. We know that in the University of London the clergymen form a very small minority, if indeed there are any worth counting at all as a matter of fact. If, as the lay element in the University constituency increases, the Liberal Party dwindles, it cannot be supposed that it is because of clerical influences. It is a consequence, or if it is not a consequence it is a sequence, of the Liberal legislation of the last few years that at the present moment, when the Universities have been thrown open to all classes and denominations, the Conservative feeling in the Universities is infinitely stronger than it ever was before. We have also heard that there are other bodies who are equally entitled to be represented, but I do not suppose the House wishes to go into that question now, nor do I suppose the House wishes to consider now the details of a University Reform Bill. If the argument of the hon. Member in this connection is worth anything, it is clear the Universities instead of having only nine Members ought to have a dozen and a half. The main objection which the hon. Member frankly admits he takes to University representation is that it is inconsistent with the existing basis of representation. We have no doubt accepted for the present generation a system by which the constituencies have been rendered much more uniform than in the past, but the House of Commons is not necessarily a body exactly akin to a national assembly. The House represents diverse communities and diverse interests. Although from time to time it has been found necessary and desirable to assimilate constituencies which return Members to the House, it has never been laid down that the time has come when all constituencies must be reduced to the same level, and that the representation of different interests and communities, which was the *raison d'être* of the House of Commons, is to be for ever obliterated. I do not believe that that is the opinion of the House of Commons and the country, and I expect we shall have a good

many years to wait before we find that bald and naked democracy installed in the place of our ancient and mixed constitution. I pass on to the hon. and learned Gentleman's best point, which is like the postscript of the lady's letter, because probably it contains the meaning of the whole, and that is that University representation is objected to because all Members who now represent Universities are Members of the Unionist Party. This is a curious evidence of the simplicity and honesty with which the hon. Member approaches this question, and I wish that every hon. Member on these benches was as careful as the hon. Gentleman not to endeavour to mislead the House. The hon. Member has thus made it a question which it is difficult for us to argue, but at the same time he has cut away from his own arguments any basis they might otherwise have, inasmuch as he has let us know the motive principle which led to this motion being brought forward. If my hon. Friend the Member for Shore-ditch (Mr. Stuart), had succeeded in obtaining the suffrages of the University of Cambridge, and had been at the present moment occupying the position which it is my privilege to enjoy, I think it is extremely probable that this Motion would never have been submitted to the House. My learned Friend is absent—he is not often absent—perhaps on this occasion he would have found some difficulty in addressing the House. Now is it not a little unreasonable for hon. Members opposite who have taken an active part in University contests, is it not ludicrous for them, because they have lost the game, to go into the Lobby to-night and vote for depriving the successful party of the fruits of a victory which they would have been only too glad to monopolize themselves? I noticed in the speech of the seconder of the Motion (Dr. Farquharson), a point which deserves some consideration. The hon. Gentleman referred to the extraordinary position taken up by Sir Charles Dilke at the time the last Reform Bill was before the House. Sir Charles Dilke stated in his place in the House that he was entirely opposed to the bases of the compromise on which the Government were able to pass the Reform Bill, and was prepared to re-open the subject. I remember the painful sensation produced in the House when Sir Charles Dilke made that speech.

Such a speech, I imagine, had never before been made by any Cabinet Minister in regard to a Cabinet Motion, and I was surprised to find the hon. Member for Aberdeenshire (Dr. Farquharson) was candid enough to refer to it as an argument in favour of his position. Now my right hon. Friend (Sir G. Trevelyan) has said that one of the Scotch Universities admits persons to its medical degrees merely for the payment of a sum of money. I think that my right hon. Friend has been imperfectly informed on the subject. The fact is that the regulations of the University of St. Andrew's permit the degree of M.D. to be conferred upon any registered medical practitioner, who, on examination, satisfies the examiners as to the sufficiency of his medical knowledge. The number of persons allowed to obtain this particular degree is limited to ten in each year.

*SIR G. TREVELYAN: How long has the regulation been in force?

*MR. RAIKES: I believe for nearly 15 years.

*SIR G. TREVELYAN: I was informed, rightly or wrongly, that there was a year of grace in which a large number of these gentlemen were admitted to the degree.

*MR. RAIKES: I am only speaking of the constitution of the University at the present time. There may have been some abuses in the past. Another argument which my right hon. Friend was pleased to lay stress upon, was that on matters relating particularly to Universities, the Members for Universities had sometimes been found in the minority. But if so it does not at all follow that Members for Universities did not fairly represent the opinions of the Universities. It does not at all follow that if this House thought proper to make a change in the constitution of the Universities, that change was necessarily acceptable to the Universities. It is the duty of Members for Universities to represent the opinions of their constituencies, and when the House of Commons and the Universities differ, the Members for Universities are not to be blamed for doing their duty. When the Universities were last reformed, who were the Members who brought forward the Bill? The present Lord Cross, who was himself an eminent Member of the University of Cambridge, and Mr. Walpole, who was at that time

the Member for the University of Cambridge. That I think is sufficient evidence that on matters really relating to the interests of the Universities, the Members for Universities are the very best authorities, and I trust and believe that as long as the representation continues, they will be regarded as authorities upon questions upon which it is their duty to be informed. We have been told that Members for the Universities opposed the Emancipation of Slaves, Catholic Emancipation, the great Reform Bill, and other beneficial measures. [*Cheers.*] It is quite true that they may have done so, but do the hon. Members who cheer remember who were the Members for the Universities in those days? Are they aware that every Prime Minister of England within the last 40 years, with the single exception of Lord Beaconsfield, who, not being a University man, was not qualified, has been a University Member? Sir Robert Peel, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. Gladstone), and Lord Palmerston, were University Members. It is true that throughout their careers they did not continue always to represent Universities. (*Opposition cheers.*) Yes, I was quite prepared for that cheer. We have been told that the Universities are such slavish constituencies that you can always find a seat in them for any Minister who wants a seat, but it is a proud distinction of the Universities that, in the plenitude of their power, they have rejected three Prime Ministers. Constituencies who have returned Peel, Palmerston and Gladstone may well outlive the sneers of hon. Gentlemen whose sympathies do not carry them back beyond the last 20 years. If there is one part of the representative system which, judged from the utilitarian point of view, has rendered a good service to the country, it is the Universities, and I do not think that the real Liberal party will countenance to-day or to-morrow, or for many years to come, what seems to me an attempt to enfranchise ignorance and to disfranchise education.

MR. W. REDMOND (Fermanagh): It is remarkable that nobody has defended the system of University representation but the Representatives of Universities. But perhaps the most remarkable fact in this debate is the absence of any defence of the representation of Dublin University. I am not at all surprised

that the two Gentlemen who represent Dublin University in this House should sit silently upon the Treasury Bench. I suppose they are extremely anxious that nothing should be said about that institution. And in speaking of the representation of the Dublin University, I wish to find no fault with the Gentlemen who represent that constituency, but merely wish to complain that an electorate of 4,000 in the Dublin University possess the privilege of returning two Members to this House, while all other constituencies in Ireland, with vastly larger electorates, have only the power to send one Member. I desire to ask hon. Members who are prepared to argue that Universities are entitled to a certain amount of representation in this House, what argument they can advance to prove that Universities are entitled to double the representation of constituencies with vastly larger numbers of electors. The history of the Dublin University representation is an extremely curious one, and if Her Majesty's Government would be candid in the matter they would defend the representation of that institution in the House not on the ground of the University having the right to representation, but because Dublin University is the only place South of the Boyne from which the Government can get Conservative Members. The Government feel it is absolutely necessary to maintain this constituency as a hot-bed for Tories. In the name of goodness what would have become of the Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Madden) if he had not had Dublin University to supply him with the seat in this House? It would have been painful to see the hon. and learned Gentleman scouring about Ireland to see if any constituency would take pity upon him and give him a seat in order that he might hold the office which the Government has given him. University representation affects Ireland very differently to England. The Universities of England are national institutions. In England men of all positions can afford to go to the Universities, but in Ireland that is not so. Dublin University is by no means a national institution. It is, and always has been, an institution of the ascendancy party. I do not wish to put the matter upon the sectarian ground, which I am sorry to see introduced in

any debate affecting Ireland, but it must be remembered that Dublin University is an institution which the great mass of the Irish people do not support because it is monopolized to a great extent by people who hold religious opinions differing from those of the majority of the people. There is a Catholic University which is largely supported by the people, but it has not the right to send a single representative to the House of Commons. I am not in favour of either the Protestant Institution of Trinity College or of the Catholic University in Ireland, or of any University, having direct representation, but I contend that is manifestly unjust that whereas Trinity College, which is an institution which the great bulk of the Catholic people of Ireland do not utilize or patronize, has the power to send two Members to this House, the other University, which is supported by the great bulk of the people, has not the power to send a single Representative here. If University representation is good for the institution of the minority, why has it not been extended to the institution of the majority? In the opinion of nine-tenths of the Irish people the representation of Dublin University is retained simply in order to convenience the Government whenever they want to send gentlemen to this House to occupy official positions, such as that of Solicitor General for Ireland. Now, it has been said in debate that it would be a great pity if Universities were not represented in this House, and that they have special claims to that distinction. But the Solicitor General for Ireland will not, I am sure, think I wish to say anything offensive at all if I maintain that he himself cannot claim that he is in the House for the purpose of representing the culture or the education of the Irish people, or even the electorate of Trinity College, Dublin. The hon. and learned Gentleman is here not as the representative of University culture, he is here as the Solicitor General of the Irish Government, and it is perfectly absurd to maintain that he sits here in order that Dublin University culture may be represented in the House. The Solicitor General for Ireland, I believe, wrote an exceedingly dazzling and highly interesting pamphlet on "The Registration of Deeds and Mortgage Judgments," but I do not

think that he himself will claim that by this achievement he received a passport or established a claim to the representation of a University. I think it would not be right for this debate to close without at least one Irish Member entering a protest against what is, after all, an absurdity and an injustice—the allowing a small knot of men the right, which elsewhere in Ireland is accorded only to the largest constituencies, of returning two Members. It is said we object to this because the University has returned Unionist Members. The University of Dublin returns two Conservative Unionists; but it may be said that the University of Dublin is the only place in that part of Ireland that returns a single Unionist; and it should be remembered, in discussing the question of the Union, that, but for this privilege given to 4,000 men in Trinity College, Dublin—who represent no class of the people, for it is only landlords and people of that class who send their sons there, and utilize the University, and who represent the ascendancy class—but for this privilege of sending two Members to the House, the magnificent Unionist Party, who make such a triumphant display here, would have only sixteen Irish representatives. But I maintain it is not on the question of Party politics that this ought to be decided. Those who are prepared to maintain this absurdity must show why, in the case of 4,000 men inside the walls of Trinity College, they should be allowed to send two Members to Parliament, while 10,000 outside in the City of Dublin are only allowed to send one representative to this House. If you are not prepared to abolish University representation altogether, you ought to cut it down to one Member, for that would adequately represent the electors of Trinity College, Dublin. As I said before, I do not make any protest on personal grounds, and the senior Member for the University (Mr. Plunket) is very popular in this House; but I think that the right hon. Gentleman, who after all is an Irishman, must be keenly alive to the opinions of his own countrymen, and would not be sorry if he had a legitimate constituency instead of the hot-house, artificial constituency of Trinity College, Dublin. That is the position of these two unfortunates. I do not wish to be offensive,

but imagine the feelings of these two Gentlemen from the Government Bench when they arrive in Dublin. They have to pass through streets where almost every person they meet is a Nationalist and Home Ruler, and throughout the whole of that part of Ireland they cannot feel a breath of Tory atmosphere until they get within the walls of Trinity College, Dublin, where there is a Tory garrison. That is a position they do not find exceedingly comfortable, I am sure. Though they support the Government to-night, in their hearts they must know they are giving a vote for a thing that is unjust, and they must know very well that the time will very soon come when this class, as well as other classes, of privilege will be swept away by the advancing tide of democracy and Home Rule. The hon. Member for Prestwich Division, the single exception among Members who support the Government and is not a University representative, though nearly related to one, said there was in Ireland a constituency smaller than Dublin University. I do not know where this is.

*MR. MOWBRAY: The constituency of Kerry, which numbers 3,780, while in Dublin University the electors are 4,094.

MR. W. REDMOND: Yes; but the hon. Member forgets that South Kerry returns but one Member, and the 4,000 of the University return two. The hon. Gentleman was also good enough to say that if changes in representation are to be made, then change should take the direction of reducing the number of Members for Ireland. I was extremely surprised to hear that from the hon. Member, for it would be breaking or smashing one of the fundamental articles of that Act of Union of 1800 his Party have sworn never to destroy, for under that Act we are entitled to the representation we now have. However, I agree with the hon. Member, it might not be unwise to reduce the number of Representatives in the House, and going so far with him, I hope he will join in the attempt to reduce that number by two.

*THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (MR. R. D. PLUNKET, Dublin University): The hon. Member for North Fermanagh, who has just sat down will admit he has hardly dealt justly with me, for while in the first sentence he complained that none but University Members had

taken part in the debate—in which, by the way, he was not quite correct—the next moment he rated me because I had not spoken; and now I think I have reason further to complain that he has left me but very few minutes to reply to the important speech he has just delivered. Let me point out when the hon. Member expresses so much pity for my hon. and learned Colleague and myself, that the course of my hon. and learned Friend at Dublin University was a brilliant one, and that his success at the Bar has won the confidence and admiration of all his constituents. The hon. Member expresses sympathy for our forlorn condition in that we have only the limited number of 4,000 constituents to return us to Parliament, but the hon. Member only had the support of 3,128 votes, and secured his return by a majority of 266.

MR. REDMOND: I am loth to interrupt the right hon. Gentleman, and hope he will excuse me. He says I only got 3,000 odd to vote for me, but he will remember he had only 1,800 supporters.

*MR. PLUNKET: That is to say that I had to ask my friends to cease voting as there was no occasion to continue, seeing that after several days polling my opponents had succeeded in obtaining 60 votes altogether. I can assure the hon. Gentleman that his pity is misplaced. But I do not think the House will, at this hour expect from me that I should go over the general grounds so well covered by hon. Members on this and the other side in opposition to this Motion. I must say that I have never heard so grave a proposition as that contained in the Motion of the hon. Member for Dundee, however ably and forcibly he himself endeavoured to advocate it, supported by arguments so slender and unsatisfactory as those we have heard to-night. The proposal is to make a change in the constitution of Parliament; a change that would affect an institution which has existed for two and a half centuries, the representation of Universities in this House. That principle adopted so long ago has on every occasion when Parliamentary representation has been reconsidered, been re-affirmed, and sometimes extended. The hon. Member who introduced the Resolution tried to explain these various occasions, but how does it come about that whereas at the beginning of the century there were only five University Members, there are now nine?

It is because Parliament, having repeatedly revised the representation of the people since then, has thought it wise and in the interest of the community that the number of University Members should be increased. So it was that in the great Reform Bill of Lord Grey, a Member was restored to the University of Dublin, who had been taken away by the Act of Union. So it was that in 1868 two University Members were given to Scotland, and one to London, which had no such Members before; and so it was that in 1885, when the question was fully debated from every point of view, and every argument brought forward to-night was urged with greater force against University representation, the proposal was scouted in this House by a majority of more than three to one. On a subsequent occasion there was even a more remarkable incident, in which the late Prime Minister re-asserted and vindicated the principle of University representation, and to this I shall refer presently. What are the kind of arguments adduced in favour of this great change? We are told there are too many Members in the House, and that the Irish difficulty might be solved if University Members were taken from the House! And some of the great obstacles to doing business would be removed! This was one of the first arguments of the hon. Member who introduced the Motion. Then we were told that the University Members did not really represent the Teaching University. Well, I have heard that argument before, and I must say a more bogus argument could not be advanced. Can anyone tell me there is any man more acquainted with the teaching staff of any University than myself? Do I not whenever I can get away from other duties, live amongst them, and do I not personally and intimately know every member of the teaching staff, and a multitude of my constituents as well? It is absurd to urge the House to destroy this representation, only because the Member who represents the University is not himself a member of the teaching staff. It is indeed impossible to be both at the same time teaching there, and representing the teaching staff here. Then it is said that if we do not represent the teaching body we ought to represent the graduates and then there might be a

fair representation. Well, I do not know how it may be in other Universities, but in mine it would not, I believe, make the slightest difference in the Members returned whether it was the teaching staff alone, or the graduates, or the Masters of Arts who had the voting power, or even the undergraduates, though they might be a slightly unruly constituency at times! I do not think this is a very serious argument. The real argument, whatever force there may be in it, is that of Party interest put forward by the hon. Member for Dundee, there are only nine, he said, but that might make 18 in a division, and then the hon. Member went on to say he hoped they would all remain Tories, for otherwise the University representation would not be destroyed even in the next Liberal Parliament. After that I think it is hardly worth while to follow this argument further. But I want the House to bear in mind the proposal is not to reform University representation; that is not the proposal before us to-night, it is destruction pure and simple. It is not to transfer the representation to any other constituencies, it is not to provide for some great commercial centre of population, or for some large working community that has no Member now. No, if this Motion is carried, no new seats will be provided for any constituency it will be simply sweeping away nine Members because of their political views, the hon. Member would "rob us of that which not enriches him, but makes us poor indeed." Only one more point will time allow me to refer to. In 1885 the question was fully thrashed out and what was said then has been said again now, and the Motion similar to the present was rejected by a great majority. But it is said that that was the result of a compromise and that the right hon. Gentleman the late Prime Minister did not express an opinion in that debate, but there was another occasion only a year afterwards on which this question came up again, when in 1886 the right hon. Gentleman introduced his Home Rule Bill. How did he deal with the subject in that Bill? The whole question had been fully debated the year before; everything that could be said had been said against University representation, had especially in reference to the University I have the

honour to represent. What did the right hon. Gentleman do? Did he propose to disfranchise the University of Dublin by his Bill because such representation was wrong on principle—because we had not true University representation, because we were non-national or non-Liberal, or because we were not worthy to be represented in the Irish House of Commons of the future? Nothing of the kind. This is what he said:

"I ought to say a word about Dublin University. We do not propose to interfere by any action of ours with the existing arrangements of Dublin University in one way or another. But certainly we could not ask the House to adopt a plan at our suggestion which would double the representation of Dublin University. We propose to leave it as it is, but, at the same time, to empower the legislative body, if it should think fit, to appoint a corresponding representation by two members in favour of the Royal University of Ireland. There would be no compulsion to exercise that power, but it would be left to the discretion of the legislative body."

Now that may be a good argument for pressing for the representation of the Royal University of Ireland, but it is, so far as the weight of the authority of the right hon. Gentleman goes, a conclusive argument against the proposal of the hon. and learned Member for Dundee. That was no hurried Resolution in the House, it was not the result of an agreement between parties by way of compromise, it was the ripe fruit of mature deliberation when the right hon. Gentleman had to create a statutory Parliament in Dublin and launch it forward as an assembly to govern the destinies of Ireland in the future. I am sorry that time does not allow me to treat the subject as I would. The argument last referred to cannot be confined to the Irish case alone, it affects University representation in England as well as Ireland, and I maintain that no argument has been brought forward that should lead the House to take any step in the direction of altering this old established principle embedded in the Parliamentary representation of this country except the merely partizan argument which no doubt will weigh with some few that at the present time and probably for some time to come University representatives happen to be and may continue to be opposed and sturdily opposed, to the party from whom the Motion has come.

The House divided (Division List No. 105). Ayes 217; Noes 126.

House adjourned at five minutes after One o'clock till Monday next.

HANSARD'S PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES.

No. 17.] THIRD VOLUME OF SESSION 1889.

[MAY 21.]

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Monday, 13th May, 1889.

OFFICE OF THE CLERK OF THE
PARLIAMENTS AND OFFICE OF THE
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First Report from the Select Committee made; and to be printed. (No. 61): And to be considered on Monday next.

ARMENIA—QUESTION.

The EARL OF CARNARVON: My Lords, I wish to ask my noble Friend the Foreign Secretary a question of which I have already given him private notice. There appear in the newspapers to-day serious statements in regard to the state of affairs in Armenia. Those statements are the sequel to many other statements that have been made from time to time of a similar kind; and so far as any contradiction of them on the part of the Turkish Authorities is concerned the denial has been one of a very feeble character. If my noble Friend can give a strong and unqualified denial to the alleged facts, I and everybody else, I am sure, will be satisfied. If, on the other hand, he cannot give that denial, then I hope he will give instructions—as I have no doubt he has already done to some extent—to the British Ambassador at Constantinople to ascertain what are the facts of the case, and to report to the authorities. The British Ambassador at Constantinople both can, and ought, to know what truth there is in these statements. My noble Friend, perhaps, will remember that a great many years ago a very

similar case to this occurred when Lord Stratford de Redcliffe was British Ambassador at Constantinople. That was not in regard to the Armenians, but in regard to a people resident very near, the Nestorians; and Lord Stratford de Redcliffe not only ascertained the facts, but he knew by his great personal influence how to restrain the oppressions of the Pashas and the cruelties of the Kurdish tribes. I have no doubt that Sir William White has every desire to do the same, and also every ability to do it. My noble Friend will remember that in this matter there are both general and special obligations; and certainly any one who looks to the state of the East must know very well what a dangerous thing it is to leave a large district of territory such as Armenia, seething as it now is, under these cruelties and oppressions. I would remind my noble Friend that it is now a good many years since any proposal on the subject was laid before Parliament. It is a matter which concerns not only Europe, but this country in particular.

*THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: My Lords, we have no information with respect to the particular matters which appear in the newspapers of to-day. I quite sympathize with the feelings of my noble Friend; and I quite understand the motives which induced him to press Her Majesty's Government upon the matter. I need hardly assure him that if there is suffering among this ancient race Her Majesty's Government would gladly do anything that lay in their power to abate that suffering. Whether the stories that are told are accurate is not so easy to say. My noble Friend talks of Lord Stratford de Redcliffe's having obtained information with reference to the Nestorians. We are not

precisely in the days of Lord Stratford de Redcliffe; matters are much changed; and I do not think it is quite so easy to obtain absolutely accurate information as to what goes on. But perhaps I may be allowed to say what the Turkish Ambassador has stated to me; although it is not official, I think I can do no wrong in speaking of it. He entirely disbelieves these stories, so far as the responsibility of the Turkish Government is concerned. He said that what is called Armenia is a country inhabited by various races and various creeds, separated from each other by long traditional antagonism; that Kurdish tribes, a pastoral and nomad people, residing near the Persian border from time to time commit atrocities which the authorities deeply lament and do all in their power to prevent, and when the outrages are committed these pastoral tribes pass over the border the next day and are entirely out of the reach of the Turkish Authorities. We know something even in this country of the difficulty of absolutely preventing in Ireland cruel outrages, resulting from the existence of divisions of race and creed and long traditional antagonisms, but we experience it in a very slight degree, and we cannot be surprised that in a country where the power of the Government is less than it is here, on account of the vast distances, the fewer opportunities, and the smaller resources, that such raids as those of the Kurdish tribes, moving rapidly from one country to another, should be difficult always to prevent. My Lords, I entirely sympathize with the feelings of my noble Friend, and think he was within his right in putting this question, and I agree that England is under considerable responsibilities, in consequence of the engagements that have been entered into; but I do not think that these considerations should prevent us from looking upon the matter with prudence. It must be remembered that remonstrance is a double-edged weapon. If there is any power behind it to give effect to it, it may have effect upon the local authorities of the raided country. Nevertheless, when we know that what we are saying here may have effect rather in aggravating the treatment of the Armenians, those who wish them well will at least refrain from saying anything which may diminish the

activity and zeal of the authorities on their behalf. Therefore, without in the slightest degree wishing to complain of or deprecate such action as that of my noble Friend, I would earnestly press upon the friends of the Armenians to consider these matters with care and prudence, and not to press the Government, or to put pressure through the Government upon the Ottoman Authorities, unless they are certain that there is a strong case for doing so, and unless they have a strong conviction that the remonstrances they ask for will have the effect which they very laudably desire. I will only assure my noble Friend that the Ottoman Government earnestly desires—has every reason that prudence and common-sense could dictate for desiring—to govern these people with justice, and to maintain order; and, further, that when we can exert any influence we shall always do our utmost to give effect to that desire.

THE SUGAR BOUNTIES CONVENTION. QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

EARL GRANVILLE: My Lords, at the last sitting of the House of Commons, Sir W. Harcourt questioned the President of the Board of Trade as to the effect of our commercial treaty with the United States upon our right to exclude their sugar, while we admitted that of other countries. The President of the Board of Trade stated that the question was one for the Foreign Office to answer, but he gave his own opinion that the Americans were absolutely debarred from pleading the most favoured nation agreement against the operation of the Sugar Convention as against themselves. I agree with Sir M. Hicks Beach that this is a Foreign Office question, and as it one of great importance, I ask the noble Marquess to inform the House whether his view is that of the President of the Board of Trade. When, in 1885, it was found that the United States were making treaties with neighbouring countries, giving them preferential advantages over the West Indian Colonies, I claimed for the latter the advantages of the most favoured nation clause. The American Government pointed out that, although the United Kingdom had a most favoured nation agreement, the Colonies had none, and they declined to concede it

to them. They suggested in its stead a reciprocity treaty. We made a proposal in that sense, but were met by a counter proposal, which it was impossible to accept. As the Colonies had no most favoured nation agreement, the American arguments respecting the Colonies were irrelevant as regards the present circumstances, but the Government of the United States went further, and argued that the most favoured nation clause of the United Kingdom did not apply to the case of reciprocity treaties, where one concession was made in return for another. If we had agreed, or even if we had remained silent, it might be expected that the Americans had lost the moral right to insist now upon their treaty engagements. But the correspondence to which Sir M. Hicks Beach referred was closed by a long despatch in which I repudiated in the strongest manner the American assumption, denouncing it as contrary to International Law and fatal to the principle of most favoured nation treatment. To this Despatch no rejoinder came from the American Government, and the negotiations ceased. For all we know the Government of the United States may say that they had been convinced by the argument. But even if they adhere to their *obiter dictum* of 1884, that a most favoured nation clause does not apply to a case where a concession is given to a third country in return for another concession, what is to prevent their saying, "The cases are quite distinct. In this one there is no concession in return for another concession. We are not relying upon the general most favoured nation cause, but upon the special provision in our treaty that no prohibition shall be applied to American produce which is not applied to that of other nations"? And what is to be the attitude of Her Majesty's Government? Are they going to admit that the Americans were right and we were wrong in our views in 1884? And are we going to adopt a principle which we then showed was fatal to the advantage of most favoured nation clauses? My own belief is that this clause is one of the greatest value, and constitutes by itself the best kind of commercial treaty. It simplifies tariffs and adds to freedom of trade. Its abolition or its weakening might be fatal to the best interests of commerce in the principal markets of

the world. It is therefore of great importance that the noble Marquess should make known his views.

*THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: My Lords, in answer to the question of the noble Earl, I may say that I quite agree with the views of Sir M. Hicks Beach. It is a question of what lawyers would term estoppel. The United States Government are estopped by their own statements from making use of the argument which was hypothetically put into their mouths by the noble Earl. Nothing would give me greater pain than to be obliged to throw over the language used by the noble Earl in the Despatch he has referred to. But the Americans are far too high-minded to try to escape from their own statements, from declarations by which they are bound by citing against us subsequent statements from our own side. I am speaking from memory, as I did not receive the noble Lord's notice in time to enable me to fortify my recollection; but if I remember rightly, there was a treaty signed by the American Government in 1886 with the Government of Tonga—it is a small country, but that makes no difference—in which the doctrine is absolutely laid down that the most favoured nation clause is not to be interpreted as operating where there is a difference in the conditions under which equal treatment is demanded. I do not therefore suppose it is likely that the Americans would attempt to pass over their own deliberate and repeated statement; but, perhaps, though I have not the least desire to complain of the question of the noble Earl, I may be allowed to say that it belongs to what has been called the science of *hypothetics*. There is no ground for believing that the Americans would have the temptation or the desire to make such a plea as that which he supposes. In the first place, the Americans have not dissented or shown any sign of dissent from the Convention, and we have no ground for saying that before it is ratified, towards the end of next year, they may not have adhered to it. But even if they do not adhere to it, their law contains, in the most clear and categoric terms, a prohibition of any bounty, and therefore we have no ground whatever for believing that they would ever come within the purview of the provisions which the noble Earl

says would be interpreted by the language of this Despatch in their favour. When the case arises, if it ever does arise, which I do not believe, I shall be prepared to join issue with the noble Earl upon the legal question, but I maintain that the legal question is now so hypothetical that it is not useful, and it is not desirable to carry the discussion any further.

LORD HERSCHELL: My Lords, I should like to be allowed to say one word, because the noble Marquess has made no allusion to that clause in the treaty between ourselves and the United States to which the noble Earl referred. This question does not depend only on the most favoured nation clause, but on the express provision with regard to export and import between the two countries, a provision which did not come into existence at all in the controversy which arose at the time to which the noble Earl has alluded, and therefore, it seems to me impossible to say they are precluded from using any argument with reference to it by reason of an argument that they may have used in relation to another clause altogether in the treaty. It strikes me, with all respect, it is a somewhat dangerous doctrine to say that, because a particular Power has used an argument in relation to a commercial treaty, or a provision of a commercial treaty with which they have disagreed, that, therefore, we ought to treat that provision in that treaty as having the meaning which they contended we have erroneously put upon it at any time or at all times.

*THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: I did not understand the question of the noble Lord to refer to anything else but the favoured nation clause; therefore, I am not prepared to deal with the particular matter to which the noble and learned Lord refers. On the other hand, the reference to a subsequent treaty is a reference of a different character to that to which the last argument applied.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS.

*THE EARL OF MEATH: I have to move the following Resolution—

"That, in the opinion of this House, the Education Code is defective, inasmuch as it fails to provide adequate facilities for the physical education of children attending elementary schools."

My Lords, in moving this Resolution, I do not desire in the smallest degree to belittle the work of the Government in the new Education Code. I quite feel that it was an improvement on its predecessor. At the same time, I desire by this Resolution to emphasize the fact that physical education seems to me almost entirely ignored in the Code. My Lords, it is necessary that the physique of the population of this country should be improved. But before I enter upon that consideration, I desire to draw your Lordships' attention to the fact that the population and the circumstances connected with the population of this country are entirely different from what they were a very few years ago, and also that these islands are in a very different position from any other country, I may say, on the face of the globe. I mean by that, My Lords, that whereas Belgium, for instance, is a very thickly populated country, and perhaps more thickly populated than this country, still there is no other land on the face of the globe in which the population is congregated in towns in such enormous numbers as in these islands. Belgium is a thickly populated country, but its population is, to a large extent, found in populous villages; ours, on the contrary, is in a great measure collected within some 20 enormous metropolises, if I might call them so. Then, my Lords, not only have we these enormous cities studing the land, but they are annually increasing at a rapid rate. The population in these islands increases at the rate of something like 300,000 a year, and the whole of this increase goes towards the enlargement of our cities. I believe that the influx of agricultural labourers into the towns of Great Britain is at the rate of something like 60,000 or 70,000 a year. And what cities they are! Most of these cities have sprung up without any regard to the health of the population, and these masses of people are congregated in a great measure in narrow streets and in confined courts. It is impossible, I think your Lordships will allow, that a generation of children can grow up healthy and strong in such cities unless some means are taken to strengthen their bodies. There is no doubt, as a question of physiological science, that the health of a population is in inverse ratio to its density, or, in other words, that the more a

population is aggregated together, other things being equal, the more unhealthy it becomes. Happily, other things are not always equal in the prejudicial point of view, and science is able in a great measure to counteract the bad effects of this overcrowding. But nevertheless, there is a great need, I contend, for the Educational Department of the Government to consider whether they ought not to endeavour to improve the physical condition of children as well as their minds. It is now a quarter of a century ago since Dr. Hayles Walsh first drew the attention of the public to this question, and it is many years since Dr. Cantlie, a surgeon practising in the London Hospital, in giving evidence on this question, stated that after making inquiries among 800 patients in the hospital, he found that there were only one-fourth who could trace their pedigree back to the fourth generation. I believe, my Lord, that if it were practicable to surround the large towns so that it would be impossible for countrymen and countrywomen to enter it, we should find that the degeneration of the race would become so great that the Legislature would be forced to take some action in the matter. The truth is, my Lords, that our eyes are blinded to the degeneration going on, owing to the influx into our towns of countrymen and countrywomen. They improve the race in the towns, but they themselves deteriorate—and their children are less healthy than those who are born and bred in the country. Now what are the requirements of the Code with regard to this matter? There are only two paragraphs in which physical education is at all mentioned. Section 12 sub-Section F provides as to military drill for boys under an instructor for two hours a week, or forty hours during the school time. Section 89 says that the income of the school must be applied only to the purposes of the school, and the school authorities are not allowed to pay the whole or even part of the salary of a teacher of drill unless he is also the drill teacher in several schools. Now, what are the subjects which are taught in the schools under this Code? There are four subjects which are obligatory—reading, writing, arithmetic, and needlework, and for those there is a fixed grant of 12s., 14s., or 15s. 6d. according

to the efficiency of the scholars. My own feeling is that physical education is of such importance that it ought to be included in the obligatory subjects; but if that does not meet with your Lordships' approval, I would suggest that it ought to be included amongst the optional subjects, so that any school which chooses to take it up may do so, equally with geography, English, singing, elementary science, or history. Those are subjects which only individual scholars can study, and for which there is a grant of 4s. Now, my Lords, we heard a great deal not long ago about overpressure in the schools. I venture to assert that a good deal of this overpressure is due to the neglect of the Department not to consider the requirement of physical exercise as part of the education in elementary schools. Children of tender years are kept at their desks doing sums, and at other lessons which to them are exceedingly hard, for a much longer time than the children of well-to-do parents are allowed to work; and they are children of parents who have never used their brains to a great degree. If, however, these children had physical exercise, it would be found that their minds would improve as well as their bodies. The children of upper and middle class persons come from parents who for many generations have used their brains, and are children more capable of using their brains than the children of those who for generations, it may be, have not in any large measure done so. I think, my Lords, that if physical exercise were allowed for half an hour so as divide mental lesson from mental lesson, not only the physical condition, but the mental condition of the children would be improved, and the result would be very much better, looked at even from a mental point of view. Then, again, there is another point which I should like to impress upon your Lordships, and that is that the teacher as well as the scholars are kept for very long hours at schoolwork. I believe there is nothing so trying to the nerves—nothing which makes a man so irritable and nervous as teaching; and if you could turn the teachers out to engage in gymnastics with the children, you would find there would be better discipline and less corporal punishment inflicted. This Education Code is a

one-sided one. The whole idea pervading it is to train the intellect. There is nothing for the body, which should also receive attention. The intellect and the body I assert should be considered together. But, my Lords, it is no use allowing this subject if you do not put it on a par with the others. Those subjects which are neither compulsory nor paid with money are handicapped, and, I submit, unfairly handicapped. My Lords, it may be said that in the Board Schools of London Swedish drill is taught, and that we have already small companies of boys drilling. I am perfectly aware that Swedish drill is taught now, and for many years I have been trying to get this drill taught in these schools. Although I believe the Board Schools of London have been exceedingly anxious to do all they can in the matter, they have not got the power or the funds to do it, and if they attempted to spend money in this way they would be surcharged. I therefore, through an association with which I am connected, proposed to them to bring over Swedish teachers by means of voluntary subscriptions, to teach the Swedish drill. They consented, and I was enabled to get £400 to bring over the necessary teachers. By that means they have been able to teach the Swedish drill in spite of the Government. Thus the teachers of the Board have been taught Swedish drill and were able to train the girls. But, my Lords, Swedish drill is not all that is necessary. It is excellent for girls, but the experience of several other countries, I believe, proves that it is not everything. Germany has not adopted it. Germany has got regular gymnastic training for its students. Switzerland has not adopted it. and Switzerland has got gymnastic training for the children. In Germany, Switzerland, Sweden, and Norway, every child is compelled to go through a course of gymnastics unless physically unfitted. If that is necessary in agricultural countries is it not much more important that English children, who are living in crowded slums and alleys in our enormous towns should have something done for the training of their bodies? And, my Lords, there is another argument, and that is that military drill does not expand the chest;

it does not increase the size of the arms; and it does not increase the power of the muscles in the same way as a thoroughly systematic course of gymnastics does. This has been proved by those who have taken a great interest in this subject. Dr. Brookes, of Much Wenlock, says that of a dozen lads of about equal force and strength, he set six to drill and six to a course of gymnastics for six months, and the result was that at the end of six months the six who had gone through the course of military drill had increased their chest measurement by 11-24, or very nearly $\frac{1}{2}$ an inch, while those who had gone through the course of gymnastics had increased their chest measurement by two inches. My Lords, I do not think I can do better than quote the authority of Sir James Crawford the Director General of the Army Medical Department who lately said at the meeting of the British Medical Association, that in 25 years the number of rejections for the Army had increased from 376-67 per 1,000 in 1862 and in 1866 to 415-58 per 1,000 in 1882 and 1886, showing a physical condition of the masses very much in favour of 1862 and 1866. He said that there was evidence of perceptible degeneration in the lower orders of people, and he says he has been forcibly impressed with the fact that the recruits drawn from the town population gave by far the largest portion of rejections, and that the cause of rejection is inferior physique. The inferiority is shown by the difference in rate between town and country recruits, as well as insufficient chest capacity and diminuity of stature. Again, he says, the masses are of inferior physique to what they were 25 years ago. Another authority, Dr. Fothergill, in a paper which he read before the Anthropological Association at Manchester, said that figures had shown the superiority of country people, as can be seen every day of our lives if we compare the population of Hammersmith, Shoreditch, and such places, with the population in country places like Lancashire and Yorkshire. Very similar evidence, my Lords, has been given by Sir C. Brown in his Report on the London Board Schools. He is the gentleman who brought out the facts which so horrified the public sometime ago with regard to the overpressure in those schools. If we are not careful of

the physical health of the children of this generation this country will certainly suffer in the future. I hope I may appeal in what I am about to say with some confidence in this matter to the sympathies of the Conservative Party in this House, for if ever there was a man who cared for the health of the people it was the Earl of Beaconsfield, who said *sanitas sanitatum omnia sanitas*. There is no nation on the face of the earth which favours physical exercises so much as this country, but the physical exercises are voluntary and are carried on mainly by the rich and well-to-do. The result is that the weak and the poor do not receive that physical training which they should have. The Germans have proved the wisdom of introducing competent physical training, and there is no doubt it was owing in no small degree to this training that their soldiers were enabled to march to Paris. Germany is a country which has done much in this matter of physical education, and I should like to point out very briefly to your Lordships how it was that Germany came to take this step. Most of us know that it was owing to the defeat of the German army, after the battle of Jena in 1806, that Germany determined in future to prevent similar disasters, and in 1811 Johann Jahnny formed the Turner-Vereine, or Gymnastic Association, which was a German Association for the purpose of hardening the German youths and strengthening their muscles, so that at some future date they might be able to best their enemies. In 1840, the system of compulsory exercises was introduced by Adolph Spiess into the teaching of the schools. In this country we have what may be called Turner-Vereine in our large Universities and schools, and in the association for physical exercises, which are so much delighted in by the children of the poorer and middle classes. There is no nation, perhaps, which indulges so much in physical exercises as the English nation. But, my Lords, that is not the point. Being voluntary the result is that the weaker and poorer children do not obtain that physical training which I should like to see them have. The example of Germany, will, I hope, induce your Lordships to see whether it is not possible to do something in the same direction in this

country. The Germans have proved the wisdom of introducing that system into their own country. Some people have asserted that force and strength are anachronisms in the nineteenth century, and that science is sufficient for everything, and that by machinery we can do with few physical requirements. But, my Lords, you will yourselves have noticed that those who excel in anything are the people who have most physical power. Take our Parliamentary Leaders; are not they all men who have been renowned for physical strength, or our leading barristers, physicians or City Clergymen, all of whom are hard worked. Could they, if they had not strong constitutions, go through their work? Is strength not also necessary in the lower classes? Consider, my Lords, how hard is the work of a compositor, railway guard, or omnibus conductor. And even in the case of women—dressmakers and sempstresses—could they go through their hard work unless they had some amount of physical strength? I believe, my Lords, that really this is a matter in which very little expense would do what I should desire. I have seen practical proof of this in a case with which I am connected, where I converted an ordinary schoolroom into a gymnasium for the small sum of £5, and that was done without in the slightest degree interfering with the ordinary school work, simply by hanging up a few ropes, by introducing into a doorway a bar which could be used for athletic exercises, and one or two other things which could be put on one side when necessary. In fact, my Lords, a large gymnasium is not wanted in every school. I do think it would be well if there was a large gymnasium, or perhaps even two or three gymnasia in our large towns. No doubt some schools have already set up gymnastic apparatus in their playgrounds, but the absurdity of it is that having set up that apparatus, they are not allowed to pay anyone to teach the use of it. I think, my Lords, I have shown that the power of excelling in anything depends in a great measure on physical stamina. I believe, my Lords, that by such a system as I propose the great national crime of drunkenness would be diminished, and I have the authority of one of the principal teachers of gymnastics for saying that those

they import a handiness in after life, whether a man is in the Army, Navy, or elsewhere. It therefore seems to me that the Code still remains one which attaches too much importance to book learning, and devotes a great deal too much time to it. The children could pass through the same literary test if a portion only of the time were devoted to this purpose. It seems to me that this is a very strong argument in favour of diminishing the length of the hours devoted to book learning in our schools, and giving more time and some pecuniary encouragement, not merely to gymnastic training, which requires considerable expense in the employment of skilled professors, to prevent danger to the children, but to drill; and in these days of Volunteers, Militia, and short service, it would be a very strange thing if, for a moderate sum, some competent retired non-commissioned officer could not be found to drill the boys in the most remote rural schools. The adoption of gymnasia in our large schools is needed, and I think very inadequate encouragement is given to it by the Code. But I should like to see all our children drilled from the Duke's son to the beggar's son in the work-house.

***THE DUKE OF CAMBRIDGE:** My Lords, I have no hesitation in saying that I consider drill most valuable to young people in all vocations of life. I believe that it will add very much even to the power of science, because where proper physical training is not given, although young men may acquire a great amount of scientific knowledge, still they will suffer so much in bodily health that they will not really be in a position to turn to full account the scientific instruction that has been imparted to them. I am convinced that the application of military drill to a limited extent and as a regular part of the daily work of the schools would conduce to the advantage, both mental and bodily, of the scholars. I quite agree that gymnastics are a delicate thing to deal with, and will require that great care should be taken to see that they are not carried too far and do not cause accidents; but the case is quite different with drill, which can lead to no accidents. As to the matter of expense, there are many non-commissioned officers in every part of the country who could under proper regulations give instruc-

tion in drill to the children without causing any very considerable outlay of money for that purpose. As far as the Army is concerned, men are now sometimes taken into the service who shortly after they enlist are found to be disqualified physically, and they have been discharged, entailing great expense to the country; and therefore I quite agree that the sooner boys at school begin drill the better it is in every way. The boys of the Shoeblack Brigade, as it is called, march through the streets as well as soldiers could, because they are drilled young and take a pleasure in it. That shows there exists a disposition to learn drill, if the opportunity for it is afforded. If a reasonable time were devoted to drill in Board Schools and other schools generally, it would be greatly to the advantage of all concerned, and also to the country at large.

***VISCOUNT CROSS:** My Lords, the Royal Commission, of which I was a Member, have inquired into this question, and they had the Report of the Inspectors of military gymnasia before them. I hope that the result of this discussion will rouse the attention of the country to a matter of considerable importance. I am afraid that people may get the notion that there is no drill in the schools at the present moment; but the fact is that there is a great deal of drill given now in the schools, to the delight of the children, and with a good effect on their power of work at their studies. I entirely concur with the illustrious Duke as to the great difference between gymnastic exercises and drill; and the Royal Commission were of opinion that the introduction of an elaborate gymnastic apparatus into the school playgrounds was not to be recommended unless there was adequate and competent supervision of the children during their exercises. The Commissioners reported that in towns the best results, both physical and moral, might be expected from the introduction of some system of physical instruction, such as that recommended by the War Office, but that care must always be taken in applying it to delicate and weak children. I believe that the training colleges might do much in training teachers to carry on drill, and I believe that it would be of enormous advantage to have the bodies as well as the minds of the children exercised.

*THE EARL OF MEATH: My Lords, I have given you my opinion in this matter. I can state it in a very few words. Physical education would include drill, and as everything depends upon the grant that is given, the National Schools will push into the background subjects that do not earn money. My own opinion is this, that this subject should be included in the class of optional subjects, so that each school should be left to do what it can. If it did not choose to take up this subject, it need not do so. If it chose to take up drill, it would be paid for it. If it chose to take up gymnastics, it would be paid for it. In reply to the noble Lord Norton, I wish to draw his attention to this fact, that I do not ask for any more money, because I only desired to put this subject among the optional subjects. If the scholar is not drilling, or at gymnastics, he will be reading or writing, and therefore the payment will not be increased in any way. I do not think sufficient stress has been laid on the health question. This is a question entirely of health. It is not an ornamental question, or a question of military drill merely, but it is one of health. and I hope it will go before the country in that form. If this training is not required, do not let us have it; but all I said was that we should have it in the large towns, and if the noble Lord will give me an assurance that he will place the subject among the optional subjects, even limiting it to the large towns, I will withdraw my proposal. Otherwise I will not.

Question put, resolved in the negative.

STATE GRANTS FOR MAIN ROADS.

QUESTION—OBSERVATIONS.

LORD BELPER: My Lords, I have to ask Her Majesty's Government to state on what grounds the Local Government Board have repudiated any claim based upon the cost of quarter maintenance of main roads for the years ending 25th March, 1888 and 1889. There is one point which I think perhaps in strict accuracy ought to be referred to, and that is that the grants are for a quarter for the Highway Authorities and a quarter for the County Authority. My Lords, I do not think it necessary to apologize to the House for bringing this question forward, because there has

been so strong an expression of opinion and disappointment, not only from the County Councils, but also from the various Highway Authorities, that I feel the Government will not object to an opportunity being given of stating in an authoritative way their opinion with regard to the making of these grants. I think, my Lords, in order to make this question clear, I ought to remind your Lordships of the terms on which the main roads have been paid for up to this time. The main roads have been maintained by the Highway Authorities, either the parishes or the Highway Boards. In the first place the Highway Board has had to pay the whole of the cost, and half that cost has been repaid by the County Authorities. Then, in addition to that half paid by the County Authorities, and which falls so hardly on the district itself, for some years there has been repaid one quarter of the cost to the Highway Authorities, and a quarter to the County Authorities. Therefore, under this somewhat complicated triangular arrangement, which existed down to last year, the Highway Authorities paid one-fourth of the cost of maintaining main roads, the County Authorities one-fourth, and the Government one-half. I think your Lordships would agree that this system is so complicated that it ought to be done away with, and that in future it should be carried out in a different manner. But, my Lords, I should like to call your attention to this, upon the point of the permanence of this system. The payments by the Government must be necessarily in arrear, and such arrears were owing when the Bill passed creating County Councils. What takes place is this: The Local Authorities have to get their accounts made up at the end of the period, and they have to get a certificate that the roads have been kept in order. Then the County Authorities, as soon as they get them, pay their half, and in the process of time the Government, two or three months afterwards, repay a quarter of what has been paid. So that some time afterwards they are repaid one-half of which has been paid by them. This grant has always been paid in arrear. When it was first started, the Government did not give the grant at once, but they waited until they had the returns for the year, and paid afterwards. It was therefore in

arrear at that time, it has always been in arrear since, and it is in arrear now. Then when the Bill appointing County Councils was passed, all these grants made by Government towards the Local Authorities were done away with, and it was resolved in the future to make the grant in a different form, and that the County Authorities should be paid in their stead. I believe the County Authorities desired that the grant which was owing last year towards the maintenance of the roads should be paid, but the Government would not pay it. My Lords, I will take the case, first, of the Highway Authority. I am bound to say that the Highway Authority has not so much to depend upon as the County Council; but they had to entirely take over the maintenance of the main roads. That has to be done in future by the County Councils. I will call the attention of the House to the fact that there are two years of arrears to the Highway Authorities. There is something owing for the year ending March, 1888, and a sum owing for the year ending March, 1889. The Local Government Board have informed me that no payments have been made to any Local Authorities in respect to the claims based on the maintenance of main roads for the year ending March, 1888, or for the year ending March, 1889, nor is it intended to give such effect to the Bill. In my letter to the Board I called attention to the fact that really these payments were due for the last two years, but in answer to that the Local Government Board said they had forwarded the claim to the Surveyor of Highways, and that although based on the cost of maintenance of main roads in 1886 and 1887 it was a contribution in aid of expenditure during the financial year 1888-9. Therefore it is clear, as far as the Government contention goes, they are not in arrear, but that the payments have been made for the year which has actually been running. As I have pointed out, I do not believe this contention can be supported by evidence. I know there are certain Highway Authorities who have made financial arrangements knowing that that half would be paid back at the end of the financial year; and they would be put in a somewhat awkward position if it were done in any other manner. But I think the County

Councils have a stronger claim upon the consideration of the Government, because I would point out that the County Councils have had to pay during the current half year what is coming from the Government. They say, "You are bound to pay the Highway Authority, though we are not going to pay you." I do not quite see the distinction between the two bodies in that respect, and if one has a payment founded on the sum expended during the past year, and a payment is made for the financial year on account, then, I think, the County Authority should be put in exactly the same position. I think we are bound to pay the Highway Authority. At the same time, I think both of them should be placed in exactly the same position. But, my Lords, that is not the point on which I think the greatest stress ought to be laid. The Government, in bringing in the Local Government Bill, informed us that for the future the County Councils would be placed in a more favourable position than they had been in the past; that those grants would be larger than the amount which had been handed over hitherto; and therefore, that the County Councils, in starting their work, would be in a more favourable position than Quarter Sessions ever were before. I would be perfectly willing to base the whole of our case upon the question whether that will or will not be the case this year. We have had some expenses already, and we shall have to pay for six months of maintenance of high roads to the Highway Authority—that is to say, half the whole cost. In addition to that, we shall have to make some provision for the maintenance of the county roads during the next 12 months. As I have said, we shall have nothing to meet this in the way of any payment in aid at the beginning of the year; and, of course, all we can do will depend upon what we are going to get from the local grant. My Lords, I beg to say there is not a single county in my neighbourhood in which the estimates for the coming year are not in consequence of this higher now than they have been for many years past. They are considered to be higher than they have been for many years, simply from the fact that they have had to meet the cost of the maintenance

of roads for the past year. The point of the Government is that the only grants which are now going to be given will take the place of the old grants, and that as far as that is concerned, we shall not be in a worse position. I would ask the attention of the House to the laws which regulate this grant. The whole of the grant which is handed over to the County Council is provided for by Statute in a very strict manner. It is provided in what order the Local Authorities are to be paid by the grant, and not one farthing of that grant can be touched by the County Council for the purpose of the maintenance of main roads until all the Local Authorities have been paid. I understand that part of the grant is paid in July, part in October, and part in February, before the end of the financial year. That will make it more than a year from the present time. I wish to point out that the rates are higher than they have ever been before. It is clear that 18 months will probably have elapsed between the last payment and the payment on account of this new grant. I am very sorry to have occupied the time of the House at some little length upon this matter, but I think the House will see that it is rather an important one, and unless it is put forward in some detail, it would be impossible to make out where we stand. Equitably speaking, even if the Government were to place us this year in as good a position as we were in in former years, we should then feel that if they cannot pay the grant in this form, the County Authorities are at least entitled to some consideration for this present financial year. My Lords, I think that the manner in which the County Councils are working generally seems to give, as far as I can judge, considerable satisfaction, but a great part of that satisfaction will be marred from the fact that during the first year of the County Councils they have been pressed further than these authorities have ever been before. In this way, my Lords, the County Councils will be put in an unfavourable position in which they do not deserve to be placed. They will not be placed according to the declaration of Government in a more favourable position than the old authorities were by the former grants, and that declaration will certainly not be kept if an incident of the period of transition is

to be the loss of the grants that are overdue, and which would have been received in the ordinary course if no change in County Government had been made.

VISCOUNT TORRINGTON: My Lords, there has been no repudiation of any valid claim by Her Majesty's Government in this matter. It is assumed that the Government are, in the present and next financial year, liable to pay to the Local Highway Authorities a quarter of the cost which was incurred by them in the maintenance of main roads in the years ended Lady Day, 1888 and 1889. There is, however, no good ground for any such assumption. The facts are these:—The County Authorities, under the Highways and Locomotives (Amendment) Act, 1878, were required to pay to the Local Highway Authorities one-half of the cost of the maintenance of the main roads, when such roads had been certified by the County Surveyor to have been maintained in a proper condition. It was therefore the practice of the County Authorities to pay in one year a moiety of the expenditure incurred in the preceding year. In 1882 it was determined by Parliament to make a grant to the Local Authorities in respect of main roads in anticipation of the larger relief to local taxation which was made by the Local Government Act. This grant was, of course, intended to be in aid of the expenditure of the particular year in which the grant was paid; but for the purpose of the distribution among the different authorities it was determined to take as the basis a moiety of the sum allowed by the county in the previous year. This was done in order to secure the full advantage of the examination of the claims of the Local Authorities by the County Authority. It is clear that the grant was made for the particular year in which it was voted and paid, and not for the preceding period in which the expenditure which was the basis of the distribution was incurred. Any other contention would involve this, that when Parliament in the year ended Lady Day, 1883, voted for the first time a certain sum for main roads, that Vote was to be regarded not as a Vote for that year, but for the year ended Lady Day, 1881. This was clearly not the intention. Take the past year. The full grant for the maintenance of main roads has been paid to the Local Authorities as in

previous years, but the distribution, for reasons already mentioned, was based on the expenditure allowed by the County Authorities for the year ended Lady Day, 1888, and that allowance was in respect of the expenditure in the year ended Lady Day, 1887. If the Local Government Act had not passed, or if under that Act the County Authorities had not had ceded to them the License Duties and Probate Duty Grant provided for by that Act, the Local Highway Authorities would no doubt receive in the present financial year a similar grant to that which they have received in past years, but under the Local Government Act the License Duties and Probate Duty Grant have been substituted for the Parliamentary grants, and the revenue ceded is largely in excess of the grants which are discontinued. It cannot be contended that, while the Local Authorities are to receive the Imperial Revenue out of which the Parliamentary grants would have been paid, they are also to continue to receive the grants for which it is distinctly provided that this Imperial Revenue shall be substituted. It is true that this revenue will be received by the County Authorities and not by the Local Highway Authorities, but it is to be borne in mind that it devolves upon the County Authorities from the 1st of last April to defray the whole cost of the maintenance of these roads, and that the Local Highway Authorities are altogether relieved of the burden of maintaining them.

*EARL SPENCER: My Lords, I should like to say a few words upon this matter with regard to the County Councils, after the statement which has been made by the noble Viscount in answer to my noble Friend Lord Belper. This matter of the subvention for the maintenance of main roads is extremely complicated. My noble Friend has put it extremely clearly, and I have nothing to say by way of differing from him upon the former method applied to the subvention. But, my Lords, I think there is this to be said. There are two sets of authorities concerned in this matter—the Highway Authorities and the County Authorities. They have both a responsibility in the matter, and the Government have nothing to do with the question whether the county rate has more thrown on it, and the Highway Autho-

rities less thrown on them, than previously for the maintenance of the roads. The Government have only to see that they have paid over sufficient money to relieve the local burthen, whether it be in the shape of County or Highway Bill. The Government have paid certain sums towards main roads, relieving the local rates for the year in which they make the payment, but calculating the amount on the cost of main roads for the previous year. Had they not done this, the Local Authorities would have had to wait until the accounts of the year had been audited, and this would have created an inconvenient delay. They have gone on paying in the same way for 1883-4-5-6-7-8. They have paid the full subvention—the quarter to the Highway Authority and the quarter to the County Authority—down to 1888. Then they say they are not going to pay any more. And why? Because they are going to give an equivalent and more than an equivalent to the County Councils by means of the License and Probate Duties. If the Government paid, as my noble Friend desires, they would be paying some part of their subvention twice over. In my opinion, if a Highway Authority has any grievance it must look now for redress to the County Council. But now I should like to press another matter very much upon the Government. The noble Lord at the latter end of his speech thought that in his part of the country some of the County Councils would have to raise very considerably their rates in this the first year of their administration. I confess that would be a very serious thing. It would have a very bad effect in prejudicing the country against this new Act, and I therefore think it is important that Her Majesty's Government should redeem their declaration and pay the full amount of the subvention. We hoped we should gain a little beside what we had at the old Quarter Session, something more to answer the heavy burdens which we have to meet; but I think it is of the greatest importance that the Councils should not be put to any inconvenience by the subvention being less than the charges which they, instead of the Government, are now bound to meet. We have to meet the subvention to the Unions, we have also to

maintain absolutely the whole of our main roads, and we have to pay for the whole of the Police. I need not go through the items of all that is now thrown upon the County Councils. I therefore would press very much on Her Majesty's Government that the Councils should receive within the financial year certainly as much, if not more, than was formerly paid to various Local Bodies; otherwise, we shall fall into difficulties. I am aware that before this can be finally settled an agreement as to the share which counties and boroughs are each to have of the Licenses and Probate Duties has to be made. I was one of those who went through the process of trying to agree to a settlement last week, and I assure your Lordships that you could not have a much more difficult measure to carry through than to come to an arrangement between the borough and the county with regard to the share which is to come from the Government of the Licensing and Probate Duties, because although with regard to the Probate Duty the Act in a certain sense settled the principle of its division for the whole country, you have to make a division on that as well as for the other licenses within each county. My Lords, I think this matter of the division between the boroughs and the counties should be settled as speedily as possible, and until that is done the Government will not of course be able to complete finally the subvention; but I venture to press on Her Majesty's Government strongly what my noble Friend so well put, that it is very desirable we should get the full subvention during the financial year and that we should not be obliged to raise higher county rates than we were obliged to raise formerly.

***LORD BALFOUR:** My Lords, I think this is simply an exemplification of the old proverb that you cannot eat your cake and have it. If the Local Government Bill had not been passed last year the grant which has hitherto been paid by the Exchequer would have been paid this year. But the Bill having been passed the licenses have been handed over to the County Councils in the place of the grant. The amount from licenses will be larger than the former grants in aid from the Exchequer. Undoubtedly there will be some delay in the payment of the sums this year, but

the noble Earl will see that they cannot be paid until they are received, and the money will not be wholly received by the Exchequer until the end of the financial year. Considerable payments will be made in July, October, and February next. This is an important question, in so far as the different County Councils may be placed in a temporary difficulty arising out of the transfer. I believe every effort will be made by the Government to pay the money as quickly as possible. With regard to the larger question which noble Lords have raised as to how the County Councils are to tide over the difficulty of having to levy an increased rate to meet the present year's liabilities, the point is not covered by the Notice on the Paper and I do not suppose that the noble Earl opposite will expect the Government to give an answer without further consideration. The point is obviously an important one, and if the Government had received notice of the question they would no doubt have been able to deal with it. The Government would not willingly lay an undue burden upon the County Councils in the first year of their existence.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: My Lords, it is quite clear that the Government are right in the view they have taken as to the question of the payment of the money this year. If they are right, it is all the more important that your Lordships should impress upon the Government the extreme hardship which the counties will suffer if they do not receive a sum equivalent to the amount which they have lost. If they have to make a new and additional county rate, the ratepayers will take notice of the increase, although the poor rate may be reduced. I quite agree with the noble Lord that we cannot eat our cake and have it. But in the present year there is no cake. They have been accustomed to a cake of a certain size, and they have been told that they were to have a larger one this year. But they are not to have it, and what they ask is that the cake may be made up to the same size as before. I think the Government are really bound, having announced that their measure will tend to the relief of rates, not to allow the year to go over in such a way that the rates will be actually increased instead of decreased. It is not

enough to say that they will get the money in another year, because the ratepayers of another year may not be the same as the ratepayers of this year; and they would be relieving the ratepayers of another year at the expense of the ratepayers of this year. I hope and believe that the larger question will receive the careful consideration of the Government with the view of preventing the grievance complained of from arising.

LORD BELPER: My Lords, if we understand that the Government consider the County Councils are entitled to the payment of the full subvention within the financial year so that they shall not be obliged to raise higher county rates, I think that will be an answer to my question.

AGRICULTURAL HOLDINGS (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1883, AMENDMENT BILL.
(No. 42.)

(SECOND READING.)

THE EARL OF ELGIN: My Lords, in moving the Second Reading of this Bill, I have to explain that it deals with a single provision of the Agricultural Holdings Act of 1883, the provision which relates to the appointment of arbitrators. Under the provisions in question each party has power to appoint a referee, and a single referee can only be appointed when both parties concur. That provision has caused a considerable amount of unnecessary expense, because many of these arbitrations are in respect of small holdings, and the cost of the arbitrators swallows up their whole value. Under these circumstances, the Bill now before your Lordships proposes a change in the law to avoid that very considerable and unnecessary expense, so that unless the parties agree that a single referee shall be nominated by the parties, the nomination shall be made by the Sheriff. My Lords, I may mention that this Bill has passed unanimously through the other House, and I would ask your Lordships now to give it a Second Reading.

*THE MARQUESS OF LOTHIAN: My Lords, I have no objection whatever to the passing of the Bill, which does not affect the principle of the Act of 1883. It does not affect more than a small part of the procedure under that Act. I have only a few words to say upon the matter. I would point out that the

procedure under the Act as it now stands is this: that any case of arbitration must be referred to two arbitrators unless the parties, with an oversman, mutually agree that it should be referred to one referee. The proposal under this Bill is that the procedure should be reversed—namely, that any such case must be referred to one referee, unless the parties interested agree that it should be remitted to two referees for their decision, with power to appoint an oversman. There is, therefore, no change in the principle of the Act of 1883, the alteration proposed having only the object of saving expense in carrying out the provisions of that Act. As any such saving must be for the interest of both landlord and tenant, I am glad to give my support to the Bill.

Bill read 2^a (according to order), and committed to the Standing Committee for General Bills.

House adjourned at a quarter before
Seven o'clock, till To-morrow, a
quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Monday, 13th May, 1889.

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

MARGATE COAL DUES BILL.

Order for Third Reading, read.

Motion made, and Question proposed,
"That the Bill be now read a third time."

MR. R. WEBSTER (St. Pancras): I do not rise to oppose the Third Reading of this Bill, but on looking through the Bill I perceive that it confirms the system of levying modified coal dues in the town of Margate, until the year 1920. The Corporation of Margate have apparently no new fangled method of raising money to propose for carrying out the town improvements, but prefer to rely upon the old system of raising money by means of the coal dues. I find that in the United Kingdom there are no less than 200 other towns and ports which also impose these

coal dues, and I maintain that it is an extremely bad system of taxation to resort to. It is a tax which falls upon the consumer, the producer, and the middleman, and is only borne to a very modified extent by the inhabitants of a town generally. It is acceptable to owners of property who know that their land is not taxed, and to occupiers who do not have to pay an increased rent in consequence, and therefore it is a tax which is acceptable to the inhabitants generally. I know that I am precluded by the Rules of this House from referring to another part of the United Kingdom, but I may say that while by this Bill the town of Margate will crystallize the system of imposing coal dues until the year 1920, this great metropolis has never yet been afforded the privilege of discussing in any form or shape whether in London the coal and wine dues are to be renewed. I know, Sir, that if I were to go further you would rule me out of order. Therefore all I will say is that if the town of Margate is to have the privilege of levying these dues, the inhabitants of London are fairly entitled to equal treatment.

Question, "That the Bill be now read a third time," put, and agreed to.

Bill read the third time, and passed.

PIER AND HARBOUR PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 1) BILL.

Order for Third Reading, read.

Bill re-committed to a Committee of the whole House, with respect to an Amendment to the Wexford Provisional Order.

Bill considered in Committee, and reported; as amended, to be considered to-morrow.

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION PROVISIONAL ORDER CONFIRMATION (ACTON, &c.) BILL [LORDS.]

Read a second time, and committed.

PIER AND HARBOUR PROVISIONAL ORDERS.

Copy ordered,

"Of Memorandum stating the nature of the Proposals contained in the Provisional Orders included in the Pier and Harbour Orders Con-

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firmation Bill (No. 3)."—(Sir Michael Hicks Beach.)

Copy presented accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 140.]

BRITISH MUSEUM.

Ordered—

Account of the Income and Expenditure of the British Museum (Special Trust Funds) for the year ending the 31st day of March, 1889:

And, Return of the number of Persons admitted to visit the Museum and the British Museum (Natural History) in each year from 1883 to 1888, both years inclusive, together with a Statement of the Progress made in the Arrangement and Description of the Collections, and an Account of Objects added to them, in the year 1888.—(Sir J. Lubbock.)

REVISING BARRISTERS.

Address for—

Return, showing the Circuits, including the county of Middlesex and the cities of London and Westminster, within which the several Revising Barristers and additional Revising Barristers, if any, were appointed to revise the Lists of Parliamentary Electors, Burgesses, and County Electors in England and Wales in the year 1888; the names of the Barristers appointed for each Circuit; the places where each Barrister sat; the Electoral Areas, whether Counties, Boroughs, or Divisions of Counties or Boroughs, included in each Circuit; the total number of Voters in each group of Areas included in a Circuit; the number of Days actually occupied by each Barrister in the Revision:

And, the total Cost incurred for the payment of such Revising Barristers and the Amount received by the Treasury from the Local Authorities in respect of such Costs:

Names of Circuits.			
Names of Revising Barristers.			
Places at which each Barrister sat.			
Electoral Areas in each Circuit.			
Number of Electors in each Circuit.			
Number of Days actually occupied in revision.			
Cost of Revising Barristers ...		£	s. d.
Cost of additional Revising Barristers			
Total		£	
Amount received by Treasury from Local Authorities in respect of such costs		£	

—(Mr. Stansfeld.)

QUESTIONS.

IRELAND—THE ANTRIM POOR LAW UNION.

MR. BIGGAR (Cavan, W.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the yearly

emoluments of the clerk of the Antrim Poor Law Union, in addition to his formal salary as clerk, amount to £182; as returning officer, £10 per annum; sanitary officer, £10 per annum; clerk to Local Authority, £15 per annum; clerk to Burial Board, £10 per annum; Jurors' Act, £47 per annum; Parliamentary Voters' Act, £60 per annum; registration of births, £10 per annum; Income Tax Returns, £10 per annum; fees for copy of register, 2s. 6d. each, £10 per annum; whether the Guardians proposed to give in addition £40 of formal salary as clerk: whether the Local Government Board refused to ratify the said proposal; if so, on what grounds; under what Act of Parliament have the Local Government Board power to force Guardians to give a higher salary than they consider reasonable, taking all circumstances into account; and, can the Guardians, when making a new appointment, do so subject to the condition that the appointment is one from year to year, so that no vested interest will be created?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.) said the facts appeared to be substantially as stated in the question.

SALMON NETS.

Mr. MACINTOSH (Invernessshire) asked the Lord Advocate whether nets placed on the sea coasts of Scotland, or in estuaries, for the purpose of taking salmon, are subject to the law or custom of Saturday "slap" in Scottish Rivers, and liable to confiscation or penalty, if kept set over Sundays; whether he is aware that salmon nets on the coasts of the Islands of Skye and Raasay, are never closed during the fishing season; whether he is aware that this practice, involving constant Sunday labour, within view of those attending Divine Service, is a just cause of offence to the people; and, whether means can be taken to put an end to the desecration?

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. P. B. ROBERTSON, Buteshire): The Statutory slap and the relative penalties are expressed by the Statutes as applying to the several districts to be constituted by the Commissioners. It so happens that Raasay is not comprehended within any district, and it is maintained that in consequence the Statutory slap does not

apply, and the nets are not lifted. I am informed that this does not necessarily involve touching the nets on Sunday. If, however, offence is caused to the feelings of anyone, he has a remedy by trying the question under the 28th Section of the Act of 1862, which gives the right of prosecution to the Clerk of the District Board, or to any other person. Skye is included in a district, and the weekly time close time therefore applies.

PENSIONERS IN INDIA.

MR. KING (Hull, Central) asked the Under Secretary of State for India whether he will lay upon the Table a Statement showing the number of pensioners, retired members of the Uncovenanted Service in India, whose pensions were paid in England prior to the year 1864; the names of pensioners so paid, and the Presidencies to which they belonged.

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Sir J. GORST, Chatham): If the hon. Member will confer with me, I will settle with him the form in which the Return he asks for can be given.

BURIAL GROUNDS.

MR. OSBORNE MORGAN (Denbighshire) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he is aware the Bishop of Wakefield has informed the Burial Board of Kirkheaton, Yorkshire, that, after consulting the Archbishop of York and other Bishops, he is prepared to dedicate their burial ground, as requested, by using the Consecration Service without the execution of a legal instrument, provided that the Home Office Order for Consecration is cancelled, that the rector is a consenting party, and that an agreement is come to as to the clerical fees; and, whether he will consent to cancel such order, or, if unable, on legal grounds, to do so, the Government will facilitate legislation which will permit the substitution for consecration of a dedication service, the principle of which the Archbishop of York and other Bishops have accepted?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (MR. MATTHEWS, Birmingham, E.): The answer to the first paragraph is in the affirmative. By the Burial Acts a portion of the ground is required to be con-

secrated, but the Acts do not require that an order to consecrate should be made by the Home Office, and no such order has been made in this case. All I have done is to call the attention of the Board to the requirements of the Acts, which I have no power to modify by substituting dedication for consecration. I understand, moreover, that in this particular case the vendor of the site stipulated that a portion should be consecrated. The Government are not prepared without more consideration to propose or facilitate any alteration of the existing law.

CLELAND WATER SUPPLY.

MR. DONALD CRAWFORD (Lancashire, N.E.) asked the Lord Advocate whether his attention has been called to the fact that an application under the Public Health Act, by Thomas Gibb and others, for the formation of a water supply district at Cleland, has been pending for about six years; whether a petition for the rectification of the proposed boundaries was presented to the Sheriff in May, 1887, and the Sheriff remitted to an architect to report on this question on 3rd October, 1887; whether the report was not lodged till 13th December, 1888; whether, on 12th January, 1889, he made an order permitting written objections to be lodged to the report within eight days, but no objections have been lodged; whether the Sheriff has given no decision; and whether, if these facts be correct, he will inquire who is to blame for such extreme delay in a matter affecting public health, and consider whether the law requires amendment?

*MR. J. P. B. ROBERTSON: The facts as stated by the hon. Member are substantially correct. Some necessary delay was occasioned in the initial stages of the inquiry by a difficulty regarding the boundaries. I am informed that the Sheriff Substitute of the district has been suffering from illness lately which may account for the delay in his pronouncing any decision, but I hope the matter will now be decided as soon as possible. As at present informed, I do not see any necessity for amending the existing law.

IRELAND—RETIRING ALLOWANCES TO ASYLUM OFFICIALS.

MR. JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieu-

tenant of Ireland whether he has received a memorial signed by the officers and attendants of the various asylums for the care and treatment of the insane in Ireland, praying that an Act, similar to the English Asylums Act (25 and 26 Vic. c. 3, s. 12) be passed to provide retiring allowances to Irish officials; and whether, as such a measure passed the House of Commons, unopposed in 1887 with the approval of the Government, he will give favourable consideration to the memorial, and introduce a Bill to remove the anomaly at present existing in regard to a very deserving class of public servants?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have seen the memorial alluded to by my hon. Friend, but I am afraid I cannot hold out any hopes of our introducing a Bill dealing with the question.

MR. THOMAS BARRY.

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he is aware that Mr. Thomas Barry, P.L.G., Mallow Union, was assaulted by a policeman at Kanturk Railway Station on the 4th instant, who dragged him violently from a railway carriage, and wrenched his arm; why did the head constable, who was present, refuse to give the name of the constable; and is it a fact that when Mr. Barry again demanded the name of the offending constable at Banteer Station, he was threatened with violence, and filthy expressions used towards him by the constable in question?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: From the constabulary report received it appears that no assault was committed on Mr. Barry, and that the occurrence arose out of an attempt on his part to prevent two constables from entering the railway carriage. The head constable states that he did not refuse to give the constable's name; but as the constable had done nothing wrong, so far as he had seen, he asked Mr. Barry what he wanted the name for. The train at once moved off, and the matter ended there. The constable denies the allegation in the question that Mr. Barry asked his name at Banteer, or that he threatened Mr. Barry with violence or used filthy expressions. But he adds that Mr. Barry was most offensive towards him.

MR. FLYNN: Have the Constabulary Authorities instructed the head constable in view of legal proceedings to give the constable's name to Mr. Barry?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am unable to say.

MR. H. J. WILSON (Yorkshire, W. Riding, Holmfirth): Am I to understand that the head constable did not give the name?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: As a matter of fact, I understand the name was not given.

MR. FLYNN: Are the Constabulary Authorities aware that Mr. Thomas Barry, P.L.G., Mallow Union, is constantly followed by policemen, whether on his private or public business, and is prevented from transacting his private affairs by the constant proximity of these constables? Are these constables authorized by their instructions to interfere with Mr. Barry by thrusting themselves between him and persons with whom he may be engaged in conversation; and, why is this gentleman exposed to such treatment?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The Constabulary Authorities report that the local police have reason to believe that Mr. Barry is engaged in the unlawful practice of endeavouring to prevent the sale of cattle in connection with evicted farms, and also that he had been named by Mr. William O'Brien, M.P., as a proper agent in organizing on the Kenmare estate the illegal association known as the Plan of Campaign. The police have, therefore, in the discharge of their duty watched his movements. They deny that they have prevented him from transacting his legitimate private affairs.

MR. FLYNN: May I ask whether in this case instructions will at any rate be given to the Constabulary not to interfere with Mr. Barry, when in the discharge of his own private business?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: They deny that they have in any way interfered with him in such a case.

POLICE HUT AT KILLABRAKER.

MR. FLYNN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he can state whether a police hut has been recently erected at Killabroker, near Charleville, and how many police constables are stationed in it; on what fund or what district will the cost of the

maintenance of these extra policeman fall; what is the reason alleged by the Police Authorities for placing this police post in the neighbourhood; and, is he aware that this district has been exceptionally quiet and free from outrage or disturbance for some years?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The Constabulary Authorities report that the police hut mentioned has recently been established. One sergeant and four constables are stationed in it. The men form part of the general extra force of the county at large. The hut has been established to protect a man whose house was recently attacked by night for his having taken ground on an evicted farm. In addition to the outrage mentioned there were two others in February last, and the place being very remote, and commanding a large district of country, the responsible officers have deemed it advisable to place a hut there.

TREATMENT OF EMIGRANTS AT BUENOS AYRES.

MR. MAURICE HEALY (Cork) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether his attention has been called to the case of John Callanan, late of Cork, one of the emigrants from Ireland recently landed at Buenos Ayres, who towards the end of March last called on the British Consul there and complained that his wife had been forcibly detained in a house in that city; that he (Callanan) had been denied access to her; and that, on going to the house, he had been savagely assaulted; whether complaints have reached him that the British Consul refused to take any action, and used abusive language to Callanan; and, whether he will cause an inquiry to be made into the circumstances of the case?

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir J. FERGUSSON, Manchester, N.W.): I have inquired of Mr. Bridgett, H.M. Consul at Buenos Ayres, who happens to be in London, having left his post on the 1st of April. He tells me that he never heard of such a case as that described in the hon. Member's question, and that if he had he would have advised the man what to do and would not have abused him. I may add that I have seen a paragraph in a Limerick newspaper, in which the kindness of Mr. Bridgett to certain emigrants from that

city to the Argentine Republic is gratefully acknowledged.

In answer to a further question by Mr. T. Healy,

*SIR J. FERGUSSON said that inquiries should be made about the case.

POSTAL TELEGRAMS.

MR. RANKIN (Herefordshire, Leominster) asked the Postmaster General whether it would be possible to make arrangements with the railway companies so that postal or private telegrams could be sent from and received at the railway stations where no other telegraph station exists?

*THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (MR. RAIKES, University of Cambridge): On the 4th May of last year I stated in this House, in reply to a question put to me by the hon. Member for the Chester-le-Street Division of Durham, that there were nearly 1,600 railway stations open for the transaction of telegraph business on behalf of the Post Office. I may add that arrangements are continually being made with the railway companies to open additional stations for telegraph business, where there are the necessary facilities for transacting it, and I shall always be glad as opportunity offers to communicate with the companies in regard to any reasonable application for such facilities.

THE ZAMBESI RIVER.

SIR JOHN SWINBURNE (Staffordshire, Lichfield) asked the First Lord of the Admiralty whether he will take the necessary steps to ensure the Report on the navigability of the Zambesi River being presented to Parliament before the middle of next August.

*THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Lord G. HAMILTON, Middlesex, Ealing): As the surveying vessel, the *Stork*, which has been directed to make an mination of the mouth of the Zambesi, recently reported to afford a good entrance into the river, cannot be on the ground until the end of July, it will be impossible for any report to reach England at the time mentioned in the hon. Baronet's question. Moreover, the *Stork* will only be able to survey the bar of the river. Any survey inland as to the navigability of the Zambesi could only be undertaken by a vessel specially equipped for the purpose.

SIR J. SWINBURNE: Could not the Admiralty send orders by telegraph? The amount of water on the bar is the principal thing we want to know.

LORD G. HAMILTON: I have already said that the Surveyor has been directed to inspect the mouth of the Zambesi on his way back to Zanzibar.

DR. CAMERON (Glasgow, College): May I ask the noble Lord whether, considering the critical position of missionaries at Nyassaland, whose lives so much depend on the navigability of the Zambesi, he cannot take steps to accelerate action in the matter of the survey?

*LORD G. HAMILTON: There is very little connection between the safety of missionaries and the navigability of the Zambesi. But everything possible is being done to expedite the survey, especially of the bar. It is very doubtful whether the reports which have reached this country concerning the supposed channel are accurate.

ACQUISITION OF SUBMARINE CABLES.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury) asked the Postmaster General whether he has any objection to lay upon the Table of the House the correspondence which led to the acquisition by the Governments concerned of the submarine cables between England and the Continent, and also the correspondence and documents relating to the fixing of the rate of twopence per word for messages transmitted between England and France, Germany, Holland, and Belgium?

*MR. RAIKES: In reply to the hon. Member, I have to state that the correspondence to which he refers has been regarded as confidential not only by this country, but also by the other countries concerned; and I may add that it would be contrary to the public interest to lay it upon the Table of the House.

ANNEXATION OF THE SUWAREW ISLANDS.

DR. CAMERON (Glasgow, College) asked the First Lord of the Admiralty whether his attention has been called to a Reuter's telegram, dated Sydney, 9th May, to the effect that the commander of Her Majesty's Cruiser *Rapid* had hoisted the British flag in the Suwarew Islands, a small group in the South Pacific, to the north-west of Cook's Island; whether the statement

contained in it is correct; and, if so, whether the annexation was made by instructions from the Admiralty; and whether any Papers on the subject will be laid before Parliament?

LORD G. HAMILTON: It is the fact that the commander of Her Majesty's ship *Rapid*, acting under instructions from Her Majesty's Government, annexed the Suwarew Islands on April 22 last. With regard to the production of papers on the subject, I do not think it would be desirable to publish all the correspondence at present.

THE TRANSVAAL.

MR. MUNRO FERGUSON (Leith, Burghs) asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the report given in the telegraphic columns of the *Times* of the 8th inst. is correct, to the effect that it had been officially announced at Pretoria, in the Transvaal, "That the Imperial Government had decided with regard to the Grobler-Khama incident, that the Chief Khama was guilty of an assault, and that he is therefore adjudged to pay Grobler's widow the sum of £200 annually;"

whether he is aware that, before the occurrence of the above incident, the High Commissioner had instructed his Deputy Commissioner for Bechuanaland Protectorate in words to the following effect: that Khama was an independent chief, that Khama was quite strong enough himself to deal with refractory subordinate chiefs, and that if any Boers entered his country and took part against him, he should expel them (C. 5237, pp. 7, 8); if he will state what was the status of the Commissioner from the Transvaal who was present at the inquiry held in the Protectorate by Sir Sydney Shippard; and what further steps have been taken to settle this matter; and, if a decision has been arrived at, as announced at Pretoria, upon what is that decision based?

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Baron H. de WORMS, Liverpool, Toxteth): In answer to the first question put by the hon. Member, I have to state that the telegram is not accurate. Khama himself had nothing to do with the death of Mr. Grobler. The acts in respect of which Her Majesty's Government decided that £200 per annum should be paid as compensation to Mr. Grobler's widow, were those of Khama's native

policemen. The words in the second question are correctly quoted; but as Mr. Grobler was a Consul returning to his own country, and not a free-booter, they do not apply. In answer to the third question, the Transvaal Commissioner was engaged in making an independent inquiry for the information of his own Government. With regard to the last question, the matter is settled by the Government of the South African Republic having fully accepted, on the behalf of its citizens concerned, the compensation awarded as stated to Mrs. Grobler, with a gratuity of £250 to Mr. Lotrie, who was wounded on the same occasion. Papers on the subject are about to be presented to Parliament.

IRELAND—BOYCOTTING.

MR. W. A. MACDONALD (King's County, Ossory) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is correctly reported as having, in a speech addressed to Non-conformists at Willis's Rooms last Wednesday, used these words: "You will find, for example, that in the case of boycotting at Youghal, the boycotters, so far as I have been able to judge, have been instigated, in the first instance, by Roman Catholic priests, that the boycotters are invariably Roman Catholics, and that the boycottees are invariably Protestants;" whether this statement is to be understood as applying only to Youghal, or as extending to the whole of Ireland; whether he will lay upon the Table a statement showing the proportion of Protestants among all people boycotted; and whether he can cite an instance in any part of Ireland in which a branch of the National League has boycotted any Protestant as a Protestant, or on account of his religious belief?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The report seems accurate, except that "Roman Catholic priests" should be "a Roman Catholic priest." The statement referred only to Youghal, though no doubt priests have in other parts of Ireland frequently instigated boycotting. As regards the last paragraphs, I have to say that I not only never suggested that boycotting was on account of religious belief, but that I suggested precisely the contrary. If Protestants have been subjected to outrages instigated by the

League, it is presumably because they have had the courage to resist its tyranny.

MR. FLYNN: Are we to understand that it was a particular Roman Catholic priest who was referred to, and if that conjecture is right, has the right hon. Gentleman seen the correspondence between the Roman Catholic priest referred to and the editor of a certain newspaper in England, in which the Roman Catholic priest indignantly denies having had anything to do with boycotting, and furthermore, that the boycotting had anything to do with religion?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have not seen the correspondence to which the hon. Member refers.

MR. CLANCY (Dublin County, N.): Who is the Roman Catholic priest in question?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Canon Kellar.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): Will the right hon. Gentleman make that statement outside this House?

MR. W. MACDONALD: Will the right hon. Gentleman explain the expression referred to in the question, "You will find that the boycottees are invariably Protestants?"

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not know that it is part of my functions to explain in this House speeches which are made outside the House. What I say is that so far as the boycotting in Youghal is concerned, it is openly alleged that the persons boycotted were Protestants and the boycotters were Roman Catholics. That was the statement made by the Lord Lieutenant, and it appears to be perfectly correct.

MR. FLYNN: Is it not the fact that the majority of the persons boycotted are Catholics because they are land grabbers?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have already stated that the remarks of the Lord Lieutenant had relation to the boycotting at Youghal, and to Youghal alone.

THE SUGAR BOUNTY CONVENTION.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT (Derby): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the Government of Denmark declined to sign the Sugar Bounty Convention on the ground that the prohibitory Article

(VII.) was irreconcilable with the most favoured nation clause of the Commercial Treaties (Commercial Papers, No. 13, pp. 373, 438); whether the Government of France declared, at the close of the Conference, that their assent was absolutely "conditional on the adhesion of all sugar-producing States," and that, "unless all sugar-producing countries became parties to the Convention, the prohibitory Article VII. would be contrary to the most favoured nation clauses" (ibid. p. 431); whether these conditions having been rejected the Government of France refused to sign the Convention (ibid. pp. 437, 438); and, whether Her Majesty's Government have any reason to believe that the Governments of Denmark and of France have abandoned the views thus stated, or that those Governments are prepared to recognize the right of States who are bound by the Convention to exclude, on the score of bounty, the sugar of other States not parties to the Convention, who, under treaty or otherwise, are acting on the principle of the most favoured nation clause?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: The right hon. Gentleman has correctly quoted opinions expressed by the representatives of Denmark and France during the proceedings of the Sugar Conference, but the position of the Governments of those countries towards the Sugar Convention of August, 1888, is authoritatively defined in the declaration annexed to this Convention. Both having signed the draft Convention, and adhered in principle to it when completed, have accepted the suppression of Sugar Bounties within their territories. Denmark is not a sugar-producing country, and as France, having accepted that principle, took the lead in the Convention of August, 1888, the agreement that privileges under the most favoured nation clause should not be pleaded against prohibition, even on the part of such signatory States as might hereafter withdraw from the Convention, it does not seem reasonable to suppose that she could object on that ground to prohibition by other States, should it become necessary under the terms of the Convention.

SIR W. HARCOURT asked the hon. Gentleman whether it was a fact that the clause proposed by France commenced with a statement that it is "on

condition that all the sugar-producing countries join in the Convention"; and whether, on the motion of the President of the Conference, that condition was struck out before the clause was put into the Convention?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: Yes, Sir, that was so; but the declaration that France accepted the Convention in principle was subsequent to it.

SIR W. HARCOURT asked the hon. Gentleman whether his contention was that France was bound by a clause of which the material part was struck out?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: The right hon. Gentleman's question involves a legal point, which I should be rather imprudent to answer offhand. I do not think he would do so himself, but the fact is that the Convention, with the reservation stated, was accepted in principle.

THE SUGAR CONVENTION BILL.

SIR LYON PLAYFAIR (Leeds, S.): I wish to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, in compliance with the promise of the Government on 11th April, that before the 16th of May the Government would fix a day on which they would propose to proceed with the Second Reading of the Sugar Convention Bill, he would now state the day fixed?

*THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH, Strand): The Government regard the Bill in question as not being one of immediate and pressing importance; and, as there are other measures which require the early consideration of the House, it is not the intention of the Government to take the Second Reading of the Sugar Convention Bill before Whitsuntide. They will give ample notice of the date when the Second Reading will be fixed.

MR. GLADSTONE (Mid Lothian): In connection with the declaration of the right hon. Gentleman, that this is not a measure of urgent and pressing importance, I wish to ask him whether he has heard anything of the proceedings of the Protectionist Party in France and other countries, who are founding themselves on this Sugar Convention Bill as a means of obtaining restrictive legislation in those countries; and whether, if that is so, it is not a matter of very urgent importance that the decision of Parliament upon this Bill

should be taken at the earliest possible date?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: No, Sir; I am without the information to which the right hon. Gentleman refers; and I am of opinion that we must, and that we are entitled to, proceed with the business which is now before the House, and which is of greater and more pressing and immediate importance than that to which the right hon. Gentleman now alludes.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland): May I ask whether the attention of the Government has been called to the serious derangement in many of the industries of this country which has followed the announcement of the intention of the Government to increase the price of sugar—[*Ministerial cries of "Oh!"*] Well, I will withdraw that remark, and I will ask whether, in view of the derangement of many of the industries of the country in consequence of the announcement of the Government with regard to sugar, the right hon. Gentleman does not consider it a matter of urgent importance to state what the views of the Government are on the matter? Should the Government determine not to proceed with the measure, will the right hon. Gentleman make an immediate announcement of that fact to the House?

MR. CAUSTON (Southwark, W.): Is the House definitely to understand that the Bill is withdrawn, or only postponed as a matter of convenience as to time for taking the Second Reading?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: The hon. Gentleman is to definitely understand that which I have clearly stated to the House in my answer. I have to say, in answer to the hon. Member for Liverpool (Mr. T. P. O'Connor), that we entirely deny that there is any derangement of industry whatever at the present time.

MR. MUNDELLA (Sheffield, Brightside): I have had a letter from a former Member of the House and a large employer of labour, Mr. George Palmer of Reading, asserting that there is such a derangement of business, and, therefore, I ask the right hon. Gentleman to make an announcement as to the intentions of the Government at the earliest possible moment. Already the French Government are taking steps in the matter.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton): Is the First Lord of the Treasury aware that the price of sugar to the poor has considerably risen and is still rising, and whether that does not make the matter one of urgent and pressing importance?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: My attention has not been called to any considerable rise in the price of sugar. No doubt the price is higher, but it is not attributable to the proposed Convention. The price of sugar for delivery in the autumn is, I understand, much lower than usual.

SIR L. PLAYFAIR: As the Convention is not to be ratified until the autumn of next year, does the right hon. Gentleman mean by postponing the Bill that it is only postponed until a later period of the Session, or postponed to any time before the ratification?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I am very anxious to give all the information in my power, but it is impossible for me to say more at the present time than I have already said. The Government regard the business before the House—the Scotch measures especially—as of great importance, and they do not think they can proceed with the Sugar Convention Bill until after those measures have been disposed of.

WEIGHING CLAUSES OF THE MINES REGULATION ACT.

MR. J. SPENCER BALFOUR (Burnley) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he is now in a position to announce his decision upon the applications which have been made to him to withdraw the exemptions from the weighing clauses of the Mines Regulation Act, granted to certain collieries at Burnley?

MR. MATTHEWS: No, Sir. I am not able as yet to announce my decision upon these applications, pending an inquiry into the particular circumstances of the collieries, which I have directed the Mines Inspector to hold.

IRELAND—THE OLPHERT EVICTIONS.

MR. JAMES STUART (Shoreditch, Hoxton) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether it is the case that in the evictions to take place to-day at Glasserchoo, on the estate of Mr. Olphert in Donegal, it is intended to burn down the houses from

which the tenants are evicted; and, whether he will give instructions to the police not to assist in burning the houses?

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): Is it the case that any evictions are to take place to-day?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The statement to that effect in the first paragraph appears to be a blunder. There are no evictions to take place to-day. In answer to the remaining portion of the question, I have to say that the Constabulary Authorities report that the allegation contained in the first paragraph is, so far as they are aware, perfectly unfounded. There is no necessity to give the instructions indicated in the second paragraph, the police being quite aware of their duty in the matter.

CHIEF RECEIVER (LANDED ESTATES).

MR. T. M. HEALY asked the Solicitor General for Ireland whether the office of Chief Receiver, to which Mr. Edward Murphy has been really appointed, is a new office; under what section or sections precisely of the Landed Estates Act or Judicature Act was the appointment made; out of what fund is Mr. Murphy paid his salary, and will his salary appear upon the Estimates; and, is it the fact that a new additional Stamp Duty was imposed upon the suitors for the purpose of producing funds for payment of his salary?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (MR. MADDEN, University of Dublin): The temporary Chief Receivership to which Mr. Edward Murphy has been appointed is a new office. The appointment was made pursuant to the 9th Section of the Landed Estates Court Act and the 73rd Section of the Judicature Act. Mr. Murphy's salary will be met out of a fund created by the imposition of an additional Stamp Duty on the Receiver's Account, pursuant to the 84th Section of the Judicature Act. The salary will appear upon the Estimates.

ARREARS OF RENT.

MR. AIRD (Paddington, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if it would be possible to obtain a Return, or, failing that, an approximate estimate, of the total amount of arrears for rent owing in the several counties of Ireland?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I regret that the machinery at the disposal of the Irish Government would not admit of their obtaining such information with regard to arrears of rent as would enable them to give even the approximate estimate required; nor would it, I fear, be possible without legislation to devise any means by which the information sought by my hon. Friend could be obtained.

INJURIOUS PAINTS.

SIR JOHN LUBBOCK (University of London) asked the First Lord of the Admiralty whether, having regard to the serious injury to the health of the workmen employed in carbonate white-lead factories, he would consider whether sulphate whitelead could not, at any rate partially, be used in its place?

LORD G. HAMILTON: Trials of white paints, prepared in the manner suggested in the question, have been made in the Dockyards, but the result has not been such as to lead to their adoption in the Service. Any suitable invention, free from the defects hitherto found to exist in the compounds submitted for trial, would be readily accepted by the Admiralty.

BROMPTON CEMETERY.

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the Board of Health reported, so long ago as 1851, that Brompton Cemetery did not possess the conditions essential to a burial ground, and recommended that it should be closed; whether the Government then purchased this cemetery, and have since carried on the business of the cemetery; whether representations have reached him that the soil of the cemetery has become perfectly surcharged with human corruption, and is a serious danger to the neighbourhood; and, whether he will order that the cemetery shall be closed?

MR. MATTHEWS: I am informed that the earliest report on this cemetery is in February, 1853, when Dr. Sutherland reported that the Brompton Cemetery could afford burial space for upwards of 3,000 bodies per annum for an indefinite period without injury to the public health. The Treasury purchased the cemetery under the 46 Section of the 15 and 16 Vict., c. 85. The only com-

plaint made to the Home Office was on May 16, 1876, by a Mr. Wright, who was of opinion that the cemetery was injurious to the health of a thickly populated district. Mr. Rolland, the Burial Inspector, reported on this complaint that no interference was necessary. The present Burial Inspector reports to me that there is no ground whatever for saying that the soil of the cemetery has become surcharged with human corruption, or that it is any danger to the neighbourhood. There is still available space for common interments for at least three years, and in private and select ground for an indefinite period. There is no reason for closing the cemetery, and the present regulations are quite sufficient to prevent injury to the public health.

SIR HERCULES ROBINSON.

MR. BAUMANN (Camberwell, Peckham) asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he will undertake to lay upon the Table of the House a full and authentic report of the speech delivered by Sir Hercules Robinson at a farewell banquet in the Cape Colony?

BARON H. DE WORMS: In answer to my hon. Friend, I have to say that the Secretary of State regrets that he does not see his way to comply with his request. Sir Hercules Robinson is now on his way home, and his views will be laid before the Secretary of State and fully considered by Her Majesty's Government.

REFUSAL TO ACCEPT A VERDICT.

MR. CUNINGHAME GRAHAM asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department if his attention has been directed to the fact that Sir Peter Edlin refused to take a jury's verdict of "Not Guilty" a few days ago; and if he had any legal right to do so?

MR. MATTHEWS: I am informed by the learned Judge that, in the case to which he understands the question to refer, the defendant was charged with having unlawfully and maliciously wounded his wife. He did not refuse to accept the verdict. On the contrary, he did accept it, and the prisoner was acquitted and discharged; but before accepting it, having reason to think that the jury might have misunderstood the meaning of the

word "maliciously" in the indictment, he directed their attention to the legal meaning of that term. The Judge considered it to be his duty to guard against any possible error on this score; and he did no more than he had a right to do.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Was the statement of the learned Judge made after the verdict was returned?

*MR. MATTHEWS: I am not informed whether it was after the acquittal or not, but I presume it was after the foreman had delivered the verdict verbally. It is a matter of common practice in this country.

MR. T. M. HEALY: That is the whole point. Are we to understand that after the verdict was returned, and when the record ought to have been filled up, the learned Judge questioned the verdict of the jury?

*MR. MATTHEWS: My information is that the learned Judge simply desired to explain a point, the significance of which the jury were likely to have misunderstood.

SCOTCH LOCAL GOVERNMENT BILLS.

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, with reference to the four Bills which were simultaneously introduced as constituting together the scheme of Local Government in Scotland proposed by Her Majesty's Government, whether it is intended that, on the stage of Second Reading, the Bills should again be simultaneously discussed, or that each Bill should be taken separately; and whether the former course will be in accordance with the Rules of the House?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I hope the House will be content to refer No. 2 Bill to a Standing Committee, and in those circumstances will consider in debate Bills Nos. 1 and 2. With regard to No. 3, Parochial Boards Bill, it will be open to the House to take what course it prefers. But if it should be the pleasure of the House to give a Second Reading to that Bill immediately after the other Bill the Government will be exceeding glad. Bill No. 4, referring to Private Bill legislation, is totally distinct, and, I am afraid, must be separately considered.

MR. GLADSTONE: It is evident, from the answer of the right hon.

Gentleman, that he is in an extremely genial state of mind, and is disposed to give all the information he can. May I ask whether we are to understand that when the Scotch Bills are disposed of in their material stages it is the intention of the Government to proceed with the Sugar Bounties Bill?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I fully appreciate the good feeling of the right hon. Gentleman, and I shall be glad to inform him at the earliest possible moment what we intend to do.

DR. CAMERON: As a point of order arising out of the answer of the right hon. Gentleman, I wish to ask the Speaker whether, if the two first Local Government Bills are taken together, it is competent for the second standing on the Paper on the same day as the first to be discussed along with it. Must not the debate be restricted to the Bill regarding which the question will be put in the House?

*MR. SPEAKER: I have been privately asked my opinion upon the matter, and I hold the opinion that it would be impossible to discuss all the four Bills together, but that the Bills referring to the Poor Law and to private Bill legislation should be entirely distinct. But the first and second Bills might be discussed together, the second Bill, if I recollect rightly, dealing with supplementary provisions to Bill No. 1, the precedent of the Local Government England Bills would thus be followed.

SIR G. CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy): To what Grand Committee is it proposed to refer Bill No. 2? Any Bill dealing with law may be referred to the Grand Committee on law, but this deals with trade and commerce as well as law, and is it proposed to appoint another Grand Committee?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: If the hon. Gentleman will ask me that question when we reach the Second Reading of the Bill I shall be very glad to give him an answer.

IRELAND—THE LORD LIEUTENANCY.

MR. HOWORTH (Salford, S.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, in view of the impending resignation of the Lord Lieutenantcy of Ireland by Lord Londonderry, and the very widespread feeling that if the office is maintained it should be detached as much as possible from

Party politics, the Government will consider, before making a new appointment, the propriety of advising the Crown to depute the ceremonial duties of the Lord Lieutenant to one of the Royal Princes, and to make suitable provisions for his residence in Ireland during a portion of each year?

MR. HENEAGE (Grimsby) also asked whether, in view of the impending resignation of the Lord Lieutenant, the Government will consider the expediency of introducing a Bill to abolish the office, and to transfer the administrative duties of the Lord Lieutenant and Chief Secretary to a Secretary of State for Ireland.

*MR. W. H. SMITH: The questions of my hon. Friend the Member for Salford and of the right hon. Gentleman opposite refer to subjects of great delicacy and importance, and they will feel, I am sure, that it is impossible for me to come under any engagement with the House beyond this—that the Government will give their most anxious consideration to them.

CHRONIC DISTRESS IN TOWNS.

MR. CUNINGHAME GRAHAM asked the First Lord of the Treasury if he can promise a day for the further discussion on the Adjourned Debate on the chronic distress in towns, &c.?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I regret that it is not in my power to offer any day.

LAGOS.

MR. SYDNEY GEDGE (Stockport) asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he has received the petition of Mr. J. A. Payne, the Registrar of the Supreme Court of Lagos, and 48 other Native officials in the public service of that Colony, which was presented to the Governor of Lagos on the 13th November, 1888, and a copy of the Governor's reply, and, also, a memorial, signed by the same Native officials, presented to the Governor on the 12th of March last, with a request that it might be forwarded to the Secretary of State for the Colonies; and, whether he has taken, or proposes to take any, and what, action in the matter?

BARON H. DE WORMS: The papers referred to by my hon. Friend have been received. The Secretary of State has written to the Governors of the

West African Colonies suggesting rules with regard to leave of absence, which will probably meet the wishes of the petitioners on the point. With regard to the pay and prospects of native officials, I may say that, when vacancies occur, the Secretary of State is always glad to approve of the promotion of a native, and the claims of any natives who may be qualified to fill the higher posts in the service are always carefully considered.

AFFAIRS IN MARÉ.

MR. W. JOHNSTON (Belfast, West) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if he is aware that, since the expulsion of the Rev. John Jones from Maré, one of the Loyalty Islands, the Protestant natives are being subjected to cruel persecution; whether M. Goblet, referring to Mr. Jones' expulsion, said, "The principle of religious liberty is by no means in question;" whether any information has reached the Foreign Office that, on 14th January, 1889, a native pastor, named Waiwi, while attending a marriage feast of one of the Church members, was seized and handcuffed, and has been sentenced to cease the administration of the Lord's Supper to the people; whether Naihele, the bride, who had invited her pastor to attend the wedding, was cast into prison for holding Bible classes among the young people; and if he can give any information to the House as to the present state of affairs in Maré?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: In reply to the first, third, and fourth paragraphs of my hon. Friend's question, we have received no reports of persecution of Protestant Natives of the Loyalty Islands, nor of the occurrences alleged to have taken place. As to the second, Monsieur Goblet stated in a note dated 26th July, 1888, which is among the Papers laid before Parliament (France, No. 3, 1888, page 57) that "the principle of religious liberty is by no means in question." As to the fifth, we have no later reports of the state of affairs in Maré.

In further answer to Mr. Johnston,

*SIR J. FERGUSSON said the Government would endeavour to get what information they could.

Mr. Howorth.

PUBLIC BUSINESS.

DR. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W.): May I ask if it is the intention to take the Vivisection Debate on the Report of Supply to-night, or whether it will be taken at all this week?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I do not think it will be reasonable to ask the House to take it to-night, but I will endeavour to come to some arrangement in regard to it.

DR. FARQUHARSON: I trust that the right hon. Gentleman will not continue to put it down upon the Paper unless there is some reasonable prospect of its being reached.

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I will consider what can be done in the matter.

MR. E. ROBERTSON (Dundee): Am I to assume that the answer of the right hon. Gentleman in reference to the third Order applies also to the fourth, which also relates to the Report of Supply?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: Yes.

MR. MUNDELLA: May I ask the President of the Board of Trade whether, having regard to the technical character of the Tonnage Bill, and the important interests involved in it, he will consider the advisability of referring it to the Grand Committee on Trade?

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Sir M. HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W): I think the suggestion of the hon. Gentleman is a very good one, and I shall be happy to consider it. My own view is that it is desirable.

SIR L. PLAYFAIR: Will the Report on the Sugar Trade be placed on the Table before the Second Reading of the Sugar Convention Bill is taken?

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: I hope to present that Report in a very few days.

IRELAND—TREATMENT OF MR. J. O'CONNOR.

MR. FLYNN: I wish to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant whether he has received any information in corroboration of the statement in the newspapers that my hon. Friend the Member for South Tipperary (Mr. J. O'Connor) is lying upon a plank bed although suffering from acute rheumatism?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: No; I have had no such information.

MR. FLYNN: I will repeat the question to-morrow.

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON LABOUR.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: I desire a question with reference to the invitation of the Swiss Confederation for an International Conference with regard to the regulation of factory labour. I see that three European Governments—Belgium, Holland, and Italy—have given in their adhesion. Have Her Majesty's Government given any answer to the invitation?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: No answer has yet been given to the invitation addressed by the President of the Swiss Confederation to Her Majesty's Government; but the subject is receiving the very careful consideration of the Government. Communications are in progress, and we hope to be able to send an answer in the course of a very few days.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: Can the right hon. Gentleman hold out any hope that the answer will be known to the House before the discussion of the Vote for the Foreign Office?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I cannot say whether that will be the case or not, but the Government will have no hesitation in submitting their decision to the House.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: Would the right hon. Gentleman expedite the communication to the House, because, if it were adverse, it would be necessary to discuss the conduct of the Government in refusing.

*MR. W. H. SMITH: There will be no delay in communicating the decision to the House.

MOTION.

—o—

BOARD OF AGRICULTURE BILL.

On Motion of Mr. William Henry Smith, Bill for establishing a Board of Agriculture for Great Britain, ordered to be brought in by Mr. William Henry Smith, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Viscount Lewisham.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 221.]

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

CUSTOMS AND INLAND REVENUE
BILL (No 215).

Order for Second Reading, read.

Motion made, and Question proposed.
"That the Bill be now read a second time."

Mr. PICTON (Leicester), in moving "That this House is unwilling to sanction a Bill which involves the continuance for another year of the present duty on tea," said: The right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury has expressed a hope and an expectation that this stage of the Customs and Inland Revenue Bill will be a very brief one, and that the discussion of the provisions of the measure will be deferred until the Committee stage is reached. Now, I venture to think that no stage of the Bill would be as appropriate for the consideration of my Motion as the present one, because if the Motion should be carried it would be absolutely necessary to re-construct the taxation of the year upon wholly different principles. I therefore think I am justified in asking the House kindly to listen to me shortly before we proceed to the later stages of the Bill. In bringing the Motion forward again this year I am quite prepared to be charged with importunacy; but my experience of the House of Commons has impressed me deeply with the wisdom contained in the well-known parable of the unjust Judge. Not that I would charge this House with injustice; but I think that all suitors to this House would do well to follow the example of the poor widow who, by her importunity, wearied the Judge, and in the end got her request. I feel obliged to take this course; it is widows and poor women who constitute by far the larger number of clients, in whose behalf I am about to make this appeal. It is of no use to tell me that the question does not excite any clamour out of doors. Wise legislators would prefer to render clamour unnecessary on a question like this rather than wait until the public mind is excited. I am afraid that the Chancellor of the Exchequer, with all his well-known financial skill, has been during his tenure of office, the sport of popular passion. Instead of pushing forward to higher

applications those principles of just taxation, which he learnt from even a greater master than himself, he has been watching from the serene height of his official position the toiling world of business and labouring men below, in order that like a bird of prey he might suddenly pounce down upon the weak and unwary. In the first place he tried the Cart and Wheel Tax, but was speedily frightened off; he then seized upon pleasure horses and was thrown off again. This year he has swooped down upon the thrifty hoarders of personalty in order to persecute them, for the benefit of the sacred landed interest. I think the right hon. Gentleman would do better if he were to give up this vain attempt to balance one selfish interest against another, and to seek out rather what is safe and just for the whole community. I can find no better justification for my Motion than the words of the right hon. Gentleman himself in the speech in which he introduced his Budget. He said:

"It is our duty to have a special sympathy for the struggling professional or trading class—for the men with incomes from £300 to £700 a year, whose situation requires them to spend all, or nearly all, they earn, leaving no margin, or a very small margin, beyond their expenditure."

Sir, we are asked to show sympathy for certain classes of income taxpayers, but if we are called upon to deal tenderly with those having incomes of from £300 to £700, because they have to spend all, or nearly all that they earn, leaving no margin, or scarcely any margin, still more tenderly ought we to deal with those who, with all the agony of struggling, cannot make both ends meet, and who have to spend more than they earn, and if they have any margin at all have it on the wrong side. It is to the case of these poor people that I am calling attention, and I earnestly hope that I shall not plead in vain. The right hon. Gentleman, in the very next sentence after that which I have quoted, said that he would look to the surplus which could be put by rather than to the resources which could not be diminished without imposing sacrifices out of proportion to the sacrifices made by other Members of the community, or to use another phrase, he said he would lay special weight upon accumulations. Now, Sir, it is precisely because the Tea Duty is flagrantly at variance with those

principles laid down by the Chancellor of the Exchequer that I am attacking it now. I shall prove that the Tea Duty is a plunder of poverty and distress. Tea has become a necessary of life; it is a special consolation to the poor and heavy laden when they are overdone by daily toil. The tired seamstress, the exhausted washerwoman, the poor under-paid teacher all find refreshment in their cup of tea, and you will often hear a hard-working woman declare at the end of the day that she cannot keep on unless she has a cup of tea. Now, the tax upon tea amounts to sixpence for every pound consumed by these patient, suffering, laborious people. And, again, I contend it is a case of plundering poverty and distress. Sir, if I could gather into one picture the thousands of garrets in this great Metropolis, and in other large cities and towns which are the haunts of ill-paid and suffering women; if we could only realize the temptations ever pressing upon them to partake of drinks which bring madness and dishonour in their train, I do not think I should plead in vain when I urge that this kind of refreshment should be lightened of the tax, and should be made as cheap as possible. For without any deviation whatever from the strictest lines of political economy, by taking off this sixpenny tax upon tea, we could actually add about a week's wages to many of the most poorly paid labourers in our country. This is a consideration which the House ought not lightly to disregard. We are asked to mulct these poor creatures in a week's or half a week's wages in order to build ironclads, and to provide soldiers, gunpowder, and weapons of destruction. Why, if that proposal were made now for the first time in so many words to this House, the proposal would be scouted, and yet that is what we are actually doing by enforcing this tax upon tea. In many poor houses tea is drunk as often as four times a day. I know there are very few hon. Members in this House who drink it so often, but that is simply because they have a sufficiency of beef and mutton and of other generous sustenance, and they can get ample stimulants for the brain without drinking tea. But people who have to live on bread and herring for breakfast, bread and bacon

for dinner, and bread and dripping for tea or supper, cannot be so satisfied, and need some stimulant, and if they do not have tea they must partake of some other drink which is most dangerous for them. Prudence and industry induce these people to drink tea instead of beer. Two of the reasons, then, upon which I ask the House to abolish this tax upon tea are that it is drunk by those who are in abject poverty, and that it is partaken of for reasons of self-control, prudence, and industry. Are either of these fit qualities for taxation? Surely a just Government would do all it possibly could to encourage properties like this. Now, Sir, I wish to lay before the House some few considerations to show how very disproportionate this tax is, which has to be borne by the ranks of labour. I say the ranks of labour, because I prefer using that phrase to saying working classes, because, in my opinion, the ranks of labour do not constitute a class at all; they form the vast majority of the population. Professor Leoni Levi, in his book on "The Wages and Earnings of the Working Classes," published, I believe, in 1885, holds that those who work for wages are two out of three in the population; but then he separates from these workers for wages the lower middle class, whom he treats as having incomes ranging from £100 to £110 per year. Now, Sir, for my purpose in regard to the tea-tax, I contend that the lower middle class must be reckoned in the ranks of labour, because an income of £100 or £110 does not raise them beyond the needs of this class. Therefore if I add the lower middle class to Professor Leoni Levi's workers for wages, I find that altogether they constitute five-sixths of the whole proportion of the country. The question I am urging upon the attention of the House is whether the sixpence a pound they pay for tea is a fair share of taxation, and whether it presses fairly or unfairly upon them. Now, I need not ask whether they ought to pay in general to the sustenance of national expenditure, because my point is that they pay in a much greater proportion than those who are more comfortably off. In the first place, they drink a great deal more tea, and consequently they have to pay a greater share of this taxation. In the next place, I have to urge that the

taxation is much heavier in the lower qualities of tea, in proportion to the charge on the higher qualities, because it is sixpence a pound all round. And whereas, while on the tea costing fourpence half-penny or fivepence in bond, the tax amounts to more than 100 per cent on the value, in the case of tea costing two shillings and sixpence per pound it is only 20 or 25 per cent. Therefore at least seven-eighths of the tax upon tea falls upon the shoulders of the poor. It may be said that they do not drink it as strong as the rich people do, but then they cannot afford to do so; but that makes my case all the stronger. They want tea as a gentle stimulus, but because of the tax they are obliged to drink it so weak that it does not do them much good. Therefore I contend they are robbed of their just dues by a tax which presses, I believe, iniquitously upon them. I take it that the tax upon beer amounts to about two-pence per gallon, or about a farthing per pint. Well now, I find that according to one calculation made by the officials in the Tea Room in this House, sixteen pints can be made from one pound of tea, and that gives you a tax of a little less than a halfpenny per pint. But this is strong tea, and I have consulted an authority who takes an opposite extreme, and says it is possible to make 42 pints out of a pound of tea. If you take the extreme estimate, you find that even then the taxation upon tea amounts to half-a-farthing per pint, so that while everyone who drinks a pint of beer has to pay one farthing to the tax gatherer, the drinker of this weak tea has to pay half-a-farthing for the privilege of drinking a pint of that. Sir, I do not think that that is a proper proportion, and I appeal to the friends of temperance in this House whether such a tax should be imposed upon tea. Take the consumption of a poor family, consisting of a father, mother, and three children, whose wages come unteddily to 20 or 25 shillings per week. As a general rule they consume half a pound of tea per week, though I know that there are some families which have to be content with less. I have come into contact, for instance, with a labourer earning 11 shillings per week, who had to be content with a quarter of a pound of tea per week, until after his children had

left home. Then, although he was earning just the same wages, he and his wife increased their quantity; thus showing that before they had had to stint themselves of what was necessary for their comfort. Remember, the consumption of half a pound of tea per week represents 13 shillings a year, paid in taxes, which is more than many agricultural labourers earn in one week. Is it to be wondered at, Sir, that a revenue obtained from such a source as this should prove inelastic? Last year the Chancellor of the Exchequer informed us that the consumption of tea just kept pace with the population; this year we are informed that the proceeds from the tea tax were disappointing, the increase had only been one-third per cent, whilst the population had increased at the rate of one per cent. I know that the right hon. Gentleman explained that this was mainly attributable to the increased use of Indian tea. But here, Sir, I find a very strong argument on my side, because it is precisely the discouragement imposed by this tax on a growing trade with India which forms one of the strongest points against the duty. It is true that the use of Indian tea has increased considerably at the expense of Chinese tea, and experience shows that if only you abolish the tea duty the trade in Indian tea would increase by leaps and bounds, to the great benefit not only of our poor population at home, but of our vast population in India—in that great dependency of which we are never weary of boasting, as one of the brightest and most splendid jewels in the British Crown. Surely we ought not to discourage a profitable and growing industry, like the tea trade in India, by enforcing this duty of sixpence per pound. Now, Sir, I should like to sum up my arguments in opposition to this tax. In the first place, I have shown that it is borne to the extent of seven-eighths by the ranks of labour. I have shown that it presses particularly on misery and suffering; that it is a tax on temperance, and that it bears an improper proportion to the taxation on beer. It takes an appreciable part out of the income of the worker; it discourages the consumption of tea, and finally, it is unfair in its operation to our great dependency of India. But, Sir, I cannot sit down without alluding to some of the objections which are sure to be made

against my proposal. The Chancellor of the Exchequer regretted last year very much that there were so few objects upon which he could lay his hands for taxation; but remembering the beneficent course of financial reform by which the great Leader on this side of the House had thrown so widely open our trade, and had removed taxation from all necessities of life with the single exception of tea, the right hon. Gentleman acknowledged the justice of the doctrine that taxation should be upon accumulations and not upon matters of consumption. I suppose I shall be told again that there are very few subjects possible for taxation, and that it is inexpedient to lessen them still further. I only wish the right hon. Gentleman, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, would have the courage of his opinions expressed in his recent speech, and that he would look forward to the true ideal of taxation, which I take to be this, that with a few exceptions for certain luxuries, all Imperial taxation ought to be drawn from realized property, whether in land or funds. I would not go so far as Henry George, who advocates one single tax — a tax only on land, but I do think the land might yield a great deal more than it does at present. I know when such a proposal is made, there is a great outcry from hon. Members opposite about the poor landed interest. That interest is always complaining. It reminds me of the hypochondriac, who thinks that he has all the diseases under the sun, when in fact, he only wants a little fresh air and exercise. And so it is with land. If you get rid of all the settlements, entails, mortgages, and game laws which keep it down, it would once more flourish, and it would be able to bear much more taxation. I know that we are told that it cannot bear more because it yields only $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent to investors, but it must not be forgotten that land owners or investors, in land are quite willing to consider that the prestige that goes with the possession of land, and the political influence which attaches to it are equal to another $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. Sir, if the land were treated on more commercial principles than it is now, it would be capable of yielding very much more to the exchequer. I contend, however, whatever may be the proportion that should

be raised from land, we ought to get a far larger part of our taxation from realized property, whether personal or real, from accumulations in fact. We are told that there are ten thousand millions of accumulations in this country, and if we charged these with only a quarter per cent, we should get twenty-five millions of income. There I suggest is a resource for future Chancellors of Exchequer. If they will only put the tax on these accumulations, they will be able to abolish income tax, and also abandon these imposts on the necessities of the poor. The Chancellor of the Exchequer has more than once indicated that he is strongly at variance with the doctrine that the scanty incomes of the labourer should be altogether free from taxation. I do not think that that is so dreadful a thing at all in a wealthy nation like this, and I think where the labourers are nearly, if not all, quite on the borders of pauperism, they have claims upon our consideration, which have not always been attended to. As regards these accumulations, we ought to see how they have been gathered together. It is because the landowners have been living in a prosperous country, and a country to a considerable extent depending for its prosperity on the energy and industry of its labourers that the value of the land belonging to many of the proprietors has enormously increased. I know noble Lords who possess land in the neighbourhood of great towns. Their ancestors got it in times long gone by for an old song, and now it is worth £20 or £30 the square yard, and that without the slightest effort on their part. They never had anything to do with the trade of the community that made their land so valuable, and have never done a stroke of commercial work in their lives. Whilst they neither toiled nor span, industries have been growing up, and the value of their property has increased in consequence. I am not in favour of dividing the goods of the rich amongst the poor, but I am in favour of showing a generous consideration for the poor because they have not sufficiently shared in the prosperity to which they have so largely contributed. Again, under the present system of wages, labour does not share as it ought, in the profits of industrial enterprise. Wages are, as everyone knows, fixed

by the standard of the necessary cost of living. If the standard rises, wages must rise or work must stop. If the standard falls wages must fall. There are companies which distribute dividends of 16, 20, and even 25 per cent, and they are not ashamed to pay 9s. and 10s. a week to their poor female workers. I do not say for a moment that they ought to make paupers of these people, but I do say that out of the 16 or 20 per cent, some 5 or 7 per cent might very well be divided amongst the poor workers at the end of the year, and then they would have a share in the profits. It is because they have not got that at the present time that I think they should be generously considered in the matter of taxation, and that it is very cruel, indeed, to ask them to pay 6d. a pound on their tea. I may be told that this savours of socialism. Well, Sir, I shall not be at all terrified by that observation. I am justified in being comparatively callous to it, for the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby (Sir W. Harcourt) said with much point a short time ago, in public, "We are all socialists now." I quite understand and I do not wish to misinterpret that remark. There is a sense in which it is perfectly true. It is only by socialism, in the best sense, which I am sure is what the right hon. Gentleman had in his mind, that we can discourage communism, which would eat the heart out of the community. It is only by putting all our common interests upon a common basis, and causing the abundance of the rich to make good the want of the poor, in our public affairs, that we can ease the load of the poor in life, and show them something better than the vicious communism which is often preached to them. Being recently in Scotland upon a Royal Commission I heard much there about "the common good." I had not heard the phrase used in the same sense in our English towns. In Scotland they seemed to speak of corporate property as "common good." It is an admirable phrase. I wish we had not only the phrase, but the principle amongst us. Surely a fair share of the accumulations of which I have been speaking are a debt owing to the community, which has not had its legitimate proportion of them. I am afraid I can scarcely hope for a majority upon this question, but I

feel impelled to go to a Division upon my Motion. I invite all those hon. Members who really believe in the doctrines preached by the Chancellor of the Exchequer with regard to the incidence of taxation upon surplus, I invite all who think threepence a week too much to take in taxes on tea out of the wages of a poor family, I invite all friends of temperance who do not think it fair that beer and tea should be taxed almost alike, or much too nearly alike, I invite all genuine Radicals, and I invite also all those prudent Conservatives who agree with me that a kindly socialism is the best preventative of a fierce and destructive communism to vote with me. I beg to move the Resolution of which I have given notice.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "this House is unwilling to sanction a Bill which involves the continuance for another year of the present Duty on Tea"—(*Mr. Picton*),

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Sir W. Lawson (Cumberland, Cocker-mouth) formally seconded the Motion.

*MR. GEDGE (Stockport): I think, Sir, it would have been kinder of the hon. Member, who has ingeniously taken us round the whole range of political economy and social economy and taxation in general, if he had given us a little hint of it in his Amendment so that we might have been prepared to reply to him. I do not, however, intend to follow him over all the ground he has covered, I wish simply to ask the House to consider whether this tax is or is not a proper tax to be levied, having regard to the fact that it produces four and a half millions sterling a year, collected with very little expense or friction. I think we shall nearly all agree that the working man who earns weekly wages should pay some taxes. As, unfortunately, it is necessary to raise money by taxes every year in order to keep the machinery of Government in motion, I think everybody ought to contribute his share towards the total amount wanted. As every man enjoys the benefits of living under a properly organized Govern-

ment, every man ought to pay something towards the cost; and especially now that everybody possesses the voting power. Upon the voting body, of whom the poor form a large proportion, depends the decision of many great questions, such as that of war and of peace, in which questions of expenditure are largely involved. I do not think it would be for the advantage of the country if large classes of the people escaped taxation altogether; and how are you to get at the wage-earning classes unless you tax some article of general consumption? They certainly do not pay income tax or house tax, and it rarely happens that they pay the Death Duties. There is nothing they pay taxes on except the tax on the tobacco they smoke, the tax on beer and the tax on tea. I would point out that the poor families who are spoken of as being severely handled if they have to pay as much as 13s. a-year upon their tea, their wages being assumed to be the same sum per week, because the tax is a 52nd part of their income, do not in some cases confine themselves to the consumption of tea, but the father and mother generally take beer also and the father smokes tobacco. If a man smokes an ounce and a-half of tobacco a-week he will pay 4d. upon that, and he and his wife will perhaps have to pay 3½d. a-week in taxation upon their beer. It must also be remembered that the man who pays an income tax of 6d. in the £, pays in that tax alone a 40th of his income, and he also pays the Tea Duty as well as the House Duty, and various other taxes which the poor man escapes. While we should be very glad to see the burden of the Tea Duty lightened if it could be, it does not seem to us to be a very large amount to pay. The general objection to indirect taxation upon articles of consumption like bread is that the poorer a man is the greater the proportion of his money that goes in taxation upon the articles taxed. I think, however, with regard to tea, that it is drunk in families very much in proportion to the income. In many families they use half a pound of tea per head a week. We know the fashion of tea-drinking now—tea in bed in the morning, tea at breakfast, tea at four o'clock, and tea after dinner. The result is that the rich man pays in proportion far more of the Tea Duty than

the poor man. If this tax were abolished, as the hon. Member proposes, what taxes would the teetotal working man pay? I do not wish to tax teetotalism, but it seems to me that the teetotaler gets the benefit of the system of Government equally with the man who drinks beer, and I do not see why he should pay nothing whatever. His teetotalism and his thrift enable him to bear the burden of taxation better than others of his own class. I think it is probable that before long the teetotalers will not smoke any more than they drink now. I know the Salvation Army, which is having great popularity amongst the masses and is doing a great deal of good bars tobacco as well as beer and endeavours to get its young people to take the pledge against both. It seems to me that the teetotaler ought to pay some tax, and if you take off the tea duty he will pay none. There are difficulties in the way of making it an *ad valorem* tax, and the result is a certain inequality. There are, however, inequalities in all things. The teetotaler ought to pay some tax, and therefore I think this tax ought not to be abolished.

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN, St. George's, Hanover Square): I do not complain of the hon. Member's introduction of this subject, which he also brought forward last year. Evidently he has the matter very strongly at heart, and he may be right in indulging in importunity in bringing it forward. I am not, however, so satisfied with the somewhat grotesque description he gave of the financial policy I have pursued. I must say I think he exaggerated and perverted the history of the last three Budgets in a somewhat extraordinary fashion, and I hope he will excuse me if I do not follow him in that portion of his speech. I object to some of the phrases he used because I think they are likely to do harm. When he speaks of taxation which is imposed for the purpose of the government of the country as plunder, he uses a phrase which is unnecessarily strong and which is a dangerous phrase to employ. I may point out that there has been no additional taxation of tea for any purpose whatever. The duty has remained at its present level since 1866. If the working classes pay that duty,

they pay it, as my hon. Friend (Mr. Gedge) has justly pointed out, for the whole machinery of government under which they live, and for the maintenance of the institutions which they enjoy. I certainly hold that every person should contribute something towards taxation. It is quite competent for the hon. Member to contend that some one class pays more than its proportion. I think, however, the hon. Member goes too far when he pleads that the working classes ought to make no contribution whatever to taxation. He indulges in a fallacy which is very frequently advanced when he argues his whole point on the basis of the very poorest class. All taxation bears with very great severity on the poorest people. The hon. Member referred to the poorest class, to whom, no doubt, the Tea Duty is a most important item, but if his resolution were adopted, he would bring about a result which would not be in accordance with the wish of many of those who belong to his Party—namely, that a large class of persons would contribute nothing whatever to the revenue. The hon. Member considers that we ought to relinquish altogether the £4,500,000 or £5,000,000 sterling we derive from this tax, and he only throws out one suggestion to meet the financial difficulty that would thus be created—namely, that we should put a tax upon accumulations. The hon. Member lays hold of a phrase of mine to the effect that we should look to accumulations rather than to profits. I think it is scarcely doing me justice to suggest that as a general proposition on which I should be glad to rest the whole taxation of the country. He takes a rather fantastic return of the aggregate accumulations of the country, and upon that he suggests that we should raise a duty of 1 per cent. This proposition means that if you have a person possessed of £10,000, and receiving £300 a year income from it, you are to take £100 from that £300 every year.

*MR. PICTON: I think the right hon. Gentleman will do me the justice to remember that I did not propose that. I said $\frac{1}{4}$ per cent.

MR. GOSCHEN: Then the income tax the hon. Member would propose upon the £300 a year would amount to £25, which is rather a heavy annual tax to put upon such an income. I really think the hon. Member has not thought

out his proposition in this respect; nor has he examined the Return in detail, or he would have seen that, in order to make up the £8,000,000,000 he mentioned, £300,000,000 are put down as belonging to people who are so poor that they do not pay income tax at all. Upon that group of persons the hon. Member would levy this enormous tax. Again, farming stock and implements of husbandry are included in the Return. I need not labour the point, however, because I think it would be long before any responsible statesman would think of imposing such a tax. There is, no doubt, a tax of the kind in the United States, but I have read of the fraud and perjury to which it leads, and I know statesmen in America speak of it with sorrow and regret. The hon. Member said he thought from the lessons I have derived from the finance of my right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. Gladstone) I might have conceived it to be my duty to repeal this tax; but the House will remember that the tax has stood where it now stands since 1866, that in the interval we have seen the income tax reduced from 6d. to 5d., and from 5d. to 4d., and from 4d. to 3d. when the right hon. Gentleman was in office, and that nevertheless the Tea Duty has not been touched. It must also be remembered that the price of tea has fallen to such an extent that less is paid for tea now than would have been paid if there had been no duty at all twenty years ago. We are glad to think that the falling off in the price of this article has contributed so much to the comfort of the poor. I do not maintain that the duty must always remain at 6d. I do not think it is a very light tax. But what the hon. Member proposes is that we should impose other taxation now in order to replace the $4\frac{1}{2}$ millions sterling we should lose by taking off of this duty. I do not think there are many Members of the House who would be willing to face that. In a year when there is a large surplus to dispose of, tea would have a good claim to some consideration, but I maintain that it would be a deplorable error of judgment to abolish the Tea Duty altogether and thereby to establish the principle that a large proportion of the population need never pay any taxes at all. I think the House would be scarcely

prepared to create such a gap in the Revenue of the country as would be created by the abolition of the Tea Duty.

SIR W. HARCOURT (Derby): I feel sympathy with a great deal that has been said by the hon. Member for Leicester (Mr. Picton), and certainly the duty on tea cannot be regarded as a light duty. Comparing the duty now with the cost price of tea, it is a much heavier duty than it was some years ago. *Pro rata* with the value of the commodity, the duty is a high one. We may congratulate ourselves, at all events, if the Tea Duty is to remain, that it seems probable, from what we have heard this evening, that the measure for raising the price of sugar is likely to be indefinitely postponed, and the hon. Member for Leicester has that consolation, though he may be unable to enforce his views as to the Tea Duty. We have voted a large sum for public expenditure, and we must find the money for this expenditure. It must be remembered that if the Tea Duty is not to be removed, other taxes have to be imposed, and this is due to that enormous and, in my opinion, preposterous expenditure to which we are committed. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, in a speech made in the country some months ago, maintained that he had a good surplus, and that everything seemed favourable to his Budget, but then there were demands made upon him that ruined his Budget. Well, they have ruined his Budget. In a time which we may call, as compared with recent years, one of public prosperity, the Chancellor of the Exchequer with a large surplus has to come forward and make proposals for increased taxation. What is the reason of this? It was given by an authority that will be accepted by hon. Gentlemen opposite, Lord Beaconsfield many years ago, when he, in a lucid interval—I mean not to Lord Beaconsfield, but to the Party—denounced bloated armaments, and said, “expenditure must depend on policy.” There never was a time that afforded a more conspicuous instance of the truth of this. What is the situation? The hon. Member for Leicester might very fairly have made a demand for the reduction of the Tea Duty. I think a very fair and very proper demand it would have been. He would have said to the

Chancellor of the Exchequer, “you have got a surplus which according to all rules of finance has hitherto been distributed among the different classes of the community;” and the reduction of the Tea Duty would have been a very fair contribution towards the relief of the taxation of the most numerous class in this country. Well what is the situation? The additions you have made in this one financial year to the expenditure of the country would have almost enabled you to repeal the Tea Duty altogether. I think it is not very far short of £4,000,000 you have added to the expenditure of the country this year, and, mind you, that addition has been made in face of the declaration of every Member of the Government last year that expenditure at that time (last year) was amply sufficient for the necessities of the country; therefore, this is a new discovery made by the Government themselves in 12 months that it is indispensable to make this enormous addition to the expenditure of the country. If you go into a policy of this kind you cannot decrease the Tea Duty, and, indeed, you have to increase taxation not only in the Death Duties and the Beer Duty, but you must go on adding to every source and commodity for taxation. There was a very alarming and ominous phrase in the statement of the Chancellor of the Exchequer that “he wished he had more sources of taxation.” So, I suppose, in the future we must look to have duties raised from other commodities and other sources of taxation. I thought this one of the most alarming sentiments I ever heard from a Chancellor of the Exchequer in this House. It seems we are to revise the financial policy of many years, which has been so beneficial to the people of this country, not in regard to the Sugar Duty only, but in the principles of general taxation. The great object of that policy was in 1841, according to Sir Robert Peel, to diminish the taxed articles in use among the people of this country, and after the lapse of all these years since 1841 we have, I think, for the first time a Chancellor of the Exchequer standing up in the House of Commons holding out a prospect of imposing taxation on other and more numerous articles than those taxed hitherto. That is

not, I think, a pleasant prospect; but it is the inevitable consequence of the policy you are pursuing. There are missionaries and apostles of extravagance going about the country. As I read this morning, there is a political partizan adjutant-general making a violent Party speech, a thing totally unheard of in our Army organization before. I have never heard of anybody in the position of adjutant-general holding language and behaving in the manner pursued by the present adjutant-general. All this is intended to inflame expenditure; and if you have enormous expenditure you must have increased taxation. I see the hon. Baronet the Member for Sussex (Sir W. Barttelot) opposite. He does not like, as he said, some of the proposals made, though I have no doubt he sympathises in the objects which make that taxation necessary; but everybody will have to suffer under a policy of this kind, and the fair expectation which the working classes might have had of relief from taxation is gone. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had a surplus to begin with. I am speaking of the surplus of the coming year, upon which every Chancellor of the Exchequer is to be congratulated. I never congratulate a Chancellor of the Exchequer on what is called a realized surplus, because a realized surplus is merely the result of incorrect Estimates. The theory of the finance of this country is that each year you should only ask from the people as much as is wanted for the year with a small and reasonable margin that you may not be on the wrong side at the end of the year. There should be a margin of from £200,000 to £300,000. I think that the Chancellor of the Exchequer allows a margin of something under £300,000. If at the end of the year you find yourselves with one, two, or three millions more than you estimated, that is because you placed the produce of the year's revenue too low and the expenditure too high. You can manufacture a surplus to any extent by that process, but if your Estimates are reasonably correct you ought never to exceed, say half a million surplus. I find last year, and I have pointed it out—not blaming the Chancellor of the Exchequer particularly, for it is an established habit—that the Estimate of stamps was a great deal too low. This

year we find the revenue from stamps exceeding the Estimate by nearly half a million, and there is the same thing with the income tax—an excess of half a million or thereabouts.

*MR. GOSCHEN: On enormous sums.

SIR W. HARCOURT: Yes, but you are habitually dealing with these sums. Great credit is due to the permanent officials for making as close an Estimate as they can, but to be out by half a million under one head is more than ought to be reasonably expected. But what is the consequence? You levy on the year, it may be, a million or more more than you want, and then you say what a fine surplus; but in my opinion it is not a sound system, and a departure from the principle that you should only ask in the year for what is wanted in the year. The Chancellor of the Exchequer parted with two millions, I thought unwisely, appropriated for the reduction of the Debt, but by this system of miscalculated Estimates we get the money back again, and so, like Penelope, he does at one time what he undoes at another. While he makes his Estimate on the assumption that the two millions are no longer to be appropriated to the Debt, he raises the money all the same through the system of incorrect Estimates, and it goes to the liquidation of the Debt. So far as it results in this manner I am glad, but surely this is not the proper way in which it should be done. It ought to be done by correct Estimates of revenue and expenditure. I only say this by way of parenthesis, because I am speaking of the Budget proposals for the coming year. The Chancellor of the Exchequer has to deal with the liquidation of the debt; he cannot hope always to recover in the same manner the two millions he has given away. But we find in the National Debt Bill he proposes to make away with a third million, practically making three millions, that is, what he has gained from the reduction of the interests on the Debt. But for the Bill as the law stands this million would have gone to the reduction of the Debt, as, of course, that would have constituted part of the Sinking Fund going to the reduction of the Debt. The result of the financial arrangement is that he practically diverts from the Fund for the reduction of the Debt three millions, which by law is appropriated

to that purpose. That, I think, cannot be denied.

MR. GOSCHEN: The right hon. Gentleman will surely see that only two millions are diverted, the other million comes out of interest.

SIR W. HARCOURT: It is really only a matter of phraseology. In the National Debt Bill, the Chancellor of the Exchequer says that the permanent charge for the reduction of the Debt shall be £25,000,000 instead of £26,000,000, and that "25" shall be substituted for "26" in Section 1 of the Sinking Fund Act.

MR. GOSCHEN: The right hon. Gentleman will excuse me interrupting, but I have no opportunity of reply. He states that the Sinking Fund is £26,000,000, but that is a fallacy. £26,000,000 is not the Sinking Fund, it includes both the Sinking Fund and the interest. It is unfair, I think, to make the statement that a million is withdrawn from the payment of the Debt, while clearly that million comes from the saving in interest.

SIR W. HARCOURT: It really is only a question of phrasing. The Chancellor of the Exchequer will admit that if he had not proposed a special Act that million would have gone to the reduction of the Debt. I do not care how you put it, that is the effect. I will describe it in any form of words you may prefer. It is necessary to legislate to prevent the money going as it would have gone to the liquidation of the Debt. I only draw attention to this to show what is the operation of this inflated expenditure on the financial condition and taxation of the country. I show, first, that you have by your policy diverted this amount from the Sinking Fund. I give you credit, of course, for having diminished the interest on the Debt. I do not dispute that for a moment. One of the beneficial consequences of that reduction ought to have been either lowering of taxation or redemption of more debt. Instead of that, however, three millions a year, which would otherwise have diminished the Debt, have not gone to the benefit of the taxpayer. On the contrary, increased taxation in the form of Death Duties and beer tax is being levied. I wish to be fair to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, so I mention, of course, that besides

increased expenditure, there has been contribution to local taxation; but this does not alter the fact that you had this year a good surplus, from which we ought to have expected relief from taxation, and certainly no diversion from the fund for the reduction of debt which had accrued from the conversion of interest. Instead of that you are obliged to call on the House for additional taxation, and that is simply accounted for by the enormous increase made in the expenditure of the country. With respect to the Amendment of the hon. Member for Leicester, I can only say that I have voted, and shall on every occasion vote, against the additional taxation. But as the money has to be found, I could not vote for striking off four or four and a half millions of taxation on this occasion, and can, therefore, not vote with my hon. Friend, as I am not prepared to suggest an alternative tax. Nor do I think that this is a fitting opportunity for raising those larger questions with respect to the incidence of taxation which my hon. Friend has raised. They are most important questions, such as are going to command the keenest interest in the future. There is no doubt the charges that have been made in the electoral conditions of this country, the greater voice given to the humbler classes of the community will inevitably lead to that voice being heard on the subject of relative taxation. It is right that should be so; it is one of the objects with which the electoral extension was made. I hope these matters will be approached in a reasonable and prudent spirit. I have never seen any indication myself on the part of any great number of the people of dealing with the subject in other than a reasonable manner. I have no hesitation myself in expressing the opinion that realized property does not bear a fair share of taxation. I believe that, without laying down any proposition that there should be any class of the community exempt from contribution to the public burden. I do not contend that at all; but I do say, so far as I have considered the subject, that I think realized property ought to bear a larger share than it does at present. I will not go further into this question now; it is one that will have to be carefully considered. The people of this country will make

themselves heard on the question, and I expect that they will demand that the expenditure on armaments shall be less extravagant than it is at present. The Government will hereafter have to reconsider our system of taxation, and a good deal will have to be done in the direction indicated by the hon. Member for Leicester so as to give relief to all classes of taxpayers in the country.

*MR. HALLEY STEWART (Lincolnshire, Spalding): The Chancellor of the Exchequer has referred to the extreme cases dealt with by the mover of the Resolution as if they formed the main subject matter of the Motion of my hon. Friend (Mr. Picton). My hon. Friend pleaded for those whose incomes range from 20s. to 25s. a week, but in Lincolnshire and among my constituents the average wage of the agricultural labourer is only 12s. a week, and I see from the Registrar General's Report that there are other counties where the average is only 9s. a week. On incomes such as these hon. Members can hardly imagine what the pressure of a 6d. tea tax is. There has been a fall in the price of tea, but we are not indebted to the Government for that, and the incidence of the duty remains the same. Passing through a town in Lincolnshire last week, I saw tea advertized at a shilling a pound, and it was sold by the Mayor of the borough. It is certain that that tea did not cost him more than 4d. a pound, and every pound had to bear 6d. duty. Tea is quoted in the market at 4d. a pound. The House will realize the enormous inequality of the impost. The tea of the rich man, at 2s. or 2s. 6d. a pound, pays 6d., and the poor man's tea, at 4d., equally pays 6d.; the first is taxed 20 to 25 per cent, the latter 150 per cent! Let the House realize the weight of this burden upon those who, with wife and family, have to make both ends meet on 1s. 6d. per day wages. "Every man must pay something," says the Chancellor of the Exchequer, "for the luxury of Government." Yes, but the working man does pay something. He gives his toil. What more can a man give to the service of his country? When a man rises at five o'clock in the morning and works until six in the evening, is not that enough service? Do you think it just to exact 3d. or 4d. a week besides from the man

who struggles to bring up his family on 9s. a week? The exigencies of the Budget—the exigencies of Party—today may require assent to this Tea Duty; but I am sure that many who will vote for this Tea Duty are really opposed to it. I believe the time is coming when Members opposite instead of blindly sustaining the Government of the day, will vote according to their convictions and exercise pressure upon them with as good an influence as they have done against the Sugar Convention.

MR. LABOUCHERE: Taxes, though evils, must be levied on somebody, and I agree with the Chancellor of the Exchequer that everybody who has a vote ought to contribute something to taxation. Taxation and representation ought to go together if we are to have any sound system of financial Government here. But, admitting that we have to levy taxes and that every person ought to pay in some sort of way towards the Revenue of the country, the question is, whether this in itself is a fair tax? I deny that the Tea Duty is a fair tax. In your income tax, whoever dreamt of charging the same amount on all income taxes, whether large or small? You have an inhabited house tax, but whoever would dream of charging the same amount on a palace and a hovel? My main complaint of this tax is that it is an *ad valorem* on tea, and that you make the poor man pay a certain sum of money, which, in comparison with his income, is far greater than the sum you make the rich man pay, by your income tax and your other taxes. You charge a higher rate to the poor man than to the rich man, because, whilst the poor man pays, say, only 1s. a pound for his tea and the rich man 2s., the duty is the same on each description. And yet the poor man and the rich man drink about the same amount of tea, for though the rich man can afford any quantity, he cannot drink beyond the amount which fills him. This tax is, to all intents and purposes, a poll tax on all individuals, the poor man getting less for his money than the rich man. It is said it would be impossible to do away with the tax, and it is asked "If we abolish this, where are we to raise the money?" Well, I am not the Chancellor of the Exchequer. I as a Member of the Opposition have only to express my opinion when I object to a

certain method of raising money, and it is the Chancellor of the Exchequer's duty to find means for raising revenue which are satisfactory to all parties in the House. I dare say the duty is a difficult one to perform, but that is why we get a clever man as Chancellor of the Exchequer. We poor men are only here to protest against what we think unfair. We have heard the question again and again, when it has been proposed to do away with a tax, "Oh, but where are we to get the money?" You had a tax on sugar; you abolished it, and yet you managed to get the money somewhere else. You have abolished other taxes, and yet have always managed to recoup yourselves. We want to lay down the principle that we shall have a tax that will net every one according to his means, and yet place no tax on the necessities of life. No one would think nowadays of putting a tax on bread, because it is a necessary of life, and I think that tea may be regarded as equally a necessary. We are told that this tax has not been altered for a long while, but that is no reason why it should never be altered. It is quite true as the Chancellor of the Exchequer says that Chancellors of the Exchequer come and go, and, with all respect to the right hon. Gentleman, personally, I hope he himself may soon go — but that is no reason why this objectionable tax should go on for ever. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby supports the tax and says he must vote for it, because we have agreed to the expenditure, and he cannot at a moment's notice say where the money is to be taken from if not from the Tea Duty. That is his position as an ex-Chancellor of the Exchequer. But we, who are more independent, are not bound by such ties. We say we think the tax unjust, and therefore we will vote with the hon. Gentleman who has introduced the Amendment. The Amendment does not say that the duty should be altogether abolished, so that those who object to the amount can vote for it. Those who, like myself, object to the whole tax, can likewise vote for it, and also those who object to it being an *ad valorem* duty. Personally I object to the duty on all these grounds, and therefore have no hesitation in voting for the Amendment.

SIR G. CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy): I entirely agree that indirect taxation presses very unfairly on the poor, but I think that if this tax were removed it would lead to increased intemperance in tea which would be used by the poorer classes in the place of milk in the bringing up of the young. In my opinion relief ought rather to be given to currants and raisins, which are almost entirely consumed by the poor. With regard to the Death Duties, I hope the Chancellor of the Exchequer will give hon. Members an opportunity of taking the sense of the House on the question of the duty on personalty. The right hon. Gentleman has admitted that anomalies still exist in his proposals, but I take it that I should be ruled out of order if I were to move to add to the burden of one particular class, the duty of proposing increase of taxation resting entirely with the Government.

*MR. BARTLEY (Islington, N.): I wish to say one or two words on the subject brought up by the hon. Gentleman opposite, though I do not at all agree with him in the necessity or desirability of doing away with the duty on tea. I should say that those who go into the general subject of taxation will agree that the poorer classes do pay a larger amount in proportion to their earnings than the richer classes. This is in no way a party question, but a question which must be considered before very long I hope that for the simple reason that the temperance habits of the people are growing, it will before long become absolutely necessary for the Chancellor of the Exchequer to overhaul and rearrange the general model of his Budget. The man earning 10s. or 15s. a week who takes a moderate amount of beer, tea, and tobacco in proportion to his earnings pays a larger amount in the shape of Imperial taxes than the richer man, and the man who is at the bottom of the income tax scale is more nipped than those higher up. I do hope the time will come when we shall be able to readjust these duties and taxes in a more satisfactory manner. I maintain that it is not just that the man who earns £40 a year or 15s. a week should pay more per £ of his earnings than the man who earns £1,000, £2,000, or £3,000 a year. On a previous occasion I was reported as having spoken in favour of a graduated, rising income tax. I did not do so.

Whether or not it will ever be proposed it is not for me to say; but this I do assert, that a graduated income tax going the other way is very unfair to the poor, and I therefore hope that before long the Chancellor of the Exchequer will see his way to an adjustment of the incidence of taxation fairer to the poorer classes than it is at the present time.

The House divided. — Ayes, 216; Noes, 121. — (Div. List, No. 106.)

Main Question again proposed.

MR. LABOUCHERE: I desire to call the attention of the Chancellor of the Exchequer to the agreement which was arrived at three years ago, after a discussion in the House, that all packets of adulterated coffee should be marked outside as adulterated. There is a very strong feeling on both sides of the House that this precaution is not enough, but that the amount of the adulteration ought also to be marked outside the packets. I hope that the Chancellor of the Exchequer will seriously take the matter into consideration before next year.

*MR. GOSCHEN: This is a matter for my right hon. Friend the President of the Board of Trade, rather than for me, but I will look into it.

MR. H. KNATCHBULL-HUGES-SEN (Kent, Faversham): I wish to express my deep regret that the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in casting about for the means of raising the money necessary to make provision for the National Defences, should have placed the burden upon the two interests which are the least capable of bearing attack. The Death Duties will form an additional duty upon land, and the Beer Duty, although it may fall immediately on the brewers, will ultimately affect the growers of barley. Under these circumstances I think that this is a vexatious tax, because it is not necessary for raising the money wanted by the Chancellor of Exchequer. The whole sum the right hon. Gentleman proposes to raise is £300,000, and I think there was much force in the remark of the right hon. Member for Derby (Sir W. Harcourt) that the right hon. Gentleman has been in the habit of under estimating his surplus. I think it would have been better if he had been a little more sanguine on this occasion,

and that he had over rather than under estimated. There are two or three courses which the Chancellor of the Exchequer might have taken, any one of which would have avoided the agitation to which his present proposals have given rise. I contend that with regard to the whole of this taxation it was a most legitimate opportunity for having recourse to the Sinking Fund, because the purpose is a national one. I believe that posterity would be better off if it had to pay off a little more debt, rather than bear the additional burdens which would be imposed on them if we were unfortunately defeated in a great war. As to the Beer Duty, there was another course open to the right hon. Gentleman which I have not heard indicated, and that was to have recourse to the imposition of a registration fee of 1s. per quarter on imported corn. This fee, which was abolished in 1863, was a source of considerable revenue, while its incidence on the individual taxpayer was very small indeed. By its aid the Chancellor of the Exchequer would raise a large sum, and at the same time infringe no sacred principle of the fiscal policy. Another course which was open to the right hon. Gentleman was to impose an Import Duty on foreign hops and barley. Free traders complain that the imposition of an Import Duty increases the price of the article to the consumer, but that argument cannot be used in this case because the price of beer would remain the same even if an Import Duty were imposed upon foreign hops and barley. If the Chancellor of the Exchequer had taken that course he would have avoided the dissatisfaction and irritation which have been caused by the present proposal, and he would have raised a sufficient sum of money without the necessity of imposing an additional farthing of taxation. A small Import Duty upon foreign hops would raise more than £300,000. In the last place the right hon. Gentleman would have given a helping hand to a dying British industry—namely, the growth of hops.

*MR. S. BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar): I am afraid that the principles advocated by the hon. Gentleman will not commend themselves either to the Chancellor of the Exchequer or the bulk of hon. Members in this House. He desires to suspend the Sinking Fund

and to put a Protective Duty on corn and hops. [Mr. KNATCHBULL-HUGESSEN: "No."] Well, upon barley. I know that he says the duty is not a Protective Duty, but I understand that he wishes to place an Import Duty upon two articles of consumption without placing an equivalent Excise Duty upon the same articles; and that I must call a Protective Duty. I believe that the proposals of the Chancellor of the Exchequer so far as he proposes to provide for the national defences by taxation have met with pretty general approval. I doubt, with the exception of the brewers themselves, whether anyone objects to the very small increase in the Beer Duty. It has been said by the hon. Member for Leicester (Mr. Picton) in his comparison of the taxation upon tea and beer that the taxation upon beer, considering that beer is an intoxicant, as compared with the taxation upon tea is very light indeed. And whether or no the Chancellor of the Exchequer can make out his case in regard to "specific gravity," he can at least plead necessity—that he wants the money. As to the further increase of the Death Duties there is little difference of opinion on either side of the House in regard to the general principle involved, that considerable taxation should be raised from them. I and his hon. Friends, however, are by no means satisfied with the assurance of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, as carried out in the Bill, that realty will in any way contribute its proper proportion to the taxation of the country. There are three ways in which realty gains an advantage over personalty. In the first place, while the whole estate in regard to personalty is considered, only the actual succession of the individual is taken in regard to realty. In the second place the Succession Duty can be paid in four half-yearly instalments, and practically the second half is not due for four years after the death of the testator. Indeed, five-eighths of the whole Succession Duty is not payable until four years after it is due, while in the case of personalty it has to be paid at the moment. Then the Bill, as drafted, will, I understand, give realty a great advantage over personalty in the mode in which the capital value is assessed. By Clause 6 of the Bill the capital value is to be based solely on the net annual value. I should be glad to learn definitely

from the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether the capital value is to be appreciated by considering the net annual value alone. If that is so, then in a large number of estates of very great capital value, but very little annual rental value, the Succession Duty charged will be something infinitesimal compared with the permanent value. I have a large estate in my mind of which the net annual value is almost nothing—only some £200 or £300 a year—and yet it is a now valuable estate the saleable value of which is something like £200,000 or £300,000. Is the market value not to be taken into account, and is the estate to be charged merely on the annual rental value? As I understand the Bill, also, the calculation of the rental is not to be taken as if it were a permanent, fixed annual rent, but as though it were merely a case of leasehold, to be calculated at the outside as lasting 95 years. In order to ascertain the capital value of such an annuity we are referred to the Succession Duty Act of 1853. The total value of £100 rental is there capitalized at a maximum value of 24 1-3 years' purchase; but will not the Chancellor of the Exchequer assent to the proposition that much land in this country—especially luxurious estates, or estates that some day will be suitable for building purposes—is bought and sold at an infinitely higher value than 24 1-3 years' purchase? Some estates, indeed, are bought at 33 years' purchase, some even at 50, and yet in this case the maximum value upon which an estate can be charged is 23 or 24 years' purchase. How is the right hon. Gentleman going to arrive at the value of estates the capital value of which upon the rent is infinitesimal, whereas the real capital value is very considerable? The hon. Member for Faversham suggested that instead of further taxing beer that a further encroachment should be made on the Sinking Fund. I think that the Chancellor of the Exchequer has already gone much too far in that matter, and I trust that the right hon. Gentleman will not take the advice of the hon. Member. The Chancellor of the Exchequer says that the whole of the objection urged by many hon. Members to his proposal for dealing with the Sinking Fund this year is founded on

the fallacy that in their opinion the Sinking Fund is a fixed annual amount, whereas it is no such thing. No one, so far as I know, made any such assertion. Everyone knows perfectly well that the essence of the so-called new Sinking Fund is not that it is a fixed annual amount, but that it is an increasing annual portion of the fixed Debt charge, which is applied to the redemption of Debt as savings are realized. The point of the Sinking Fund is that every saving effected is to go to the further reduction of Debt. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, in carrying out his financial proposals, has twice during the last three years infringed on the Sinking Fund. In 1887 he did not actually infringe on the principle but he reduced its effective by no less than £2,000,000 a year, and now he is doing a still worse thing. For the first time since it was instituted, the principle of the Sinking Fund has been infringed, the principle that every saving within the annual fixed charged, should be applied to the further reduction of Debt. He has reduced the amount this country is annually to pay towards the redemption of Debt to the lowest sum it has reached during the last 80 years. He has reduced it to a figure less by £4,000,000, than 30 years ago; to a figure much less than what our fathers paid when they were bearing an infinitely greater load of taxation, and when the income tax was much higher than at present. He has reduced the Sinking Fund by no less than £3,000,000 a year; and this he has not done in order to carry our fiscal reforms, but simply and solely to reduce the income tax by 2d. in the pound; and by so doing he has rendered future fiscal reforms much more difficult. He knew very well that one of the most popular things a Chancellor of the Exchequer could do with the taxpayer was to reduce his income-tax.

*MR. GOSCHEN: It is the least popular.

MR. BUXTON: It was most popular with the supporters of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and certainly more popular than imposing or maintaining taxation for Debt purposes. I fear that it is but beating the air in these days to advocate the more rapid reduction of the National Debt. The Chancellor of the Exchequer the other day spoke of our

Debt as now being under £700,000,000; but he forgot to add the £36,000,000 of Debt which last year he transferred from one account to another. Such a Debt as this, which is the largest National Debt except that of France, ought to be a subject of great anxiety to the country. Taking it all round, we are reducing it very slowly. In the last 30 years we have reduced it by something like £100,000,000 only, and he would be a bold man who, in the present state of European politics, will prophecy that it will be reduced by as large a sum in the next 30 years. The right hon. Member for Derby has shown that so far as the Chancellor of the Exchequer is concerned, he is in the habit of under estimating the revenue. Any large surplus at the end of the year in the revenue only indicates that he has made a miscalculation, while any reduction in expenditure is due to his colleagues. If the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who relies upon these amounts of surplus as justifying him in the reduction of the Sinking Fund, would look back a few years, he would find that at the end, including his own years of office, there was on the aggregate number of years, not a surplus, but a deficit. The truth is that the only mode in which we can hope to reduce the Debt is by applying an annual sum for that purpose. There is one great danger which this country has to look forward to, and that is the competition of America in the markets of the world when that country adopts the principles of free trade. Ultimately, it is certain that America will abolish her protective duties, and we who are now able to compete with every other nation will then have a great commercial rival who will have got rid of her debt, who has no great expenditure on army and navy, and who has every physical advantage which we have, and many which we lack. There will then be the greatest possible danger of this country losing its commercial supremacy. In that state of things our National Debt would be a very serious hindrance, and it is to be regretted that two of the principal financial acts of the Chancellor of the Exchequer should be to infringe upon the Sinking Fund, and to reduce by a large sum the annual amount we are paying towards the reduction of the National Debt.

Mr. Buxton

*COLONEL ANSTRUTHER (St. Andrew's Burghs): The beer tax must necessarily fall to a greater or lesser extent upon the industry that is least able to bear it—the barley growers of the country. Farmers in arable districts find that at present prices they cannot grow wheat at a profit, but they do look to some small margin of recompense from their barley crop. Now, hon. Gentlemen know well, that it is these very farmers in arable districts who have suffered most severely from the agricultural depression, and, moreover, they have not reaped any advantage from the revival of trade. On this account, if for no other, they especially deserve the sympathy of this House, and they are the last class to have any further taxation placed upon them. The increase of the duty caused by the proposal of the Chancellor of the Exchequer to lower the alcoholic standard of the beer will undoubtedly cause the brewers to use less malt, and it has already caused a widespread feeling of alarm among the farmers of the Eastern Counties. In this way the Chancellor of the Exchequer, although no doubt he thought he was taxing a class who could afford it, is also taxing another class who cannot afford to pay. I hope that if the Chancellor of the Exchequer cannot see his way clear to raise this sum of £300,000 by some other method, he will be able to assure the agricultural interest that it is merely a temporary tax, and that he will remove it at the first opportunity which offers.

*MR. BARTLEY: I should like to say a word upon the subject which has been referred to by the hon. Member for Poplar (Mr. S. Buxton). I fully agree with what he has said in regard to the reduction of the National Debt, and, looking to the future of this country and of America, I think it would have been wiser this year, instead of reducing the Sinking Fund, to have left it as it was. I considered that the saving to the country from the reduction of the interest on the National Debt would have been very well applied in reducing the Debt itself. In the event of war, or when America becomes a free trade country, I have no doubt whatever that we shall find ourselves so heavily handicapped by our enormous debt and heavy expenditure

in the shape of taxation, that it will be almost impossible to compete with the United States. With regard to the Income Tax, I have, on several occasions during the last three or four years, brought the question of the mode of collecting the tax before the House. I hope the Chancellor of the Exchequer will this year, as he promised some years ago, be able to alter the whole system of assessments and appeals and the mode of payment for the collection of Income Tax by poundage. Owing to the present system of collection, the tax is not always one upon net income. In times of declining trade there is no doubt that the system of payment on the three years' average earnings bears extremely hard on small tradesmen. I trust that the right hon. Gentleman will be able to tell us that he does look forward to some system which will enable him to do away with the anomalies of this tax. My complaint is that of late years the Income Tax Assessor, instead of taking into account the distressed circumstances of the payers of Income Tax, has been engaged in making the screw tighter. No doubt it is only right that a man should pay upon his full income, but there are hardships which do arise in connection with this tax which render it exceedingly unpopular, and which might and ought to be removed.

*SIR E. BIRKBECK (Norfolk, E.): I do not intend to follow the hon. Member in the expression of opinion as to an Import Duty on foreign barley, but I do wish to enter my protest against the proposal for an increased duty on beer, and I do so on behalf of the farmers of East Anglia. They object entirely to the imposition of a tax on the produce of the land, which comes in about the worst of the ten years of depression which they have experienced. They object to the proposal also that this tax is to be allowed to go on for seven years. The Government have described this tax as a homœopathic dose, but I can assure the right hon. Gentlemen that it will most seriously affect the barley growers. There are many hon. Members, representing county constituencies where they do not grow barley, who will not consider the matter of any moment; but, in those parts where they do grow barley, it is a subject of very great

importance. I am confident that if every Member of the Cabinet farmed a thousand acres of land in a barley growing district, or if Sir Algernon West had a thousand acres of barley, this tax would never have been imposed. I can assure my right hon. Friend that had Mr. Clare Sewell Read been in the House he would have spoken in no unmeasured terms upon this question. I do hope the Chancellor of the Exchequer will give us the assurance that this is to be a tax limited to one year. If not, then I, for one, shall place an Amendment on the Paper restricting the proposal to one year.

*MR. GOSCHEN: I waited to see whether any hon. Member would rise, but as no one has done so, I may assume that I have heard all the objections to the Budget before us. My hon. Friend the Member for North Islington referred to a subject in which I take considerable interest—namely, the manner in which our income tax collectors are paid. As a matter of fact no officer in the service of the Inland Revenue is paid by poundage at all; and in the case of local collectors, where they are paid by poundage, the localities have the removal of the grievance in their own hands, but the desire to maintain patronage seems to outweigh the desire to protect the income taxpayers. I do not give up the hope that it may be possible to deal with this matter when opportunity offers. Several of my hon. Friends have suggested that, instead of fresh taxation, I should have made another inroad on the Sinking Fund; but the observations of several others would lead to the conclusion that I had already gone too far in that direction. The hon. Member (Mr. S. Buxton) has just put forward the view that our Debt is dangerously large, but I would point out that while our Debt is large the interest upon it is less than that of any other country.

MR. S. BUXTON: Not than America.

*MR. GOSCHEN: I think that on the whole Debt it is. America is able to borrow part at 3 per cent, but other portions of her Debt still continue at higher rates of interest. The hon. Member will remember that it is not only the capital amount of the Debt, but the burden of the Debt which has to be taken into consideration. The hon.

Member suggests that our Debt charge is less than it used to be, and that it ought to be greater. Well, if we have reduced the interest, surely that is one reason for our Debt charge being so much less. We have been at work for many years reducing not only the total amount, but the rate of interest of the Debt, and therefore it is natural that the total Debt charge also should be reduced. The hon. Member thinks it a fair description of what I have been able to do with regard to the Debt to say that my two performances have been to withdraw two millions from the Sinking Fund, and I forget what the other performance was, but certainly it was not the conversion of the Debt. The fact that I have managed to convert 500 millions from 3 to 2½ per cent is a matter of no importance whatever in his eyes.

*MR. S. BUXTON: My right hon. Friend will not do me the injustice of misrepresenting what I said with regard to the Sinking Fund. No one on this side of the House forgets to appreciate the very great financial operation of the conversion of the Debt, but I was speaking simply of the infringement on the Sinking Fund.

*MR. GOSCHEN: The hon. Member has perhaps not sufficient experience of the House to be perfectly aware of the effect of what he said. The hon. Member said, practically, that my Budgets would be remembered, for two performances, of which the conversion of the Debt was certainly not one. Had his words been uttered in Poplar, they would have been taken in their literal sense, and not as he interprets them. But while I cannot go along with the hon. Member for Poplar in his somewhat extreme views as to the National Debt, I should be unwilling to diminish further the amount of the Sinking Fund; and as we have undertaken a heavy extra expenditure it seems to me right that some portion, at all events, should be raised by the present generation. My hon. Friend says that future generations will derive the benefit, but I am not sure that future generations will not have to do what we are doing now. However that may be, the Government seem to have taken a fair middle course by imposing the chief part, but not the whole, upon the present generation. The hon. Member for

Poplar asked me a question with regard to the principal value. The hon. Member has managed to make his speech on this point at the present stage of this Bill, although the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian had indicated that it would be most convenient that the matter should be discussed at another stage. I suppose the hon. Member was perfectly within his right in so doing, but I am sorry that the Leaders of the Opposition were not in their places when he made his speech, to have heard from him his view of how the principal value should be taken. He stated correctly enough that the maximum principal value of real property, according to the Bill, was $24\frac{1}{2}$ times the annual value. He was dissatisfied with that because some property may be sold at 33 years' purchase. He did not remember that this proposal of putting the maximum at $24\frac{1}{2}$ times the annual value was taken from the very proposal of the Government of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian in 1885. That proposal took the principal value in the same way, and certainly I do not propose to suggest any more oppressive way of estimating the principal value upon property than that of my predecessor dealing with this same question. I have yet to reply to the remarks of my hon. Friend behind me on the subject of the Beer Duty. Of course I regret the great anxiety excited by this proposal. I regret that, because a tax of 3d., or not quite as much, is to be put on every 36 gallons of beer, the idea has got abroad that the consequences will be disastrous to barley growers throughout the country. The idea comes from a much larger increase—that of 1s. suggested in 1885 whereas now it is only 3d. It is said that by this addition of 3d. the barley growers will be placed at a very great disadvantage. I can only say to those hon. Members who represent the views of barley growers that I feel convinced that is an anxiety which they need not entertain. What does this theory of the great danger to barley-growers from this small tax involve? It involves the assumption that the brewers have got it in their power to pay what they like for the barley which they buy. I have asked this of the brewers, and I ask this of you, "If the brewers are in that

position that they can dictate terms to both the consumer and the barley grower, and that they can threaten the grower of barley that, if the Government puts the slightest additional tax upon beer, they will pay so much less for barley, why do they not do that now?" If it were contended that there was no margin of reasonable profit between the present price of beer and the cost of that beer, I admit at once that the tax would have to come either from the consumer or the producer, but it would be a bold assertion that the margin of profit in the case of beer is as narrow as this. When it is said the margin of profit is so small that the brewers must throw this extra tax on the barley growers, I ask the House to take the case of sugar. When sugar rose the brewers might at once have said, "Now that the price of sugar has increased we shall immediately begin to pay less to the growers of barley, because we cannot afford to lose the difference." This is a matter in regard to which I am afraid I shall never be able to persuade the barley growers or brewers, but, as I have said, I most distinctly assert on behalf of the Government, that there is in our opinion no reason why this additional tax on beer should affect the barley growers in such a manner as their friends in this House seem to think. At the same time, I do not think there is any other tax that could be imposed, which, would upon the whole, be fairer, although I am fully aware that this tax, like every other, must lead to a considerable amount of dissatisfaction and friction. The hon. Gentleman near me thinks it might be possible to avoid raising this sum of £300,000 by running the risk of not having a surplus this year; while the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby and other hon. Members have said—I think the hon. Member for Poplar (Mr. Sydney Buxton) took that position—that we are wrong in making estimates that will leave us with considerable surpluses. I, for one, dispute that position, and say that it involves a most dangerous doctrine. If we were to cut our estimates too fine, we should run the risk of finding ourselves with a deficit, and with a tax revenue of £70,000,000. What we have provided is, after all, a very small margin indeed, when we consider the vast num-

ber of possible accidents. To avoid the risk of a deficit, it is absolutely necessary that we should be exceedingly careful. I cannot accept the view of my hon. Friend behind me that we can afford to run the risk of having a deficit; nor do I think it would be a proper course if we were to ask for the whole of the proposed increase of taxation from realized property alone, or from any other single source. It has been held that when there is a considerable remission of taxation some relief should be given to all classes, and also, when new taxes have been proposed, it has been considered sound and conservative to make more than one interest contribute. These are the explanations I have to offer with regard to a tax which has caused some anxiety to the Friends of the Government, but I may add that in all the imposts under the Bill the Government have endeavoured to observe justice between various classes.

*SIR J. LUBBOCK (London University): The Chancellor of the Exchequer has not answered one point raised by the hon. Member for North Islington (Mr. Bartley) with reference to the system of three years' average on the collection of income tax on business incomes. Formerly people engaged in business used to pay on the average of three years, and if the current year were lower than the average the payment would be proportionately reduced; whereas, under the present system as the hon. Gentleman has pointed out, persons in business often are obliged to pay income tax on profits they have not earned. This is felt to be a considerable hardship, and I hope my right hon. Friend will consider the point in the course of the ensuing year. I believe the change was made without anyone interested in it having the least idea of what was being done, and while I do not complain of the mode in which the Bill has been drawn I would point out that it has to be read along with other Acts, and the process is so complicated that it is almost impossible to understand the clauses by their own context. I hope, therefore, my right hon. Friend will consider the point when he will be sure to see what amount of justice it will be necessary to render. While I am on my legs I may also say a few words with regard to

what has fallen from the hon. Member for Poplar (Mr. Sidney Buxton) as to the Sinking Fund, because I think that in strict justice to the Chancellor of the Exchequer we are bound to admit that as much will be done now as before the alteration of the interest on the National Debt, and I think the hon. Member for Poplar has hardly appreciated how much we are indebted to the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Secretary for the Treasury in resisting claims on the public purse, and thus securing a surplus. Still I cannot help regretting that the Chancellor of the Exchequer has not seen his way to do more towards the reduction of the National Debt. With regard to the questions affecting farmers, there is one point I should like the right hon. Gentleman to consider. Hon. Members will see from the 19th Clause of the Bill, which deals with the income tax, that the English farmers will have to pay a duty of 3d., while the Scotch and Irish farmers will only have to pay 2½d. I do not see why English farmers should have to pay a higher rate of income tax than those engaged in business of the same kind in other parts of the kingdom; and I think it will be well worth the while of the Chancellor of the Exchequer on some future occasion to consider whether it would not be right to make the rate in all parts of the kingdom the same.

*MR. C. GRAY (Maldon): Although I am very sorry the Chancellor of the Exchequer should have proposed to increase the beer tax, I do not take quite so gloomy a view of that proposal as to the effect it will have on the East Anglian barley growers as is taken by some of my hon. Friends behind me. At the same time, I wish the right hon. Gentleman had only asked us to support the proposal for one year instead of seven. There are many different opinions on this side of the House as to whether it will or will not affect the interests of the English barley growers, and I think it better that we should not be committed to an uncertainty for seven years. The right hon. Gentleman has said a rise of 3d. per barrel could not be a very serious question, but if a barrel of beer is brewed from two bushels of malt that would mean a tax of 1s. a quarter on the barley, and that would be a very large sum indeed. There are very few

of us who make 1s. a quarter profit on our barley; we have not done so for the last two or three years, and if we had to pay 1s. a quarter on the produce during that time it would have taken away all our profits. I quite understand that those who are not farmers may look on 3d. a barrel as a trivial sum, and I do not mean to say that I anticipate the proposal will make a difference of a whole shilling per quarter, but I think it would be a very unpopular tax, and even if it be considered only a straw on the back of the British farmer, I regard it as the last straw that can be placed on that already almost broken back.

SIR R. PAGET: I wish to put before the Chancellor of the Exchequer with reference to the income tax that there are strong claims upon his consideration with regard to the incidence of that tax—I allude to the way in which it presses on the owners of real property, whether houses or land. The Budget of last year, so far as it affected real property, was a Budget of readjustment; but in the present Budget I see no readjustment whatever. We do not complain that special circumstances make it necessary to impose a duty which brings thoroughly within its purview all classes of property, real and personal; but I do hope that the readjustment of taxation is only postponed for the present, and that in years to come we may not be disappointed in seeing readjustment carried still further, considering the necessity there is for striking an equilibrium in this matter. One more word. I must express my regret that circumstances prevented the Chancellor of the Exchequer from realizing the hope which he held out to us last year, that we should receive £800,000 in aid of local taxation from the wheel and horse tax. I will not enter into the question of the desirability of the tax itself, but I will express a hope that the Chancellor of the Exchequer will consider this subject again in future Budgets. I am not one of those who take exception to the present Budget. I only look upon it as still leaving the equilibrium to be restored.

*MR. GOSCHEN: In reply to the hon. Baronet the Member for London University, I may say that objection has been taken by high authorities to the system upon which the assess-

ments of business incomes to the income tax are made, and I will take care that it is carefully looked into. I will also look into the question of the position of the English farmer, as compared with that of the Irish and Scotch farmer. I have already stated to the House that I do not wish a single farmer to pay income tax on more than the actual income he earns. It is for that reason that farmers are now allowed to assess themselves under Schedule D. I can assure hon. Members that all their suggestions shall be carefully considered. Reviewing the discussion which has taken place, I find myself in this position:—I am asked to replace the Sinking Fund, in its original position, *i.e.*, to give up £3,000,000 of Revenue available to meet the expenses of the year, to give £800,000 in aid of local taxation, not to impose a beer tax, or indeed any new tax, and nevertheless to conduct the present business of the country, and to provide for Naval Defence. These are the impressions which I derive from the present discussion, and I trust my hon. Friends will see in the large and incongruous demands which are made upon me some of the difficulties which Chancellors of the Exchequer have to face.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed for to-morrow.

NAVAL DEFENCE BILL. (No. 186.)

Bill considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1.

MR. G. J. SHAW LEFEVRE (Bradford, Central): The Amendment I have to move is one of some importance, though, as it does not touch the principle of the Bill, I think it may be accepted by the noble Lord without substantially interfering with the object which he has in view. My proposal is to substitute the word "may" for "shall" in this clause, which, as it stands, imposes a statutory obligation to carry out the programme of the Bill—a programme extending over four years—and to carry it out exactly in the manner stated in the schedule as regards the class of vessel, the armaments, and the cost. It appears from the schedule and also from the statement made by the noble Lord

that no fewer than 70 vessels are to be laid down precisely according to the schedule, and no discretion apparently is to be allowed to the Admiralty in future as to the types of vessel to be laid down. If they were to be laid down in the present financial year I would not make the objection, because they might be carried out without any substantial change. But I understand from the schedule that a considerable number of these vessels will be laid down, not this year, but in the course of the next two years; indeed, I gather that 22 of them are to be so delayed, as the whole of the vessels cannot possibly all be laid down at once. Now, in regard to the 22 vessels which cannot be laid down until after the expiration of two years, it does seem to me to be absurd that so long in advance we should prescribe by Act of Parliament the exact type of vessel and the size and nature of the armament. That is surely a novelty in procedure at the Admiralty and in the legislation of this House. These 22 vessels include one ironclad of 9,000 tons, two protected cruisers of 7,300 tons, ten cruisers of second class of 3,500 tons each, and eight torpedo vessels of 750 tons each. Between the present time and the day when they can possibly be laid down there may be considerable changes of view as to what class of vessel it is desirable to lay down. I will give a very striking illustration of the changes which might take place in something less than two years. In the latter part of the Session of 1887, I moved for a Royal Commission to consider the types of the ironclads which should be laid down in the future; but the noble Lord refused to give the Royal Commission, on the ground that the Government had determined not to lay down any ironclads at all. He said he did not believe that in the future it would ever again be necessary to lay down any fresh ironclads. On the 7th of March this year the noble Lord said that two years previously he had hoped that the *Nile* and *Trafalgar* would be the last battle-ships laid down in this country, as it then appeared that there was to be a general cessation of ironclad building, torpedo boats having come into use. The second European naval Power—France—had practically suspended her armour-clad building, and the other Powers had followed her example.

But since then, owing to the development in quick firing guns and the use of new explosives, a general impetus had again been given to the building of ironclads, and consequently he (the noble Lord) came down to this House and made a proposal to lay down no fewer than 10 armoured vessels. Now I quote that simply to show what great changes may take place in the course of two years. It is unreasonable to expect that there will be no change of opinion in the course of the next two years which may prove of equal importance. I say it is not wise, neither is it prudent to decide, two years in advance, the type of vessels to be built either in our Dockyards or by contract. The effect would be to relieve the Admiralty of all responsibility, for when once these vessels are determined on the Admiralty, whatever may be the views of the members of the Board individually, will consider themselves bound by this Bill. I understand also that it is proposed to lay down 32 vessels by contract. Now, the noble Lord will find, when he comes to invite tenders, that it is not desirable in the present state of the shipbuilding business to contract for all these vessels at once; but the Act of Parliament will hardly give him any choice. Then if any change has to be made a new Act will be necessary, and the House of Lords will obtain a control which they do not now possess over the naval expenditure of this country. Would it not be wise instead of imposing a statutory obligation on the noble Lord and the Admiralty, to give them some discretion by inserting the word "may" instead of "shall" in this clause. There need be no fear that the money will not be spent eventually; indeed, the present Admiralty would be very different from its predecessors, and from every other public department, if it failed to spend the money voted. Again, in regard to the control which this proposal will give the House of Lords over the naval and military expenditure of this country, I contend it is contrary to all constitutional practice, for it has always rested solely with this House to determine what shall be the nature and extent of our naval and military expenditure. I believe we shall be acting more in accordance with constitutional practice by giving permissive powers in this clause instead of

imposing a statutory obligation, because then the responsibility will rest with the Admiralty. The wisest course will be, while indicating in the schedule the class of vessels which the Government and the Admiralty now think may be prudently laid down to avoid imposing any statutory obligation on the Admiralty to carry out a specific programme, but to leave to them the responsibility in the future of determining whether it is wise and prudent when the time comes to build vessels of the class indicated in the schedule. I think the noble Lord may well accept my Amendment which is in accord with the policy he has proposed to the House, for while it will give him full power to act according to the Act of Parliament and its schedules, it will enable him, should circumstances arise hereafter which make it undesirable to carry out the Programme now laid down in its specific form, to make any necessary changes.

Amendment proposed, "In page 1, line 25, to leave out, ninety-four," and insert 'nine-six.'"—(*Mr. Shaw Lefevre.*)

Question proposed, "That 'ninety-four' stand part of the Clause."

***LORD G. HAMILTON:** I believe there is a general impression among Members of this House that in an Act of Parliament the words "may" and "shall" are almost convertible terms. At any rate I have often heard that they have pretty much the same meaning, but in order to make it clear what we desire we have used the imperative mood and inserted the word "shall." No doubt a statutory obligation is imposed by the Bill on the Admiralty; but I can assure the right hon. Gentleman that it was not without careful investigation as to the producing powers of the country that the Government took upon themselves this statutory obligation, and having so taken it upon themselves they think it undesirable that it should be optional on the part of any future Admiralty to vary the policy to which the Government are committed. The right hon. Gentleman argues that it is not business-like to lay down so many ships at one time. I quite agree with him that that would certainly be so if it were not that time was of primary importance. But we hold time to be of the utmost importance, and therefore deem it necessary to press forward the completion of

the vessels. The number of vessels to be laid down this year is 52, and in subsequent years 18. I agree that in these days of change it is not desirable to decide long in advance the class of vessel to be built. But with respect to some of the ships, a discretion is reserved. All the ironclads with the exception of one will be laid down this year; and that one at the beginning of next year. As to the 18 vessels which are not to be laid down this year, five will be begun next year, ten the year after, and three the year after that. These are all of the smaller type, and no vessels of an experimental type are to be built. Thus far I believe we are on safe ground. The right hon. Gentleman also said that this Bill would give the House of Lords control over taxation. I do not agree with that. No doubt the House of Lords might throw out a Bill modifying this Bill; but they have no power with regard to expenditure which is decided by the annual Estimates. The Government have taken every precaution to secure the completion of the vessels, and I think the word "shall" is preferable to the word "may."

MR. GLADSTONE: I do not think that upon this occasion it is desirable for us to occupy the time of the House at any great length, but one objection to the whole proceeding is so strong that I am glad that my right hon. Friend has taken an appropriate point. Now, there are two observations which I wish to make clear, and the first is this, that in my opinion the use of the word "shall" is altogether inconsistent with the proposal of the Government themselves, which is that, as regarded 11 millions, the whole expenditure is to depend upon the voting of money from year to year. At the same time Parliament is to enact without any qualification or reservation that in any contingency a certain number of ships shall be built. At the same time, it is provided that as regards one-half of the expenditure Parliament may say whether the "shall" shall be *bona fide* binding. This is not a Parliamentary or appropriate mode of proceeding. The word "shall" means "shall," and it is a strange and wholly unprecedented method of proceeding to say with one breath that a thing "shall" be done, and then, as to half that thing, to reserve

liberty of action from year to year. The word "may" would be a sufficient indication of the present intention of the Government, and I therefore support my right hon. Friend's Amendment, though I should much prefer the proposal of my right hon. Friend the Member for Wolverhampton—that the money should be voted from year to year. In taking this course, we are not desirous of securing any surreptitious advantage. The Government are well assured that they will be able to carry their proposal to spend this money. The noble Lord said there is great ambiguity about the use of the word "may" in Acts of Parliament, but so far as regards this particular Bill there would be no such ambiguity whatever. The substitution of the word "may" for "shall" would in no way weaken the proposal of the Government as it stands in the Bill as a whole, and it would be consistent in its application of the two portions of the money, whereas in the form in which it now stands it is inconsistent in its application to that part of the money which Parliament is to vote from year to year.

*MR. W. H. SMITH: The argument of the right hon. Gentleman goes to this, so far as a portion of the expenditure is concerned the word "may" will have all the effect of the word "shall." But the right hon. Gentleman has already explained to the Committee that he really desires to make a decided change in the character of the Bill, and to secure that the money shall be voted year by year. [MR. GLADSTONE: By a subsequent Amendment.] And it is in the spirit of the Amendment of the right hon. Member for Wolverhampton which is to follow that the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian wishes to effect that change. It is on that account alone that the Government must insist on the retention of the word "shall." We desire to give emphasis to the purpose for which the Bill is framed which is to secure that a scheme which hangs together and which cannot be separated without injury to all its parts, shall be carried out in its entirety. Of course, it is open to Parliament, if it thinks fit, to refuse to vote that which is proposed annually to carry out that part of the programme which depends on annual Votes. But we hold the belief that the direction in the Bill when it becomes an

Act will not be lightly overridden by Parliaments or Governments which may follow, and that therefore it is of the highest importance to the interests of the country that the plan shall be taken and carried into effect as a whole.

*LORD C. BERESFORD (Marylebone, E.): I have often heard the saying about driving a coach through an Act of Parliament. I conceive that nothing would be more easy than to effect such an operation as that, if we substituted the word "may" for "shall." I am glad that the Government insist on retaining the word "shall," because in days gone by curious things have happened from Party exigencies. On one occasion the item for the ammunition of certain guns which have been voted for the Fleet was struck out. It is to avoid that kind of proceeding that they ought to stick to the word "shall." It is a bad thing for the Services not to have a continuity of policy. Personally, I should have liked to see the clause made much stronger. I should like to see the First Lord of the Admiralty and the First Lord of the Treasury put under some sort of contract with the people, so that if these ships fail, or are not ready at the stipulated time, they should both be hanged. We might then get direct responsibility in this matter. I am glad the Government intend to vote against the Amendment.

*MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: Since I spoke last, I have looked through the Acts directing work to be carried out, but I cannot find a single case in which the word "shall" has been used instead of the word "may." In the case of the Fortifications Act, of 1858, and also in the case of the construction of the naval docks and basins at Portsmouth and Chatham in 1859, "may" was used, and not "shall." Last year in the Act authorizing the construction of the Australian vessels, the word used was "may," and not "shall." Precedent, therefore, is in my favour.

Question put, and agreed to.

*MR. H. H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton): I beg to move to insert after the word "shall" in line 23, the words "so far as is practicable." I am afraid I shall not have the support of the noble Lord the Member for Marylebone (Lord C. Beresford), because these words are to prevent the very thing he desires. If the clause remains as it is, the Ad-

miralty will be guilty of an indictable offence if, through some mischance or no fault of their own, these vessels are not completed before the 1st of April, 1894. I will not enter into the question of the probability or otherwise of the noble Lord (Lord G. Hamilton) being First Lord of the Admiralty in 1894, but assuming that he is, I should be sorry to see him and his colleagues in the position of being charged with an indictable offence. This is a pure question of drafting, and I think the noble Lord will see at once that they ought not to be required to do what may be found to be absolutely impossible.

Amendment proposed, "Clause 1, page 1, line 23, after 'shall,' insert, 'so far as is practicable'" (*Mr. H. Fowler*).

Question proposed, "That these words be there inserted."

LORD G. HAMILTON: Of course, if it is impracticable it cannot be done.

*MR. H. H. FOWLER: If it is not done, you commit an indictable offence.

LORD G. HAMILTON: But I have no objection to the Amendment.

Question put, and agreed to.

*MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: The object of the Amendment which I have now to move is to spread the building of a large number of these vessels over a somewhat longer period, and thus make it possible to avoid many of the ends which have been pointed out in the course of these debates. The First Lord of the Admiralty has more than once said that the proposal of the Government is to lay down no fewer than 70 vessels, of which 52 are to be taken in hand at once, 20 in the dockyards and 32 by contract. As I pointed out a few nights ago, no one has more frequently condemned the policy of laying down an enormous number of vessels at once than the noble Lord himself; and the Secretary to the Admiralty (*Mr. Forwood*) has gone the length of saying that the laying down of a very large number of vessels at one time is fraught with difficulty and danger. What the Admiralty now ask us to do is to run headlong into these difficulties and dangers—not only to lay down vessels by the dozen, but by the score. If there have been difficulties and dangers in this policy in the past, surely there is in

the present. There is the greatest possible uncertainty with regard to the value of the types of many of these vessels. Not only is this a dangerous policy with respect to larger vessels like ironclads, but it is equally so with respect to cruisers. At this moment a great improvement is being effected in the speed of cruisers. Here is a striking illustration of how vessels are superseded almost before they are completed in the Estimates now before us. In 1885 four vessels of the Mersey type, of 4,000 tons displacement, were laid down with a speed of sixteen knots, and seventeen knots with a forced draught. In 1887, cruisers of another type, vessels of 3,400 tons were laid down, and they have a greater speed by two knots than the Mersey type of vessels, some of which are not even now completed. I have not the smallest doubt that in two or three years' time, we shall find it desirable to lay down cruisers of greater speed than those the noble Lord proposes to lay down, and therefore we shall probably find ourselves possessed of forty or fifty vessels which have been superseded by other vessels. But there is another point which I would urge on the Government as a reason for not commencing all these vessels at once, and that is the state of the ship building trade. The noble Lord has told us he did not embark on this scheme without careful consideration of the state of the ship building trade; but I cannot but think that he has not been sufficiently informed on the subject. I undertake to say, from inquiries I have made, that there will be the greatest possible difficulty in obtaining proper firms to tender for the vessels it is proposed to lay down by contract. It is proposed that 22 vessels with a tonnage of 160,000, should be laid down in private yards. Now what is the state of the ship building trade? We all know that some years ago this trade was in a very depressed condition. Whereas, in 1883, vessels with a total tonnage of 891,000, were built in private yards, in 1886 the tonnage fell to 331,000. In 1888 there was a great demand for new ships, and in the course of the year 573,000 tons were built. I understand that every private yard is full of orders, and that there is the greatest difficulty in obtaining firms to tender for the building of

private vessels, that in fact there are vessels with an aggregate of 1,000,000 tons in hand at the present moment. I assert, therefore, it will be impossible to go into the market and invite tenders for the 22 vessels with 160,000 tons without raising considerably the price of the vessels. I am told by many competent people that the price will probably rise something like 25 or 30 per cent. Not only so, but the present state of affairs will have its effect upon the vessels built in the dockyards. The vessels built there will require an enormous amount of material. I understand that four of the large type of ironclads which are to be built in the dockyards will each of them require no less an amount than 400,000 tons weight of armour plates. Now, if you go into private yards you will practically invite competition against the vessels which are building in your own dockyards, in respect of the armour plates, and also of other material. In that way too you will raise the price against yourselves. It appears to me, therefore, that from every point of view it would be far better to spread your shipbuilding over a somewhat longer time. What I suggest is that instead of building these vessels in four-and-a-half years as now specified in the Bill, you should not be required to complete them under six years. If you adopt my plan it will not be necessary to enter into contracts immediately, for all of the 22 vessels it is proposed to build them by contract. You will be able to defer commencing a certain number of these vessels for two years, some of them possibly for three years, and in the meantime you will be able to gain experience with regard to the value of the types of vessels you propose to build, and you will also be able to devote a great deal of the constructive talent of the Admiralty to the perfecting of the designs of the vessels to be laid down. You will, moreover, have the advantage of seeing what other Powers do in the same direction. As to the type of ironclad, I cannot think it is wise to lay down at once so many as eight ironclads of the largest class. I know there is very great difference of opinion amongst very competent men as to the value of vessels of 14,000 tons. Lord Armstrong has expressed the opinion

that it would be far wiser to lay down vessels of a smaller type and with a greater speed, and I believe I am right in saying that the Barrow Shipbuilding Company, Limited, laid before the Admiralty plans of armour clad vessels of 3,500 tons, it being contended by the very able naval architect who advises that company that four vessels of this size can be built for the same price as one of the vessels of 14,000 tons, and that they would be of much greater value.

LORD CHARLES BERESFORD: Who says that?

*MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: Sir Nathaniel Barnaby. He is a naval architect who for many years advised the Admiralty with regard to vessels under construction, and his authority is deservedly very high. But the House will perhaps recollect that two years ago I moved for a Royal Commission to inquire into the type of armour clad vessels which should be constructed, and I still think it is unfortunate the noble Lord resisted that Motion. If it were possible for the noble Lord to institute an inquiry within the next few months, at all events, as regards the vessels he proposes to lay down, and as to what types they should be, certainly it appears to me, in the present state of opinion, it would be most desirable to have such an inquiry, collecting the opinions of all competent men on the subject, before finally determining the types of vessels. All these considerations point to the expediency of extending over a somewhat longer period the programme proposed by the Bill. What would be the effect of spreading the programme over a period of six years instead of the four-and-a-half years proposed in the Bill. Dividing the proposed expenditure of ten millions over six years means an expenditure each year of £1,600,000, which is only £200,000 more than the annual payment now proposed to be spread over seven years. Adopt the principle of expenditure and payment over six years, and you avoid all those financial proposals in the Bill which are fraught with novelty and constitutional difficulty. It would be possible to pay for the vessels as they are built, making the payments equal in each of the six years—a far better plan, I think, than to spread the construction over four-

and-a-half years and the payments over seven years. Under the present arrangement it is proposed to incur the expenditure but not to make the payment on the vessels of no less than £2,400,000 in the present year, next year £4,700,000, the third year £3,000,000, having very unequal payments over the term of years. I would suggest as an alternative spreading the building over a somewhat longer period, and spreading the payment equally over a term of years, instead of concentrating it in three or four years. It appears to me a preferable proposal to that in the Bill, both from an economic point of view, avoiding the necessity of throwing all the vessels on the trade at once for contract, and from a shipbuilding point of view, preventing the determining of the types of vessels, at the same time stereotyping the vessels of the Navy and throwing the cost on future years after the vessels are completed. The adoption of this plan would not be inconsistent with the main details of the Bill. I offer the Amendment as not in hostility to any of the main objects of the Bill, and it is quite consistent with all the noble Lord has said for the last two or three years as to increasing the strength of the Navy.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 25, to leave out "ninety-four" and insert "ninety-six." — (*Mr. Shaw Lefevre.*)

Question proposed, "That 'ninety-four' stand part of the clause."

Attention was called to the fact that there were not 40 Members present. The House was counted, and 40 Members were found to be present.

***LORD C. BERESFORD** (Marylebone, E.): I think there are some tremendous objections to the arguments brought forward by the right hon. Gentleman opposite. I would like to ask him this question: Does he regard the financial question of greater importance than the question of the safety of the Empire? I would also ask him whether he agrees that the standard of our fleet should be such as to enable us to defend the interests of the Empire against the fleets of two combined nations. If he does agree in that he must also agree that we cannot be too quick in running our fleet up to that

standard. I have also shown the House that the proposal of my noble Friend (Lord G. Hamilton) does not come up to the standard which he acknowledges is desirable. The other night I proved conclusively that the First Lord was wrong in saying that the standard he desires would be necessarily arrived at when his programme is finished, because of scratching four ships off his list, as he has done on account of their being obsolete. He ought to have scratched off 18, some of which at the end of five years would be 32 years old. The right hon. Gentleman opposite says "take a little longer to build your ships" —

***MR. SHAW LEFEVRE**: I did not say that; I said, spread the building of these vessels over a longer period. Do not commence the building of so many of them at once.

***LORD CHARLES BERESFORD**: Then we at once go back to the other question. What does the right hon. Gentleman consider the standard of the fleet? I entirely disagree with the right hon. Gentleman. On many points I think the administration of my noble Friend (Lord G. Hamilton) cannot be too highly praised, but where he has made a mistake is in not allowing for the wastage of the fleet. In five or six years there may be some scare in Europe, and you will go through exactly the same thing again. I have clamoured and hallooed in order to get a business-like arrangement—namely, to fix a standard, and run your fleet up to it. If you do that the country knows what you are at. If you follow the present plan the country does not know what you are at. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Shaw Lefevre), said a naval architect had stated his opinion that four ships of a certain tonnage, a certain armament and a certain price would be more useful for defending this Empire than one ship of large tonnage at the same price. I hope the right hon. Gentleman did not think as he seemed to imply that I had sneered at Sir Nathaniel Barnaby as a professional man. I consider him a first class architect, but I do not consider him the kind of man to tell me, as a naval officer, what sort of ships I ought to have to fight with. My brother officers and I have to do the work and we know what kind of ships we want to do it with.

THE CHAIRMAN: I must point out to the Committee the limited nature of the Amendment moved. It proposes merely to substitute 1896 for 1894 as the time when these ships shall be completed.

*LORD CHARLES BERESFORD: Well Sir, I was arguing against what the right hon. Gentleman said. I hope the noble Lord (Lord G. Hamilton) will insist upon furnishing these ships as soon as ever he can. They are necessary for the defence of our Empire, and I hope we shall not have the construction delayed for another two years.

MR. COSSHAM (Bristol, E.): I support the Amendment, because, as we are going to do a bad thing, I should like to spread it over a longer period. I shall be very glad if we could reach a point at which we should have absolute safety, but I notice that every improvement made in the Army or Navy seems to render us less safe than we were before. It seems as if those who spend the money get up the scares for their own amusement. I think the time has come when we must protest against this useless and wasteful expenditure.

*LORD G. HAMILTON: When I brought this scheme before the House, I expressed a hope that it would be accepted as a whole. We propose to spend £21,500,000 in five years, and the right hon. Gentleman's proposal is to spread the expenditure over seven years.

*MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: I take the proposal of the Government as spreading over four-and-a-half years, and I propose to spend it over six years.

*LORD G. HAMILTON: Six and a half years, I should say. Anyhow, it seems that there will be a difference of about four or five millions sterling in the amount spent in the first five years. Our proposal would be reduced by that amount, and a corresponding number of ships struck off our programme. We cannot assent to such a proposal. The right hon. Gentleman spoke of the objections of putting down many ships at once. We have most carefully considered those objections. He is incorrect in assuming that a number of new ships have recently been given to the shipbuilding yards. There was a considerable spurt in shipbuilding last year, but the majority of ships in private yards are now approaching completion.

We made careful inquiry also as to the capacity of this country to produce the heaviest armour plates, and I think I may say we have succeeded in making arrangements, assuming the House agrees to our proposal, which will enable us to get the plates when we require them. At present the number of ships we have in hand, and our liabilities in reference to incomplete ships, are less than they have been at any period for some years, and at the close of the present financial year we shall have only four ships and only one ironclad unfinished. I have a list of the number of armourclads that have been on the stocks in the last few years. In almost every year there were more than 10. The number rose to 13 in 1884-5. It was 13 in 1885-6, and 21 in 1886-7. It must be recollected that during the last few years we have deliberately held our hand in regard to new ships, in order that we might complete the work we had left unfinished, and in order that we might obtain the fullest information in reference to the designs to be adopted. We cannot accept the right hon. Gentleman's Amendment. This is a five years' programme, and we cannot consent to having the period during which it is to be completed in any way altered.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: The noble Lord has either misinterpreted or misstated my proposal. I do not propose to cut down the expenditure by five or six millions sterling, or to cut down the number of ships. All I propose is to spread the expenditure over six years instead of four and a half years, and the effect would be to obviate the necessity of laying down so many vessels immediately. The noble Lord has stated over and over again the objections to the laying down of so many vessels at once. Those objections seem to me conclusive, and I believe that, unless my Amendment is adopted, the Board of Admiralty will before long find out they have made a great mistake.

MR. LABOUCHERE: The noble Lord the Member for Marylebone has furnished us with an excellent argument in favour of my right hon. Friend's Amendment, for he said in his speech the same thing would occur at the end of five years. Now, we consider this expenditure wasteful, and in excess of the requirements of the country. The noble Lord the Member-

for Marylebone seems to be able to make the Government do pretty well what he likes in naval matters, and it is very clear at the end of that period he will come forward and say, "I want another £5,000,000 or £10,000,000." It seems to me, therefore, that it is better to spread the payment over a much longer period. I am only sorry that my right hon. Friend did not say twenty years instead of six years. As he has proposed to increase the period to six years I shall support his Amendment.

*SIR D. CURRIE (Perthshire, W.): I am convinced that it is absolutely necessary to have these ships completed as soon as possible, and I hope the Government will insist upon pressing them forward without delay in the interests of the security of the Empire.

The Committee divided:—Ayes 105; Noes 60.—(Div. List, No. 107.)

Clause 2.

*MR. H. H. FOWLER: I rise, Sir, to move on this Clause, in line 26, to leave out from "of," to the second "the," in line 27, and insert "moneys to be provided by Parliament for this purpose." This Amendment I at once frankly admit embraces the other Amendments on the Paper in my name, and I submit to the House that the debate should take place upon this Amendment, and not upon the subsequent Amendments. By this Amendment I am not going to raise the question of the policy of the Government, which I think the Committee has accepted. I am not considering the proposal to spend 21½ millions to carry out the Government scheme. I do not interfere with their proposal that 10 millions should be for contract vessels, and 11½ millions for dockyard vessels. I do not interfere with the special desire of the First Lord of the Admiralty, that he should not be hampered by surrendering balances of the end of the year. The noble Lord (Lord C. Beresford) pointed out that the surrender of these balances interferes very much with the continuity of policy. My Amendment interferes with none of these things. It leaves the £21,500,000—the £10,000,000 for contract vessels and £11,500,000 for Dockyard vessels—and it leaves money voted for the purposes of naval defence, so that it cannot

be diverted at the end of the year from the purposes for which it was voted. My Amendment leaves every one of these things untouched. What, then, is the nature of the difference between myself and the Government? The difference is this: that instead of this money being for the first time in our history charged upon the Consolidated Fund, which means its withdrawal from the annual control of Parliament, it shall year by year be voted by Parliament. The words of my Amendment are, "out of moneys to be provided by Parliament"—a phrase which the Government know, as well as I do, is invariably used in reference to public expenditure. When Parliament contemplates a future expenditure, Parliament has invariably up to this time stated that it shall be "out of moneys provided by Parliament." There are only two reasons that can be urged against this. The first is—and I fully admit the great weight of it—that the noble Lord does not wish to be hampered in his work by surrendering money which is actually needed for naval purposes—which is being really spent on naval purposes—but which, owing to a technicality, he is unable to apply to naval purposes. By Clause 2, a naval account is to be opened, and money voted for shipbuilding out of the annual Estimates is to be carried to that fund, and whatever proportion the House of Commons thinks fit to vote out of that ten millions. I propose should also go to that fund. There would be no possibility of surrendering balances were my Amendment adopted. You are afraid of the House of Commons interfering with the policy of shipbuilding. That is exactly the argument by which I wish to stand or fall. I say as a historic fact—and no one contradicted me the other night when I said it—that the House of Commons has never yet refused any expenditure for naval purposes which the Government of the day have come to the Table and said they desired, and I do not believe for a moment that the House of Commons will do so. But surely there is something more—namely, that the House of Commons should retain its control over the expenditure of the country; but to take it away, even in respect of our apparently desirable or apparently good purpose, would

establish a precedent for many mischievous purposes which would hereafter follow. If you vote a Naval Defence Budget, why not vote a Military Budget. We have heard some utterances on military matters which ought to arouse our protest; and my right hon. Friend the Member for Derby has already alluded in this letter to what I call the unconstitutional and unprecedented conduct of the Adjutant General of the Army. That, however, is a matter which I will not go into, because it is my intention, and the intention of many more of this House, to raise the question of that noble Lord's action when his salary comes before the House. As a member of this House pointed out to me, there "is the possibility of a Radical Government coming into power; and if this precedent is allowed to pass, what is there to prevent you Radicals voting a prospective Budget that you may effect a series of revolutionary schemes?" I do not attach much weight to the observation myself; but what I want to point out is this: that the House of Commons has not even for fortifications, not even for extensions of dockyards, parted with its control over the annual expenditure of the country. I am not wishing to impede, delay, or maim the scheme of the Government at this moment by this Amendment; I am simply asking the House to adhere to what has been its invariable practice, and I would ask the First Lord of the Treasury, who I know is a cautious and experienced politician, to consider whether these mischievous precedents which are being established, and which do not appear so mischievous when used for the purposes of the present Administration, may not be used by some other Administration some other day, for some other purpose which may not appear so desirable as this does. I mentioned the other night that it is the hard cases which make the law; it is these dangerous precedents for desirable objects which open the door, and once the door is opened you cannot tell what may follow. I therefore ask the Government and the House not to give a Party consideration to this question of retaining annual control of the expenditure of the country, but to guard that control, which exclusively belongs to this House, from inter-

ference by any other branch of the Legislature.

***LORD G. HAMILTON** (Middlesex): I admit at once that any Amendment coming from the right hon. Gentleman is well worthy of the attention of the Committee, and any suggestion which he may make, that would not interfere with the operation of the Bill and which would avert dangerous precedents, is well worthy of consideration. Now, I heard the right hon. Gentleman, with great ingenuity and skill of argument, put this case the other night, and he was very strong on precedent, and he quoted a number of Acts of Parliament to show how our conduct was absolutely unprecedented, but like an adroit advocate, he omitted one Act of Parliament—an Act of Parliament which bears on this point. In the year 1872, when the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian was in power, he was fortunate enough to be in receipt of a revenue, which, to use his own words, was advancing by leaps and bounds. And in that year it was necessary to incur a certain expenditure in connection with the Army for the purpose of localizing the military forces, and completing certain barracks, and the amount he proposed to spend was £3,500,000. What does the right hon. Gentleman then propose? He did not cite that as a precedent which he intends to follow, or which ought to be followed. On the contrary, he thinks it a most mischievous and dangerous precedent. The then Government proposed to raise this sum of £3,500,000 by payments out of the Consolidated Fund. In that sense their proposal was similar to ours. We, however, put on taxation for the purpose of repaying the sum raised, while the Government of 1872 took off taxation, and the worst part of the proposal was that the money was put upon the Consolidated Fund not because the revenue of the year would not bear it, but simply for the purpose of enabling the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian to present a popularity Budget. The sum which he took off taxation was £4,000,000, nearly £500,000 in excess of the sum he put upon the Consolidated Fund. Yet it was said by the right hon. Gentleman opposite that it has never yet been proposed that any Military Budget

should be voted in advance or spread over a number of years, or paid out of the Consolidated Fund. So far as precedent is concerned the Government have a distinct precedent for what they are doing, with the exception that the Government have taken out of their action all that was dangerous in the proposals of the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian, and we believe we have made a proposal which is in every sense safe and business-like. The right hon. Gentleman who moved the Amendment seems to suppose that the only object of the Government is to escape from the interference of Parliament, of which we are afraid. I will say at once that the Government are not afraid of the interference of the House of Commons. It is perfectly true that the House of Commons has never refused money to the Government which has made out a case for it, but there are other considerations which must weigh with the Committee as men of business. It has been determined by the House of Commons in repeated majorities that a certain number of ships shall be built in a certain time, and a considerable portion of the ships must be armoured ships. The main cost of the armoured ships must come in the second year when the armourplates are fixed, and I defy the ingenuity of man to equalize the expenditure over each year. I will take a past case of which the right hon. Member for South Edinburgh has some knowledge. Lord Northbrook proposed to spend a certain sum on a special programme, and made financial arrangements which the Government enunciated in the House. His proposal was to raise £800,000 in the first year, £800,000 in the second year, and £500,000 in each of the remaining years until the expenditure was met. That arrangement was made after careful calculation, and was the best estimate the Government could make, but the whole thing fell to pieces. The actual expenditure was £1,066,000 in the first year, £1,350,000 in the second year, £813,000 in the third year, and £300,000 in the fourth year. The Committee will there see that, although dealing with a smaller sum than the present, the financial provision was altogether out of accord with the expenditure of those years. The Government have placed on the Table of the House an estimate showing

the probable expenditure on contract ships—namely, in the first year, £2,850,000, second year £4,450,000, and third year £1,900,000. If this expenditure were included in the annual Estimates, see what fluctuations of taxation it would necessarily involve. Those fluctuations are most mischievous to trade. I contend that both from the business point of view and from that of the taxpayer the proposal made by my right hon. Friend is a right one—namely, to spread the payment over seven years, although the expenditure is actually incurred within five. The right hon. Gentleman objects to this money being put on the Consolidated Fund because he says it will take away the control of Parliament over the expenditure. For my own part, however, I contend that if the House authorize the expenditure and the Government enter into contracts on the faith of it, the House is not either legally or morally competent to repudiate the liability so incurred. If such a policy were adopted it would be absolutely ruinous to the economical administration of the Admiralty, for, of course, contractors would demand a higher price to cover the risk of repudiation. It is, therefore, absolutely immaterial whether the money is put upon the Consolidated Fund or voted annually by the House. I quite agree, however, that the expenditure on the Navy should be within the cognizance of the House, and to meet the views of the right hon. Gentleman on that subject, I will undertake to lay before the House each year precisely the same statements as to contract ships as are made with regard to Dockyard ships. I believe that by adopting that course the House will practically have just as much control over the expenditure as if it were included in the Estimates. I think I have shown three things—first, that we are not establishing a dangerous precedent, but have whittled down a dangerous precedent; next, that our proposals are in themselves businesslike and have not omitted the interest of the taxpayer; and lastly, that they do not unduly interfere with what I contend everybody should try to maintain—the annual control of the House over all the expenditure associated with it.

*MR. CHILDERS (Edinburgh): I am called upon by the noble Lord the

First Lord of the Admiralty to offer to the Committee a few remarks in reply to his reference to what Lord Northbrook proposed in 1885. He said that Lord Northbrook had laid before Parliament a scheme for spending £800,000 and £500,000 upon shipbuilding in three successive years. He then stated that sums very much in excess of Lord Northbrook's estimates—£1,066,000, £1,350,000 and £813,000—were expended in those three years, and the noble Lord said that in consequence of the inconvenience caused by these excesses, he did not propose to follow the plan of coming to Parliament each year, but would make this a charge upon the Consolidated Fund. It is true that under Lord Northbrook's plan the expenditure on ships in two years was a quarter of a million and half a million more than the original Estimate. But why was this? Why, the noble Lord took great credit for the fact two years ago, when he said that he had expedited the expenditure under Lord Northbrook's scheme. It was because he had deliberately accelerated the rate of building that the excess had occurred. No inconvenience whatever had resulted, so far as Parliamentary proceeding was concerned. The Votes had not been disturbed, but on the contrary, we on this side of the House entirely approved of the action of Government in spreading over three years only what had been intended to be spent in five. But let me ask this question, if this new principle of forming a fund to spread equally over a series of years, and that exceeding the time of construction, and the cost of the ships built by contract in private yards, ought it not to apply to ships built in the Dockyards? In that case also the cost of a particular ship will always be far greater in the second than in the first and third years. Moreover, the question is one which affects the annual control of Parliament over the whole of our naval building expenditure, and a large amount of our military expenditure, and if the arguments for the charge be sound we shall probably be asked, as has been urged abroad, to Vote Supplies for two or three years instead of one, and then the control of this House over the annual expenditure will be lost. The noble Lord also spoke of the precedent of 1872. It is true that in that

one case Parliament was asked to make a certain charge on the Consolidated Fund for a Military expenditure, repaying it in, I think, 21 years. But that was not for perishable articles like ships; it was for the building of permanent barracks which will last 100 years. There is, therefore, no analogy between the two classes of expenditure. What I want the noble Lord to say is whether, if he thinks that is a good rule for ships built by contract, it is, in his opinion, also a good rule for other classes of expenditure in connection with the Army and Navy. I want to know how he can draw a distinction between ships built by contract and ships built in the Dockyards in respect of his manner of financial provision. Hitherto the Constitutional principle, as to which both sides of the House have agreed, that the ordinary expenditure on the Army and Navy should be voted year by year; has been jealously protected, and I fear the worst consequences from its being so lightly set aside.

*COLONEL BLUNDELL (Ince): I feel bound to protest against the proposal that the Army expenditure should be taken in a different manner from that of the Navy. I think there is a great deal of money wasted in the Army by voting it from year to year; but as I do not wish to detain the House, I will only say that I think both Services stand on the same footing; they are the insurance of the country, and if that insurance is not sufficient it is our duty to make it so without delay.

*SIR W. BARTTELOT (Sussex, North-West): I wish to say a word as to the Army Organization Scheme. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Edinburgh (Mr. Childers) will recollect that the £3,500,000 voted in 1872 for the building of barracks when Lord Cardwell, then Mr. Cardwell, was Secretary of State for War was not accounted for annually to the House of Commons.

*MR. CHILDERS: An account in detail was laid before the House every year, and precise information was given in the Military Estimates on the subject.

*SIR W. BARTTELOT: In those Estimates there was no account whatever, and when asked for it was not forthcoming for the particular time stated. I do not say it was not given afterwards; but it was absolutely at the

option of the Ministers of the day to use the money as they thought fit for each year. I should also like to ask the right hon. Gentleman what was the intention of the Government of the day with respect to the £8,000,000 for the Suez Canal? The money was to be spread over a long term of years for the benefit of a foreign company to be paid off not annually, but by certain instalments extending over a series of years.

*MR. CHILDERS: The money was to be lent to the Suez Canal Company in the same way as other loans are made by the Government. It was not a question of money being included in the Estimates inasmuch as it was not to be expended by any Department of the Government.

SIR W. LAWSON (Cockermouth): I should like to ask the noble Lord and Gentleman this. If he looks at the Return lately published he will see it stated that we are as strong in ships of war as the four Navies of France, Russia, Germany and Italy. I want to know whether we are to take that Return as accurate?

LORD G. HAMILTON: The hon. Baronet must recollect that we are talking of the necessity of maintaining in the future our supremacy at sea for the protection of this country and of its commerce, and, therefore, we say it is necessary that we should have a much larger proportion of cruisers and line of battle ships than we now have.

SIR W. LAWSON: I must repeat my question whether we are to take the Return to which I have referred as accurate?

LORD G. HAMILTON: Perfectly.

Amendment negatived.

Clause 1 agreed to.

Clause 2.

*MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I have an Amendment which is not on the Paper, and it is to omit from line 29 the word "seventh" and insert the word "fifth." The effect of this Amendment will be to confine the granting of the money to the exact time within which the expenditure would take place. I am not going to raise again the Constitutional and financial points dealt with by my right hon. Friends near me. The First Lord of the Admiralty has used the argument that there is con-

siderable difficulty in equalizing the payments of the several years, which no doubt, according to the Government proposals, would be the case, because they intend in one year to commence a large number of vessels, and will have in the second year a larger amount of expenditure than in the first, as the most expensive part of the process is performed in the second year. Had the Government chosen to have pursued a more systematic course, and to have laid down one or two ironclads last year, and the year before, and so gone on after having thus paved the way, instead of starting in this spasmodic way by at once laying down a large number of vessels, the payments which have equalized themselves; but as it is, I admit there is something to be said, from the point of view of administrative convenience, in favour of the scheme, which enables the Government to avoid coming to Parliament for a larger sum of money in some years than in others. But the whole of the work is to be done in five years; why, then, should any part of the expenditure be spread over seven? Why should not the whole of the money be provided for the years in which the expenditure takes place? I have heard no argument used by the Government in support of their proposal in this respect. A proposal had been made to extend the time; but the Government would not hear of that; they would have the ships finished in five years. But why extend the expenditure over seven years? Does the Chancellor of the Exchequer think the country so lukewarm in the matter, or the resources of the country so few, that he has to spread the payments over seven years? I think it would require some strong and pressing argument to induce the House to grant what is proposed. The hon. and gallant Gentleman opposite, I think, missed the point as to the loan for barracks, in 1872. Hitherto we have been accustomed to loans for definite and tangible permanent work, such as building fortifications and barracks; and last year, when we provided for the Australian ships, was the first occasion on which a loan was resorted to, within recent years, for a transitory and perishable service. That exception is now extended by the Government, and all I wish to do in this Amendment is to secure that, whatever financial irregularities

we are being led into under the authority of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, we should, at least, be able to say that the effort we are called upon to make is not so great that we cannot discharge our liabilities within the term within which the expenditure is to be incurred.

Amendment proposed, in page 2, line 29, to leave out "seventh," and insert "fifth: "—(*Mr. Campbell-Bannerman*).

Question proposed "That 'seventh' stand part of the clause."

**MR. GOSCHEN*: We are not prepared to accept the Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman. While Her Majesty's Government do not believe the country to be lukewarm with regard to this measure, I am glad also to see that, whilst the right hon. Gentleman is not lukewarm, there is not that violent opposition to this scheme which at one time we had been led to anticipate. We should have had no difficulty in proposing this measure in any form, but we have had to consider what is the best and fairest method of meeting the payments. In this effort we are both making up for arrears and forestalling the efforts of the future. We find that at this particular moment it is necessary for many reasons, which have been explained at various times, to bring up the strength of our naval forces. It is an exceptional effort we are making, and we think it right to deal with it as an exceptional effort, believing that little blame would be attached to the Government if they had said the payment should be spread over ten years instead of seven. We think we have gone far to meet the general anxiety that every generation should pay its fair share by saying that the whole of this exceptional and abnormal effort should be paid for in seven years. What generation will most benefit from our exertions? Not the taxpayers of the next three or four years, during which the ships will be in course of construction, but those of the sixth and seventh and subsequent years when this large force will have been added to the Navy. Doubtless, hon. Gentlemen are right in saying that perishable Services can scarcely be treated in the same way as permanent ones, but though these ships will not be as permanent as fortifications, they will be more permanent than the ships of the past.

Mr. Campbell-Bannerman

**LORD C. BERESFORD* (Marylebone, E.): I cannot understand why on earth the Government want to extend the payments over seven years when they are going to build the ships in five years. Although I do not want to vote against the Government, I am afraid I shall have to vote for the Amendment. The Chancellor of the Exchequer has said this addition to the Fleet will be a permanent one. I distinctly controvert that, and will endeavour to prove that I am in the right, feeling sure that as time goes on I shall be found to be in the right, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer in the wrong. It is for this reason I shall have to go into the Lobby with the right hon. Gentleman opposite. One hon. Member referred to the question of barrack accommodation, and said the borrowing of money for providing that was justifiable because the barracks were permanent fixtures. So too, I say, ought the Fleet to be permanent; you ought to get it up to a given standard, and take care that steps are taken every year to replace ships which have become obsolete. We have been told that ironclads only last a given number of years. Why, they bear no comparison with the old style of ship. The *Victory*, when she fought the battle of Trafalgar, was 45 years old, and she was 75 years old when she was put out of commission. The right hon. Gentleman opposite was quite right when he said that we ought to have gone on building ironclads every year. No doing so is one reason why we have to build a large number now to bring the Fleet up to its proper strength. We ought also to allow for wastage, and the 20 millions ought to be in addition to the ordinary wastage of the Fleet. If you do not do this, why in a few years' time you will have another exceptional expenditure to replace those ships which, in a year or two, will have become obsolete. I intend to vote against the Government.

**MR. GOSCHEN*: My noble Friend is going to vote against the Government because they do not want to vote two millions a year instead of one million and a-half. But I thought my noble Friend wanted to borrow the money for the whole expenditure and suspend the Sinking Fund, and yet he is going to vote against us for spreading the payment of this money over seven years instead of five.

*MR. WINTERBOTHAM (Gloucester, Cirencester): The Chancellor of the Exchequer has told us we are to spread this money over seven years, instead of paying our way as we go on. I fail to see why the unhappy taxpayers of seven years hence should have this burden put on them. We ought to pay for putting the Navy in a proper condition. We have been told that we shall have a period of rest after this money has been spent. I do not in the least believe it. We have already been warned we shall have another scare in due course, and we have also been informed that a large expenditure will be required for the Army, so that the taxpayer of six and seven years' hence will have quite enough to do to meet fresh abnormal and exceptional expenditure. Then the Prime Minister, speaking in the West Country, recently told us of the terrible danger we may run of invasion from Ireland. I do hope that my right hon. Friends on the Front Opposition Bench, who, I fear, somewhat deserve the taunt thrown out by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, that they are lukewarm in their opposition to this monstrous and unnecessary proposal, will take courage from the promise of support given by the noble Lord opposite, and go to a division on this point, which is a very plain one, and which the country will understand, and that we may not again see what we have seen more than once in the past—a Conservative Government spending the money, and leaving a Liberal Government to pay it.

MR. CRAIG (Newcastle): Before this Vote is taken, I wish to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer to explain what is meant by the difference of £3,054,000 between the sum available to new construction (£11,554,000) and the sum required to complete the new programme (£11,500,000.)

*LORD G. HAMILTON: Anybody acquainted with our Dockyards would understand the importance of not allowing the work to stand still. We propose to allot a certain amount of money to complete a given number of ships, and then as the programme is completed, the money may be used for additions, or it may be saved. At any rate, it becomes free.

MR. CRAIG: In what sense?

*LORD G. HAMILTON: In the sense that there are no liabilities to meet. If

the present Government are still in office, I have no doubt the money will be devoted to new construction, but if hon. Gentlemen opposite are in a majority, and if the views they express to-night still prevail, the 3 millions will be available for the reduction of the Estimates.

MR. CRAIG: Then it comes to this, that the Government are asking us to grant £3,054,000, which is not yet allocated on the new programme. Why should we vote money to be used in 1893-94 for laying down vessels if the Government of the day choose so to spend the money?

*LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: The money is to be devoted to new construction, and when the new programme is completed there will be a surplus of £3,054,000, which will be dealt with as the House likes. We do not ask the House to come to any decision on that.

MR. CRAIG: Then why ask the House to vote the money now?

*MR. GOSCHEN: The money will not be used now. There is no clause in the Bill in which this is asked for.

*MR. CHILDERS: I wish to put one question, which directly bears on the policy of this system of advance for naval and military purposes. Two months ago the House was informed that there would be another large sum to be borrowed, I believe some five or six millions for barrack accommodation. I should like to know whether the Government have yet decided to ask the House for authority to make this advance also?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: That is a totally different matter. The Secretary for War says that he would have to make certain proposals which were to be submitted to a Committee of the House of Commons.

*MR. CHILDERS: I thought the inquiry took place last year?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: No, Sir; the proposals are to be referred to a Committee for inquiry. They are in an entirely inchoate state at the present time. I think it is not desirable to mix up the discussion of this matter with the Bill now before the House.

*MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I should like to refer again to the important point raised by the hon. Member for Newcastle. It is evident that on the

completion of the new programme we shall have three millions unappropriated, and which will be at the disposal of Parliament either to spend or to save. But at that time Parliament will have to meet two years' payment of the funded charges, created by this Bill, for expenditure already incurred. I do not consider it a very satisfactory arrangement that you should have arrears on one account, and at the same time an actual saving on the other.

*MR. GOSCHEN: It seems to me that it is a charming argument for the Bill, as we shall have means to pay at the very time the money has to be paid.

The Committee divided:—Ayes 177; Noes 99.—(Div. List, No. 108.)

Clause agreed to.

Clause 3 (financial arrangements for Dockyard work), with a verbal Amendment, agreed to.

Clause 4 (restrictions on application of money issued) agreed to.

Clause 5 (preparation and audit of accounts under the Act) agreed to.

Clause 6 (supplemental provisions) agreed to.

On Clause 7 (definitions),

LORD G. HAMILTON: I beg to move to add:—

"The expression 'money expended' will include the value of stores issued from stock and used in the construction or completion of the vessels built under this Act."

Clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 8 agreed to.

New Clause.

*MR. H. H. FOWLER: The object of my clause is simply to follow the precedent which the noble Lord in his speech earlier in the evening stated that he was willing to follow—namely, that of giving to Parliament every information with reference to these contracts. I wish Parliament to have laid before it every year the contracts which the Admiralty enter into by virtue of this Act. It may be said that the contracts will be very voluminous in their specifications, and may contain details which it is not desirable should be known to other contractors. I would therefore be content to take a summary of every contract, and to alter the period of 30 days to any longer period which the

Government think necessary in the interest of the public service.

New Clause.

"A copy of every contract entered into by virtue of this Act shall be laid before both Houses of Parliament within thirty days after the same is entered into, if Parliament is then sitting; and, if not, then within fifteen days after the next meeting of Parliament."

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this clause be read a second time."

LORD G. HAMILTON: I quite agree with the object of the right hon. Gentleman, but I think the clause, even if amended as suggested, goes a little further than the right hon. Gentleman wishes. It would run "a summary of every contract entered into by virtue of this Act." I would suggest we should say "a summary of every contract entered into by virtue of this Act for the construction of the vessels should be laid before both Houses of Parliament," and I would say "90 days" instead of "30," and "30" instead of "15."

*MR. H. H. FOWLER: Would you say "construction and arming of the vessels"?

LORD G. HAMILTON: No; there are a number of small contracts that it would not be necessary to enter into. "Vessels and guns" will be sufficient.

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I would suggest it would be convenient to bring the matter up on Report to-morrow. The particular phraseology of the clause ought to be very carefully considered. The Government wish to give the country complete information; but I think it would be more satisfactory if the matter were properly considered, and if a clause relating to it were brought up on the Report.

*MR. H. H. FOWLER: I quite agree with what the right hon. Gentleman has said, and on the understanding that the Government will bring up a new clause to-morrow, I beg leave to withdraw the Motion.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Schedule.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Schedule stand part of the Bill."

COLONEL NOLAN (Galway): It strikes me as extraordinary you should put in the schedule of a Bill that is to

last five years the number of quick-firing guns. We may have all sorts of inventions in the meanwhile, and the number and pattern of those guns may have to be totally modified. It is proposed we should tie our hands for five years, that the Admiralty should not be able to make any change in such a small matter as small guns without an Act of Parliament.

CAPTAIN PRICE (Devonport): The hon. and gallant Gentleman has omitted to observe that the word "approximate" occurs in the Schedule.

MR. DUFF (Banffshire): I quite agree with my hon. and gallant Friend. I think it would be very rash to tie ourselves down to the exact form of guns when we know the rapid development of quick firing guns. In this matter I should like to give the Admiralty a little more liberty. We have already suffered very much by tying ourselves to the 110-ton gun, and therefore I think it would be wise to accept the suggestion of the hon. and gallant Member for Galway, and cut out of the Schedule the reference to the number of small guns.

LORD G. HAMILTON: The object of the Schedule is to give as much information as possible to the House. The hon. Gentleman says it is a great mistake for the Admiralty to tie themselves down to a particular form of gun. I think it is a greater mistake to build ships without knowing what guns we are to put in them.

COLONEL NOLAN: Would it not be well to leave out of the Schedule the numbers of all guns under six-inch?

LORD G. HAMILTON: If it is the wish of the Committee to leave out part of the Schedule, I would not object, but I cannot leave out all under six-inch guns.

THE CHAIRMAN: The question "That the Schedule stand part of the Bill" has been proposed.

COLONEL NOLAN: The noble Lord may strike out the words on the Report.

LORD G. HAMILTON: I will make a proposal on Report.

Question put, and agreed to.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill, as amended, be reported to the House."

MR. ISAACSON: I should like to know what the Government intend to do with regard to the armour-plating.

There are only two firms in England which can compete for contracts for the armour-plating, and we are entirely at the mercy of those two firms. Indeed, I am convinced that if we manufactured the armour-plating ourselves we should effect a saving of £1,500,000.

THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order. The hon. Member has neglected the proper opportunity for raising this question. He may no doubt ask a question of the First Lord of the Admiralty, but he cannot discuss anything at this point.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill reported, as amended, to be considered to-morrow, at Two of the clock.

SUPPLY.

Resolutions [10th May] reported; [see pages 1712-1750.]

SUPPLY—CIVIL SERVICES.

CLASS II.

First Resolution read a second time.

MR. CHANNING (Northampton, E.): I put on the Paper the Amendment to reduce the salary of the President of the Local Government Board by £100, in order to call the attention of the House to the question which I raised on Friday—namely, the vaccination of workhouse children within a week of their birth. I drew attention fully to the question on Friday, and I only desire now to refer briefly to the main points raised then and to ask the House to divide upon the question. I pointed out that children have been vaccinated in workhouses within two or three days of their birth, and the President of the Local Government Board declined to interfere with the rule regarding the matter laid down by the Boards of Guardians, chiefly in the metropolis and in some of the large towns. He also said the Local Government Board was not responsible for the practice and had no power to do away with it. That I venture to contest. There was issued a circular letter, signed by Mr. Lambert, the Secretary of the Local Government Board, in 1881, distinctly approving at that time of the practice of vaccinating children thus early, and the Act of 1874 gives full power to the Board to make such orders as to vaccination as may seem to them proper. I, therefore, contend that the Local Government

Board has perfect power to deal with this question and to issue an order to the Boards of Guardians throughout the country pointing out the undesirability of vaccinating children at a very early age, and asking them to alter their practice in the matter. The justification for this practice is, of course, that in a workhouse you may have started an epidemic of small-pox by the young children being left unvaccinated, but as I pointed out the other day there is also the danger of an epidemic of erysipelas in a workhouse, which may spread throughout the institution. I submit that the practice is utterly inconsistent with the very principle of the Vaccination Act. The principle of the Act is that a parent is not compelled to have a child vaccinated until the third month. To talk of the consent of the parent being given in such cases is simply ridiculous. There is no possibility of comparing such cases with the cases in which regular and formal legal notices are sent under the vaccination laws. We know perfectly well that the unfortunate women who are confined in workhouses are practically compelled to have their children vaccinated within a very few days of birth. The President of the Local Government Board admitted the other afternoon that there was no statutory authority for enforcing vaccination thus early, that such vaccination would be a distinctly illegal act if formal consent were not given by the parent. It is absurd to say that any doctor can determine whether a child is in a fit state for vaccination at such an early age, before the child has had any start in life, before any opportunity has been afforded of seeing whether there is any disease in the child which wholly unfits the child for vaccination. I hope the President of the Local Government Board, who on Friday met what I had to say on this subject in no unconciliatory spirit, will see his way to use whatever power he has with the Boards of Guardians to put an end to this practice, and, at any rate, to postpone the vaccination of children born in workhouses to, say, a month or two months after the birth of the child. I beg to move the Amendment which stands in my name.

Amendment proposed, "to leave out '£133,823,' and insert '£133,723'"—(*Mr. Channing*)—instead thereof.

Mr. Channing

Question proposed, "That '£133,823' stand part of the Resolution."

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (*Mr. Ritchie*): The hon. Gentleman has made exactly the same speech he made last Friday to which I then gave a detailed reply, and as I imagine the only object the hon. Gentleman has is to take the opportunity he missed on Friday of moving a reduction of my salary, I do not think it is necessary for me to say more than that the Local Government Board have no power to interfere with the action of the Guardians. But these children are usually illegitimate and are taken away from the workhouse soon after their birth, and therefore it is clearly in the interest of the child that vaccination should be performed so early that the sore is healed before the child is taken away. Many accidents occur after children leave the workhouse, and if the arm were ill-treated a good deal of trouble might ensue. It is mainly with a desire of seeing that the child is well and that the sore is properly healed before it leaves the workhouse that vaccination is performed early, but the authorities receive strict instructions that no vaccination is to be performed unless the consent of the mother has been obtained.

The House divided;—Ayes 212; Noes 51.—(*Div. List, No. 109.*)

Question proposed, "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the said Resolution."

Mr. PICKERSGILL (*Bethnal Green, S.W.*): I wish to call attention to a matter in respect of which I asked a question the other day, and unless I receive from the President of the Local Government Board now a more sympathetic reply than I did then, I shall feel it my duty to take the sense of the House on the subject. The Local Government Board have an Inspectorate of 25 persons, and of the whole staff of Inspectors only one is a lady. Now, when it is considered that considerably more than half the inmates of workhouses are women and children, this disproportion must be allowed as grossly unfair. During last year a Committee of the other House examined the question of Poor Law Relief, and took a considerable body of evidence on the

subject, some portion of that evidence relating to the matter I am now bringing before the House. I would particularly invite attention to the evidence of Miss Twining, a member, I believe, of the Kensington Board of Guardians. She was asked :

"We understand you advocate the extension of a system of lady Inspectors generally, in connection with workhouse administration?"

Miss Twining replied :

"I do most earnestly desire it. I think it is our one great object just now. When Mrs' Nassau Senior was appointed in 1874 I had the honour of being consulted about it by the then President of the Local Government Board. That appointment was a great success. A complete change was made in the ideas of treatment of children and the sick. We have had to remove some nurses from the impossible conditions under which they did their duty. One nurse had to cook her rations in the same saucepan in which she cooked for the sick. Others, again, had to cook in the wards or their own sitting room, and we had to remove those who could not put up with the difficulties."

Miss Twining further said—

"If the Master goes round with the Inspector, and very often that official does so, the nurses have not the courage to explain their wants as they would do to a woman."

The evidence of Miss Twining and other evidence, among which I may allude to that of Miss Mason, pointing to the same conclusion, seems to have produced considerable effect upon the Committee of the other House, an influential Committee as a reference to the names will show, and they made a recommendation that, believing great advantage had been derived from the appointment of a lady Inspector, there should be further extension of such appointments to secure more competent inspection of the female and children's wards in workhouses, and of the staff of nurses and other female officials. As I said just now, when I put a question to the President of the Local Government Board, I did not receive much sympathy from him. The right hon. Gentleman agreed it was very desirable that ladies should be members of Boards of Guardians, but I think it is equally desirable that ladies should be appointed as paid Inspectors of the Local Government Board. I suppose the objection that mainly weighs with the right hon. Gentleman is the expense. Of course this is an important matter, but I should not desire the Board to launch out at once

into any very great expenditure. All I desire is to secure from the right hon. Gentleman to-night some expression of sympathy with the object I have in view, and some declaration of an intention to carry out that object as occasion may arise. What I would suggest is that instead of having all male Inspectors we should have some lady Inspectors, and by the substitution of the one for the other no additional expense would be incurred. [*Interruption.*] Some Members of the House seem rather disposed to make light of this question, which to my mind is a matter of great gravity. Depend upon it, the women and children who are occupants of workhouses would not regard it in that light spirit displayed by some hon. Gentleman below the gangway opposite. It is to them a matter of almost vital importance that they should have one of their own sex entrusted with the duty of inspection, and coming round from time to time to see if everything is right, instead of having the present system of male inspection only. I should be quite willing to take from the right hon. Gentleman a small instalment to night. I hope he will promise that when an Inspector's place becomes vacant on the next occasion he will appoint a lady Inspector, and then I will not further press the matter. But for the present I beg to move the reduction by £100 of which I have given notice.

*THE SPEAKER: The hon. Member cannot do that. The House has decided that the amount proposed shall stand part of the Resolution.

*MR. RITCHIE: Although the hon. Member cannot move the reduction I should be sorry to leave his appeal unanswered. The hon. Member proposes there should be an increase of lady Inspectors. To accomplish that one of two things would have to be done, looking to the fact that the whole of England is divided into districts, you must duplicate the number of Inspectors or you must substitute women for men, and this last I understand is the hon. Member's proposal with a view to meeting the difficulty of increased expense. My own opinion is that if the remedy proposed removed a grievance which the hon. Member says exists, but of which we at the Local Government Board have not

heard, it would create another and an infinitely greater grievance for to say that a woman could perform all the manifold duties now performed by the male Inspectors of the Poor Law Board is, with all respect to the hon. Member, a little more than the Committee will accept from him. The hon. Member really cannot know the variety of the duties Inspectors have to perform not only in connection with the workhouse itself, but on interviewing the Guardians and on many matters of Poor Law administration, and to say that these can be as well performed by a woman as by a man is more than I can believe. The hon. Gentleman asks me to give an expression of sympathy with his object, and that I do most entirely, but the object can be achieved without expense to the country by lady members going on the Boards of Guardians. We have many cases of that already, and members of the Boards of Guardians are at perfect liberty to go to the workhouse and make all inquiries they desire. But when the hon. Member asks me to promise that when a vacancy occurs I will appoint a woman instead of a man, that I must absolutely decline to do, for I am quite sure that the administration would suffer materially. The hon. Member alludes to the inquiry into Poor Law administration by a Committee of the other House, and it is quite true they did make a recommendation of the character referred to, but I will venture to say that recommendation was supported by very scanty evidence. The hon. Member has referred to a vast quantity of evidence taken, and much evidence was taken, but upon this particular point the evidence was confined to that of Miss Twining, so I am not wrong in saying the evidence was extremely scanty, and I think the Committee had much more in mind, the inspection of boarded-out children, than of replacing male by female Inspectors, and as to this I can make no promise.

*Mr. M'LAREN (Cheshire, Crewe): As in other matters, the expression of the right hon. Gentleman's sympathy does not promise an improvement in the matter complained of. The point my hon. Friend desired to raise was not that female Inspectors should be appointed to do all the duties of male Inspectors; all we ask is that there should be lady Inspectors for the

female sides of workhouses and infirmaries, and this change would mean much less than a duplication of the staff. For these duties, not undertaking those for which men are specially fitted, a few ladies could cover large areas. Miss Mason, who, I think, was appointed in 1885 to the inspection of boarded-out children, said in her evidence that she had some 1,300 or 1,400 boarded-out children under her inspection over the whole of England and Wales. This lady has to cover a large area of inspection, and so it might be if the recommendation of the Lords Committee were acted upon. From the evidence of Miss Twining, as well as from knowledge acquired from ladies who are Poor Law Guardians, I can say that not only do the female inmates regard this as exceedingly desirable, but the Guardians themselves would welcome the change. I would emphasize that point in Miss Twining's evidence in reference to the appointment of Mrs. Nassau Senior. This lady looked after workhouse schools for a year, and it was decided by the authorities that at the end of the year the appointment should include the general inspection of workhouses, but before the expiration of the year that lady's health broke down and she died. Now, if Mrs. Nassau Senior had not died, she would have been appointed to the very office we suggest a lady Inspector should fill; therefore, to say that the Department can hold out no hope of this being done is to lose sight of the fact that such an appointment was about to be made by the predecessor of the right hon. Gentleman, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Halifax. If Mrs. Nassau Senior had lived the appointment would have been made, and there would be no reason to raise this point now. In her evidence before the Committee, Miss Twining explains that her idea is that women should do the work of inspection as regards the clothing management and domestic economy of the female side of the workhouse wards. It cannot be doubted that such inspection would be an advantage. My wife has been a Poor Law Guardian, and she has described to me how absurd it is to send a male Inspector round the female wards for the inspection of clothing, bedclothes, utensils, &c. It is absurd and scandalous, too. Miss Twining was asked if such inspection would be

of any assistance to the matron, and she replied that the good ones would welcome such a charge, though of course the bad ones would not welcome lady Inspectors or lady Guardians either, and that Mrs. Nassau, Senior, was loved and respected by all she came in contact with. I hope the right hon. Gentleman will consent to reconsider his decision. We do not want any great expenditure; we shall be perfectly satisfied with the appointment of one lady Inspector to go round and visit the female wards of all workhouses. It will be a great work to do, and will take much time, but it would be attended with great advantage to the inmates, for there are many matters that must escape the attention of the male Inspector.

COLONEL NOLAN (Galway, N.): Speaking as Chairman of a Board of Guardians, I must say I think this proposition most practical. I do not think the work of inspecting the female side of our workhouses is at the present time done as efficiently as that of inspecting the male side. You should have one lady Inspector who would devote herself solely to the females' and children's part of the workhouse, leaving the general sanitary portion of the workhouse to the male Inspector. Furthermore, the female Inspector would be able to keep the female matrons in order. The right hon. gentleman the President of the Local Government Board might well consider this matter, and see if he could not appoint at least one female Inspector for the whole Kingdom.

The House divided:—Ayes 192; Noes, 64:—(Division List, No. 110.)

Resolution agreed to.

Second Resolution read a second time.

DR. CLARK (Caithness): I wish to move the reduction of this Vote by £3,000. There are six Inspectors in lunacy in England paid £1,500 a year each, and only two in Scotland paid £1,000 a year each, or 50 per cent less than the English. Seeing that the Scotch Inspectors are superior in their knowledge of the question to the English Inspectors, I desire to reduce the salaries of the latter to the level of those of the former.

Amendment proposed, "to leave out '£13,215,' and insert '£10,215'"—(Dr. Clark)—instead thereof.

Question put, "That £13,215 stand part of the Resolution."

The House divided:—Ayes 195; Noes 46.—(Div. List, No. 111.)

Resolution agreed to.

Subsequent Resolutions agreed to.

WEIGHTS AND MEASURES [COSTS].

Resolution reported,

"That it is expedient to authorize the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of the costs incurred, and of the remuneration of the officer employed, in any local inquiry which may be held under the provisions of any Act of the present Session for amending the Law relating to Weights and Measures."

Resolution agreed to.

NATIONAL DEBT BILL. (No. 219.)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading, read.

*MR. GOSCHEN: As this is really part of the Budget proposals, and the subject was discussed in the debate earlier in the evening, I think it will be for the public convenience that it be read a second time now.

Question, "That this Bill be read a second time," put and agreed to:

Bill read a second time, and committed for to-morrow, at Two of the clock.

HERRING FISHERY (SCOTLAND) BILL. (No. 16.)

Considered in Committee, and reported, as amended to be committed upon Thursday.

MARRIAGE WITH A DECEASED WIFE'S SISTER BILL. (No. 64.)

Order for the Second Reading, read and discharged.

Bill withdrawn.

TEMPORARY DWELLINGS BILL. (No. 206.)

MR. BURT (Morpeth): I hope the House will allow this Bill to be read a second time now.

Question, "That this Bill be read a second time," put and agreed to.

Bill read second time and committed for Thursday.

SUGAR CONVENTION BILL. (No. 194.)

Question put, "That the second reading of the Sugar Conventions Bill be deferred till the 20th of June."

MR. T. M. HEALY: I should think that some notice ought to be given of the proposal. I think it might stand till to-morrow.

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Sir M. HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): This Motion is made in accordance with what my right hon.

Friend stated this evening, that the Bill would not be taken before Whitsuntide.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I should like to know what is the exact period after Whitsuntide to which it is proposed to be postponed.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: Till the 20th of June.

Question again put, and agreed to.

House adjourned at ten minutes
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